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A "Princely Lady": The Religion, Power and Identity of Anne Boleyn

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Abstract

Anne Boleyn (c. 1501 – 1536), the second wife of Henry VIII, was an influential and controversial figure in her time and is the subject of intense debate among historians today, not to mention fascination among the general public. Historians are sharply divided and seek to categorize her as either an early Protestant influential at court (historians such as Ives, Warnicke, and Starkey) or ultimately Catholic and passive (Bernard). This thesis moves beyond such polemics by combining a close analysis of documents from the time and the goals of their authors with post-modern approaches to historical biography emphasizing the fluidity of the self. This thesis argues that Anne had hybrid religious opinions; her views were fluid and flexible, and that enabled her to be an influential actor at the forefront of the transformation of English political and religious culture instead of a model sixteenth-century, passive lady.

Key Terms: Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII, Protestants, Catholics, European Reformation, Tudors, England.

A “Princely Lady”: The Religion, Power and Identity of Anne Boleyn

Anne Boleyn (c. 1501 – 1536), is a fascinating figure to historians and the general public because of her complexity and her unique circumstances. The second wife of Henry VIII, she fascinated contemporaries, including her enemies like the Spanish Ambassador Chapuys. She may be fascinating still to this day but she is also continually stereotyped, by both the general public and even historians, into overly simple classifications. Over the past half-century, Anne has been portrayed in the media variously as a flirt, a victim, a calculating manipulator, and an ambitious seductress. Historians have portrayed her variously as an influential early Protestant, and a passive Catholic.¹ Anne has aspects of all these stereotypes, but she was more than that: she was also an interested party in church reform, politics, and a mother. The approaches developed by the historians behind the field known as New Historical Biography allow us to move beyond these various portrayals of Anne to uncover a more complex and helpful understanding of her.

Like many in the early Reformation, Anne was concerned about religious abuses. She explored new religious ideas and works to help her find what she felt was the ‘truth’ of these religious issues. She agreed with some of the new ideas coming out in the reformation, but she could not forgo all the Catholic beliefs and actions to which she was accustomed. Anne was in a unique position to explore religious ideas because of her status as a noble, King Henry’s beloved, and later as queen. She was able to do this exploration because it was easier to get access to new works and she was exposed to top thinkers at court. As queen, Anne was able to influence circumstances to reform and preserve religious ideas. Anne Boleyn is a much more fluid person in religion and gender than many acknowledge; her religious beliefs do not fit easily into one label but are somewhere in the middle of the religious spectrum, as are her actions in regard to gender roles.

This work will focus on those modern historians most important to the religious debate, gender issues, and source partiality as relates to Anne. The main debate concerning religion and Anne, upon which this historian enters, portrays Anne as leaning one way or the other: Catholic or Protestant Reformer. The only major historian advocating that Anne may have actually been a Catholic is George Bernard, who opened the debate by going to the conservative extreme that Anne was not as reform-minded as others have claimed. He believes that reformist writers such as John Foxe and William Latymer were just propagandists trying to present Anne as reformist so her daughter Elizabeth would follow in Anne’s footsteps as queen. Instead of showing Anne as a voice for the English Reformation, Bernard gives Henry a more prominent role and even seems to attempt to take Anne out of the picture altogether. While reasonable to believe that Henry was involved in the proceedings and not always the one being influenced, Bernard tries too hard to limit Anne, her influence and her opinions.

E. W. Ives, another foremost twentieth-century scholar on Anne, is one of the leaders of the debate claiming her as fully reformist and evangelical, viewing her fall as part of court politics and intrigues, based partly on religious views. Ives uses evidence from several Reformers, such as John Fox, William Latymer, John Skip, and Matthew Parker, to show Anne’s religious views in connection with her fall. He also shows that reform ideology varied between the more radical and the less radical, and it was on the latter side that Anne herself fell. He believes she was a reformer and that “Any attempt to assign her to this or that confessional

¹ For interpretations of Anne as an early and influential Protestant, see Ives, Warnicke, and Starkey. For portrayals of her as Catholic, see Bernard.

position is impossible and anachronistic," an interpretation with which this thesis agrees (Ives, 1994).

