

Martyr, Mother, Wife, and Queen:
Anne Boleyn's Afterlife in the Shaping of the
English Protestant Identity, 1558 – c. 1690

by

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Introduction

Immediately after her death, there was an attempt to minimize Anne Boleyn's place in history, going as far as destroying visual reminders of Henry VIII's second wife, yet starting in the Elizabethan period and continuing through the Exclusion Crisis over a century later Anne's historical memory was cultivated for use in the religious discourse between Protestants and Catholics. While certainly not equivalent to the symbolic used of Elizabeth that developed in the seventeenth century, Anne nevertheless became a type of Protestant hero and martyr whose good character was asserted unanimously and whose representation was applied to support England's schism from Rome, Elizabeth's rule, and the anti-Catholic sentiment that pervaded England following Elizabeth's ascension, a somewhat surprising afterlife for a woman executed for treason and adultery.

This thesis will seek to analyze both how and why this portrayal of Anne as a religious figure arose, and equally important, how it persisted and expanded over the next century. Exemplary figures were sought for and crafted from England's past in the construction of a historical narrative as one form of promoting a national English Protestant identity that sought to assert the indivisible nature of this doctrine from the Church and governance of the country. Anne's history became an increasingly significant part of this developing identity, particularly in moments when it came under attack by Catholic forces. As a result, as the English Protestant identity became more entrenched, so did Anne in its narrative, so that by the end of the seventeenth

century she had become a ‘stock’ figure of English history — one who not only needed to be referenced in regards especially to the early reformation but also a significant enough figure to demand discussion and a full relation of her chronology. By comparison, none of Henry later wives received anywhere near the same degree of attention; for the longest time Jane Seymour only received about three sentences. Analysis of Anne’s portrayal in this period (roughly 1558 to 1690) therefore offers reflection on discussions of the formation of national religious identities and how people and events come to be important to a specific narrative.

In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries alone, Anne has been an incredibly popular figure of both scholarly and fictional works, with numerous biographies, plays, and films dedicated to her in addition to works on Henry VIII or the theme of his Six Wives.¹ These works however, with the exception of some scholarly articles, have been centered on recreating Anne Boleyn’s life from the contemporary sources with little to no discussion of what occurred to her memory after her death. Joanna Denny does provide a chapter on Anne’s legacy from her death to the Elizabethan period, although this is more descriptive than analytical and focused on her daughter’s perception of her rather than her own contribution to the English narrative.² The histories and biographies in particular are concerned with contributing to the numerous debates surrounding her life, from the year she was born, to her guilt

¹ Some recent examples include Eric Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn: ‘the most happy’* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004); G.W. Bernard, *Anne Boleyn: Fatal Attractions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); Joanna Denny, *Anne Boleyn: a new life of England’s tragic queen* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2006); Alison Weir, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (NY: Grove Weidenfeld, 1992); David Starkey’s 2001 documentary *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*; and the highly popular Showtime TV show *The Tudors*

² Denny, *Anne Boleyn*, 318-327

regarding the charges she was killed for, to her role in the Reformation, searching for the truths.

This thesis, in contrast, cares very little for the actualities of her life, but rather how they were recorded and described across the decades. For instance, in his biography of Anne, G.W. Bernard argues that Anne had very little involvement in England's break from Rome; however from the perception of Anne after her death, she was granted great significance to the memory of the schism, enabling Protestants to defend and justify it.³ Her memory then was actively involved in continuing the Reformation. Additionally, studying her later reputation can explain how certain conceptions — like her involvement in the Reformation — arose.

The study of a figure's "afterlives" — how their memories are recreated in different contexts, or in another sense, a long-term historiography — over an extended period of time has been extensively done with regards to Elizabeth I, and more recently begun with Henry VIII, however such a discussion of historical afterlife and memory has rarely been performed with Anne Boleyn, particularly beyond the reign of Elizabeth.⁴ The best work so far regarding this period (i.e. the