Retha Warnicke, a third leading historian, assumes Anne to be Protestant in her defenses and rejoinders of Anne with Ives and Bernard. Warnicke believes that "Even if [Anne's] education and the cultural impulse of her society had not led her to treat religion seriously, her elevation to the queenship would have. A highly motivated and ambitious lady like Anne would have wanted... to have the reputation of a Christian woman" (Warnicke, 1989, p. 152). Her admission of the disunification of religious reformers in this time implies that Anne could have been both a reformer and had Catholic tendencies, as many did; she also connects Anne with humanism and learning, not just the religious debate. However, her position, like Ives', places her view a bit too decisively on the side of reformers. Likewise, David Starkey's work on the Tudor wives firmly presents Anne as a passionate reformer. He also notes that no matter their religious views, Henry expected his queens "to be pious, and probably they paid attention [or they would have suffered the consequences]" (Starkey, 2003, p. 4). Unlike how Anne's views were seen by others even today, they were not as firmly fixed as was generally thought and believed, even by Starkey himself.

Historian Thomas Freeman believes Anne leaned towards reform and was a reformist. In his claim, he redeems the writing of reformist author and propagandist John Foxe regarding Anne. Freeman illustrates how Foxe presents Anne in ways that can be verified in other works and shows how Foxe references those from whom he received information about Anne. Freeman examines several of the editions in depth to show how the variations reflect new information Foxe had received, demonstrating to many, including this author, how Foxe's work is a valid source for explaining Anne's religious views.

Maria Dowling's work on humanism at Henry's court is also relevant because it shows Anne in line with the new humanists who leaned toward Protestantism. Dowling convincingly shows how intellectual, and subsequently religious, views can blend across factions, meaning that few people fit easily into one category. Meanwhile, Karen Lindsey takes a feminist lens to the six wives, showing a more sympathetic view of an Anne genuinely interested in the Protestant cause. Here, Anne made the best of a bad situation with Henry's pursuit and used her power, connections and influence to help the cause that she was interested in: religious reform and its introduction into England. Historian Mary Wiesner advocates a more inclusive view of women (and men) in the reformations by examining both genders' experiences, which will lessen the dominance of projecting current ideas of the split between public and private life onto the past. Lindsey's presentation is a realistic view on events and connects with Wiesner's point that neither gender operates in a vacuum as both genders, and their various opinions, influence the other's lives and views.

Scholar David Loades presents the role of Tudor queens as defenders of their husband's honor no matter their religious opinions. He illustrates how Anne was careful not to step out of Henry's religious parameters but never learned to be a conventional wife, even while she meticulously preserved Henry's honor. When reflected on, this idea is reasonable and valid because Anne was only sent to the royal apartments in the Tower of London during her sentencing and trial while Catherine Howard, who truly disgraced Henry, was sent to a dungeon in the Tower. As these scholars have shown, politics are closely tied with religious position during the sixteenth century, and Anne is not unique in this. However, neither religious nor political position is fixed; Anne, like many others in the Tudor period, also shows flexibility in her beliefs.

Unlike today, religious denominations were not as clear-cut in the sixteenth century. At the emergence of the Protestant Reformation, opinions were more placed along a spectrum than divided into specific camps. Two main categories emerged to help decide into which camp and where on the religious spectrum one fell: Catholics believed in Latin scripture and personal charity; Protestant denominations varied greatly but they all, to varying degrees, supported vernacular scripture and organized charity. Many Protestant denominations also advocated salvation by faith alone, but what would become the Anglican Church did not consistently emphasize this aspect of Protestantism. The term “protestant,” while frequently used in modern times, was not in much use during this time. Instead, evangelical was the term generally used. Like many others, including her husband, Anne Boleyn falls somewhere in the middle of this religious spectrum because while she advocated for reform and was an evangelical, she retained some of her Catholic beliefs and practices.

Having been exposed to reform ideas and works during her time in the French court with such persons as Marguerite of Navarre, Anne brought these ideas with her back to England. She continued to import works, sometimes covertly; the trade in foreign religious books was technically illegal but Anne used the statuses of royal merchants to conceal books and her brother smuggled works in his diplomatic bags. She had controversial books, including Tyndale’s translation of the Bible into English and other works by both Tyndale and Simon Fisher. She owned a French bible and other French reform books. Anne’s illuminated Psalter gave the text in a new, radical French translation (probably by Louis de Berquin, who was burned at the stake for heresy in 1529); her French bible was the translation by the famed Frenchman Lefevre and was embellished with Henry and Anne’s cipher and evangelical mottoes (Starkey, 2003). The French teacher in residence in England, Louis de Brun, gave Anne a French treatise on letter writing as a New Year’s gift in January 1530 and commended her reading habits. He told her that ““One never finds you without some French book in your hand...such as Translations of the Holy Scriptures...And principally, last Lent and the one before last...I always saw you reading the salutary Epistles of St Paul that contain the complete teaching and rule of good living according to the best moral principles” (Starkey, 2003, p. 369). She paid attention to the highlighted passages, some of which described faith as a living, breathing thing as well as leading to peace within (Starkey, 2003). To be sure, part of this reading was to be noticed and to be seen as a religious patroness like other royal and noble women such as Marguerite in France, Catherine of Aragon and Lady Margaret Beaufort (Henry’s paternal grandmother), but it occurs even before her role had been recognized on the greater European stage, which means, “There is every reason to think that these activities of Anne’s were sincere” (Starkey, 2003, p. 370). Anne knew it would be difficult taking Catherine’s place, especially since the queen was extremely popular and respected. It was imperative that Anne be seen as a devout woman. She was determined, however, to be devout in her way, as an evangelical especially interested in the vernacular Bible.

As a highly-placed lady and later queen, Anne Boleyn followed models of other noble and royal ladies of the reformations, especially Marguerite of Navarre and her own predecessor, Catherine of Aragon, to establish herself and her opinions. At the French court, Anne was well-placed to observe both the new queen Claude and the king’s sister, Marguerite of Navarre. Claude, like Catherine of Aragon, was an extremely pious woman; Marguerite was also pious but she was interested in religious reform, which Anne was in a place to observe. Marguerite was a patron of reformers, including John Calvin. She herself never went outside the Catholic faith but she was still a role model and influence for several English evangelical and proto-Protestant

ladies, including Anne and Catherine Willoughby, Duchess of Suffolk, a friend of Henry's last wife, Protestant Katherine Parr. Latymer brings particular attention to Anne's relationship with the double monastery at Syon Abbey. Anne was not interested in dissolving all the monasteries:

when her highnes was certifiende that all houses of religion... shoulde be suppressed, she commaunded that... Mr Latimer to take some occasion in his nexte sermonde to be made befor the kinge to dissuade the utter subversion of the said houses and to induce the kinges grace to the mynde to converte them to some better uses. (Latymer, 1990)

Anne felt that the mission of many convents and monasteries had gone astray. Instead of dissolving them as many protestant reformers wanted, Anne desired to "converte the abbeys and priories to places of studye and goode letres and to the contynuall releve of the poore" (Latymer, 1990, p. 57). Anne would assist these houses in their attempt to not be dissolved, but only if they would begin to reform themselves to show their earnest desire. Catherine of Aragon had been close to this monastic community at Syon and so Anne's attempt to reform in view of this is interesting; Anne may have been attempting to imitate her former mistress, who was known for her piety and charity (Latymer, 1990). Protestants writing after Anne's death credited her with stopping superstitious beliefs at Syon Abbey and elsewhere; she did this in part by updating the books the nuns used and supplying works in English instead of Latin. A sermon by Anne's almoner, the chaplain in charge of distributing money to the poor, John Skip, about the dissolution of monasteries implied Anne's own opinions on the issue because it is unlikely he would have said these things if he did not know Anne's views on the subject and had her support, Skip compared Anne to Esther, courageously saving the Jews (in this case the monasteries and some of the "little ceremonies" of the church) against the advice of the selfish councillor Haman (Cromwell) (Bernard, 1993; Ives, 1994). A play written in the early divorce stages portrayed Catherine of Aragon as a learned and wise Esther competing against the villainous Haman, Wolsey (Dowling, 1986, p. 230); that both women (in different contexts) were compared to a biblical figure shows how religious language could be used for anyone considered virtuous and deserving of it by their supporters.

Anne also advanced reform-minded bishops and clergy, even going so far as to call them "my bishops" when she was imprisoned in the Tower (Wyatt, 1815, p. 465). She was not of course the only patron but she was one of the major patrons. Occasionally, she put her opinion on the good of the church above the preferences of individual preachers; she chastised one reluctant preacher on why he had not yet taken up his post, instructing him in no uncertain terms that she expected him to do so without delay (Norton, 2011). The clergy, especially Archbishop Cranmer, believed she was a reformer. Cranmer was horrified when she was arrested because he had trouble connecting the reformist woman with the adulterous picture painted of her. He could not go so far as to explicitly doubt the king and the charges without invoking Henry's anger against himself and the reform he was in charge of, but his letter allows his doubts to slip in: "For I never had better opinion in a woman" and "I loved her not a little, for the love which I judged her to bear towards God and his Gospel" (Bernard, 2010, p. 171; Starkey, 2003, p. 574).

Part of how Anne is portrayed is in a comparison with other figures and Latymer shows Anne imitating Catherine of Aragon's behaviors in several ways; he portrays Anne as devout, well-read in scriptures, generous to the poor, and a strict moral censor on the court, reading rather like an account of Catherine's virtues by William Forrest in Mary's reign. Both Anne and Catherine are portrayed as patrons of education beyond the normal expectations of a lady, and

prepare their daughters with a well-rounded humanist education; in addition to giving money to poor scholars (as Catherine had done), Anne was generous to the universities themselves, helping to pay their expenses (Latymer, 1990; Warnicke, 1989). Latymer, in an unusual move for many reformist writers, tries to denigrate Catherine by showing one of her favored monasteries, Syon, as being foolish in their beliefs and thus needing Anne's influence; the nuns' eventual cooperation with and submission to Anne proving, in his opinion, Anne's positive reforms over Catherine's papist beliefs.

However, Anne was not as extreme as others, such as Henry's sixth and last wife Katherine Parr, who was an evangelical but had fully embraced Protestantism and could also be characterized as a Protestant by today's standards. Katherine Parr recruited pastors who had evangelical views, like Anne, but Katherine went a step farther by having her ladies, and some court gentlemen, participate in reading, prayer, and debate groups. Although a learned woman by the time of her marriage to Henry, Katherine only approved of truly Christian learning and warned scholars that "I require and desire you all, not so to hunger for the exquisite knowledge of profane learning that it may be thought the Greeks' university was but transposed or now in England again revived, forgetting our Christianity" (Dowling, 1986, p. 235). She also wrote works with an evangelical tint, which were published during the end of and after Henry's reign. Those published during Henry's reign were not too overt because of Henry's own religious leanings that veered toward Catholicism; Katherine's *The Lamentation of a Sinner* was published after Henry's death because the whole book was a detailed statement of her own beliefs, which would have been problematic if published earlier since the opinions between husband and wife differed. Katherine's book of prayers on the other hand was published with Henry's permission in 1545 (Martienssen, 1973). Anne did not go this far; to date, no religious writings or opinions written by Anne herself have survived. Katherine even wrote a couple of introductions to works she approved. Anne, on the other hand, seems to have known her limits and only approved certain writings that she was sent, some were too radical even for her. She did, albeit sometimes a little unwillingly, show Henry literature that was technically banned in England but that she had managed to obtain, for example, new Christian and reform works that managed to impress him. The decade separating the two women had produced vast changes in religion throughout Europe and England; these changes allowed for Katherine Parr to slowly advance more Protestant views that would not have been accepted earlier. Perhaps if Anne had lived, she would have gradually become more evangelical and Protestant like Katherine, but we will never know for certain.

Anne followed a model set by Catherine of Aragon to keep a moral overtone at the court. Latymer records a speech from Anne to her council to guard the court's honor and thus her own: "For in this wyse you shall preserve my courte inviolate, and garde it from the oblique of the envyous" (Latymer, 1990, p. 49). He also tells how Anne went a step beyond the court's honor and instructed her chaplains that "I requyre you, as you shall at any tyme hereafter perceave me to declyne from the right path of sounde and pure doctryne, and yelde to any manner of sensualitie, to awayte some convenient tyme wherein you may advertise me therof" (Latymer, 1990, p. 50). Twentieth-century historian Loades describes a role of a queen as the defender of her husband's honor and Anne certainly seems to be doing her part to protect both her honor and his. Continuing the preservation of honor and virtue, Wyatt speaks of how "she had in court drawn about her, to be attending on her, ladies of great honour, and yet of greater choice for reputation of virtue, undoubted witnesses of her spousal integrity" (Wyatt, 1815, p. 206); Anne also gave her ladies little books of devotion and kept them busy by sewing garments for the poor. Latymer

(and Foxe) makes note of an English bible that Anne kept on a desk in her chamber so that anyone could read it and how Anne herself as an example would go over and read from it, as well as from her French bible. It has been noted, however, that a lack of proficiency in Latin, like many laity, may have turned her interest towards vernacular scripture and devotional works in the languages in which she was fluent (Dowling, 1986).

As an intellectually-minded woman, Anne kept up in the religious debates of the time. Wyatt claims that Anne's intelligent mind brought out in Henry "the rich treasures of love of piety, love of truth, love of learning" (Wyatt, 1815, p. 201; Wyatt, 1968, pp. 185-6); Wyatt also stresses how after her marriage several people "presented her with sundry books of those controversies that then began to be questioned touching religion" (Wyatt, 1815, p. 201), emphasizing that she was interested in, even if not always convinced by, new works and ideas, like Marguerite. Latymer brings up debates that Anne held with the king: "And that her highnes might evydently declare that this godly indeavour from a constante and fervente affeccion which she hadd to the setting forth of the lyvely worde of God, she saledome or never toke her repaste abrode with the kinge his majestie without some argument of scripture throughly debated" (Latymer, 1990, p. 62).

This reference to debates between the king and queen is especially interesting because one of Anne's successors, Katherine Parr, had religious debates within her court and with the king and almost lost her head once for it. When another of Anne's successors, Jane Seymour, had attempted to engage the king on a religious matter, she was warned of what had happened to Anne. It is most reasonable to assume that it was a combination of Anne being more beloved at the time than Catherine, not as religiously radical, and that Henry had grown more conservative in his older years. After all, Henry had just spent several years waiting for Anne and would be more receptive to religious debates right after the break with Rome. As his reign went on, he veered back toward the Catholic church in his religious views, and as the head of the church in England, what he believed, went.

Like other reform movements, the English Reformation was a process. "The struggle for the supremacy and the divorce brought to power Queen Anne Boleyn, Thomas Cromwell, Archbishop Cranmer and other bishops who gave reform a *Protestant tinge*" (Starkey, 1990, p. 83, Italics added). Reform in England was different than what would occur in the countries that remained Catholic; reform was as necessary in England as elsewhere because of the circumstances surrounding abuses of power by the clergy. Those who came to prominence with the divorce of Catherine were evangelicals and Protestant-leaning and thus reform, when it came, had this tinge. Even though Anne was not a radical Protestant, she leaned that way and used her influence to continue to move in this direction. The hard-core Protestants and Catholics did what they could. However, Anne and those others who were without a definite religious commitment were caught in the middle, trying to please friends and followers on both sides to avoid disorder which sometimes left them alienated (Starkey, 1990).

As Catherine of Aragon continued to miscarry during Henry's early reign, she became more devout in her attention to religious ceremony and practice. Anne, while religious, did not carry it to this extent and neither did Henry. In a letter to the new preacher Hugh Latimer, Archbishop Cranmer gives advice about preaching sermons to the king and queen. Cranmer told Latimer that he was to expound the Scripture in the literal sense, without method, but with no current theological disputes. Latimer should also not be afraid to rebuke moral offence or superstition. "In other words, Latimer's evangelical views would be acceptable to the King if expressed with tact. Last, but not least, the sermon should be no longer than 'an hour, or an hour

and an half at the most'; otherwise the King and Queen 'shall have small delight to continue throughout with you to the end" (Starkey, 1990, p. 198).

Religious views can shine through the clearest in moments of suffering and death. The scaffold speeches of condemned traitors was an important part of executions because it was an opportunity to make peace with God and man, complete their confession in a public manner, testify to the correctness of punishment, and deter crime (Starkey, 1990). They were not occasions for last-minute declarations of innocence, but Anne and a couple of her fellow 'traitors' pushed this to the limit. Anne and her brother did not specifically acknowledge their guilt in this matter, although her brother did make brief mention of other sins. Instead, Anne asked for mercy and prayers for the king while subtly asserting her fidelity. Other convicted traitors during the Tudor period used their speeches for more overt religious, and political since the two were so closely tied, statements. For instance, the Duke of Northumberland stated that he had been led into heresy, which inspired his treason against Queen Mary. The Marian regime was delighted and used it as propaganda while the Protestants disowned the man who had been their champion (Starkey, 1990). Jane Grey in her execution speech around the same time apologized for assuming the crown even while declaring that "she died 'a true Christian Woman,' that is a Protestant." On the opposite spectrum, Mary Queen of Scots asserted her Catholicism at her execution in Elizabeth's reign by her hope "to be saved 'by and in the blood of Christ, at the foot of whose crucifix she would shed her blood'" (Starkey, 1990, p. 143). While Anne was not this overt in her last-words, she asked for prayers and for Jesus to receive her soul. Before, she had confessed her sins to her old friend Cranmer and even took the sacrament, using it to declare her innocence in the presence of her jailor and on penalty of damnation (Wyatt, 1990). As Foxe mentions, he is not sure what exactly happened for Anne's fall, but he believes her execution speech proves her to be a truly religious person concerned with Christ's gospel.

Charitable giving was a large part of Catholic duties because they believed good works are necessary for salvation. Luther and other Protestants disagreed, claiming that people should do good works because it was a Christian responsibility, and not to get into heaven. For this reason, most Protestant churches and countries discouraged personal charity and asked church members to donate to organizations that would then distribute the alms and goods in a reasonable manner to those who deserved it. Anne, according to her chroniclers, practiced personal charity but also did donate to a central practice for regulated and thought-out distribution. Even the Protestant propagandist and martyrologist, Foxe, describes Anne's personal giving habits as weekly alms of a hundred crowns and apparel as well as "wonderful much privy alms to widows and poor householders continually till she was apprehended; and she ever gave three or four pound at a time to poor people" from a little purse she carried for such purposes; she also sent some of her religious servants like her subamner, a chaplain who distributed money to the poor, to the towns they visited to get lists of those in need of charity, as well as maintaining scholars at Cambridge (Foxe, 1965, pp. 112-3). She and her ladies continuously sewed shirts and smocks for the poor, both to promote charity and virtue, and to keep her ladies busy (Wyatt, 1990). It was also in part because Anne herself was interested in poor relief, as shown by the dedication to her of a work to address the topic (Dowling, 1986). Foxe also includes her charitable work and the support of the church in his discussion of her in addition to her subamner's distributed money. Anne was also a dedicated supporter of learning, financially supporting many men at Cambridge, (especially those favoring the King's divorce) just as her father and brother did. Foxe calls her a "gracious lady" because of her charitable endeavors. Because Anne was

replacing a deeply pious and beloved queen, it is entirely reasonable that she actually behaved as Foxe describes both to be seen as a true queen and to show her own religious convictions to her supporters and detractors.

The letters of Anne's jailor Sir William Kingston to Thomas Cromwell also show that she had not given up all of her Catholic beliefs. Although he reported on some of the foolish things Anne said when she was distressed and slightly hysterical, he also recorded several comments concerning her innocence and religion: "It ys to gu[de] for me, she sayd, Jesu, have mercy on me; and kneled downe wepyng" (Wyatt, 1815, p. 459). Her most important remarks concern the presence of the sacrament – the Eucharist. She continually pressed Sir William to request from Cromwell and the King "that she [myght] have the sacarment in the closet by hyr chambr, that she my[ght pray] for mercy" (Wyatt, 1815, p. 459). In the hours before her death, Anne spent many hours in that chamber, praying before the sacrament.

There were different expectations and acceptances of women's views and this can be seen in the interaction between Anne and other married women. Wives with exiled or imprisoned husbands wrote to Anne for help. Anne also worked to help women in the convents. Instead of wishing to dissolve them as other, more radical reformers like Thomas Cromwell wished, Anne worked to try to make them better, to push them beyond their 'superstitions.' Anne, like Catherine of Aragon, might not feel called to such a life but she does not seem to have despised those women who were called to such a spiritual profession. Instead, Anne focused on education, charity, and spreading reform and the gospel within and without the religious houses.

However, she still seems to have had power in the court. Latymer and Wyatt both refer to her as a prince or a "princely lady" in their works, which suggests that she was not simply a model wife but a power in the court, being able to take up royal male aspects and wield power to improve religious and educational conditions. Anne worked on behalf of imprisoned and exiled reformers and was influential in getting reformers appointed to religious positions, even referring to them as "my bishops." Anne seems to have gone outside the limits imposed on her by marriage, even though she tried to be a good queen and wife by taking up religious pursuits and trying to fulfill her role of bearing a male heir for the king. Anne was in a position to support her views and reformers but she was not alone; other reformist court patrons, like Secretary Cromwell, existed and were also in a position to claim clientele.

Because both Wyatt and Latymer refer to Anne as 'princely' in their works, this implies that whichever side of the religious spectrum Anne fell on, she was more influential than many women and a part of court politics. Without realizing it, these men are showing how Anne went outside gender boundaries and expectations, straddling gender roles of both men and women just as she straddled both sides in her religious views. She worked to appoint reform-oriented clergy to positions of leadership, even when they did not wish to gain that appointment (Norton, 2011). Anne also passed reform pamphlets on to Henry, at least those that she deemed he would accept. On the other hand, Anne attempted to step back into the traditional roles of queen, wife, and mother. She requested the help of her chaplains in monitoring the moral behavior of the court, her ladies, and herself (Latymer, 1990). She also kept her ladies and herself busy in productive needlepoint, sewing clothing for the poor (Wyatt, 1815). It would have been expected to discuss her being 'queenly,' but 'princely' implies to a modern reader, and possibly a contemporary one, that Anne had agency of her own; seeing this description shows that Anne cannot simply be disregarded in a study of England's reformation, but was an important player and voice. Recent literature by historian Bernard places Henry at the foreground with Anne Boleyn as no more than a wall decoration in Henry's larger political and religious efforts, but the fact that Anne's near

contemporaries did not view her with so little agency lessens Bernard's claim. Indeed, the wording of Latymer & Wyatt emphasize that Anne had worked for and earned her place with others in the fore- and middle-ground.

Anne certainly earned her place, but that did not stop men from ruling over and overshadowing her. A few days before she was executed for adultery and treason, Henry had their marriage annulled, which made little sense in view of the charges. It does show how men, especially royal and noble ones, viewed women as subordinate to their expectations and marriage desires no matter where they fell on the religious spectrum. Because of their subordination in the Bible (Eve subordinate to Adam and Paul prescribed against women instructing men) and elsewhere, women could be replaced for the good of the male's dynastic legacy and goals for his country or landholdings. Since women were viewed primarily in their abilities to be wives and mothers, other considerations, except for political and economic gain, were seldom considered. Both religious sides thus continued to give preference to male prerogatives. In addition, Protestant ideas that ecclesiastical tribunals should have no jurisdiction over marriage allowed kings and the nobility to not have to go outside their country to the pope and the ecclesiastical courts. Instead, they would have more control over and within their own countries. It allows politics to play a larger role because other marriages and engagements play less of a role in the reason for wanting and needing a divorce.

Anne's former chaplain William Latymer used anecdotes in his work that highlighted Anne's positive religious qualities and views. His work presents the Anne that he remembered and admired. His portrayal of Anne is not a stereotypical one, because ladies were not necessarily expected to be active patrons of education, which Anne was. In addition, he was not as firmly Protestant as many others of the day, following Protestant beliefs in some cases while holding conservative opinions in others. In the end, he himself ended up in the middle of the religious spectrum, just like Anne and Elizabeth themselves. Latymer covers four spheres in reference to Anne: the regulation of the court and remuneration of servants, protection and promotion of good Protestants, poor relief, and educational patronage (Latymer and Dowling, 1990). If his only motive was religious propaganda, it would have been to his benefit to use other sources that portrayed Anne in the light he wanted; instead, he included only what he knew of Anne that would reflect well on her and her daughter and that would convince Elizabeth to expand and adapt her own religious views.

Wyatt claimed that it "might be easiere for me to say nothinge of anythinge of which I might reasonably doubt or have scruple for the evidence and truithe" but he nevertheless wrote it (Wyatt, 1968, p. 25). He was refuting the accusations of Anne's detractor, the Catholic Nicholas Saunder, and impressed upon his audience the reliability and validity of his sources, especially his witness testimony. In other words, he tried to present himself as an early historian in a more scholarly work. However, Wyatt and Latymer, and even Foxe, saw Anne as part of the 'good old days' before Queen Mary's Catholicism. The original break with 'corrupt' Rome and a champion of reformed religion, although they did exaggerate her efforts slightly. Foxe, for instance, asserted that even before her marriage, Anne had influenced the king towards the true (Protestant) religion, but it is significant that Foxe downplayed her role as mother to the current queen. Writing during Elizabeth's reign, one would expect to find more connection to flatter and promote Elizabeth through her mother. Instead of crediting Anne specifically with bringing reformed religion, he focuses on her personal qualities.

Foxe must have sincerely believed Anne to have been an evangelical because there was no reason to include her if he had not. Elizabeth had distanced herself from her mother's image

and legacy, unlike her half-sister Mary, who repealed the laws against her own mother so that Catherine of Aragon's marriage was valid and Mary a legitimate heir; instead of personally repealing her bastardy like Mary, Parliament said "she [Elizabeth] was rightly, and lineally, and lawfully descended," implying rather than stating her legitimacy outright (Brady, 1681, p. 33). Thus there would likely not have been any backlash from Elizabeth for not including her mother when Elizabeth herself did not have much to do with Anne, although she did favor her Boleyn relatives. The fact that Foxe cannot fully redeem Anne's reputation yet includes her anyway speaks strongly to what must be Anne's 'true' religious leanings, an evangelical promoting vernacular scripture.

Strype's work creates the image of Anne as a woman with many good qualities and a favorer of the reformed religion. It is worth noting that his work also vindicates Cardinal Wolsey by showing Wolsey's work in reforming religious institutions as centers of learning, something most Protestant historians would not mention let alone dwell on. His work seems to redeem both Wolsey and Anne, which is an unusual combination since they are often portrayed as enemies. This unusual treatment of Wolsey makes it seem as though Strype is truly working for a nonbiased view of those involved, including Anne.

Strype's portrayal of Anne reflects gender expectations because his Anne is more demure in several instances. She came when called to hear how the negotiations progressed and then went away when Henry told her to so that he could hear the news that might be troubling and break it to her in the best light. However, she could well have been eavesdropping beyond the door or not have gone as far as they thought she went. Although occasionally described by chroniclers as meek and demure, most historians would agree that these would not generally be the words to describe Anne. It does, however, make her into a better queen and wife in these portrayals, which may have been the point. Either way, it is important to consider this view of Anne to determine why she is so demure when given this news. It is not clear whether this demure reception was an act or whether she was working to behave as a model consort should.

We cannot reconstruct the past, but Strype's portrayal allows Anne to be redeemed from earlier, generally Catholic, polemics criticizing her for shrewish behavior. Presenting Anne as demure allows her to stand with other models of womanly domesticity, such as Catherine of Aragon, Jane Seymour, and numerous unnamed (but no less important and valid) women instead of with other disruptive and 'unwomanly' women. Model women and wives were demure and obeyed their husbands, bearing and raising children, taking care of the household, and pursuing womanly pursuits like needlepoint. She, for one, found ways to present her opinion and exert her influence as a woman during a time when women had less freedom to be themselves, but she was still able to keep a foothold in the masculine, Tudor political world while working to be a model consort.

Anne explored the new religious ideas, but also kept hold of earlier beliefs and actions, allowing her to cross religious lines as well as the lines in gender roles. She followed the religious debates and issues, but that did not mean she neglected other cultural, secular interests. Anne Boleyn is thus an example of how a person's self can have multiple aspects. Anne is someone who shows how stereotypes do not allow for the whole person to be seen, which is detrimental to that person whose less obvious aspects are left unseen. Neither entirely Protestant nor entirely Catholic, Anne Boleyn thus becomes an example of hybrid religious opinions, denoting that such views seldom follow one set path but are fluid and flexible.

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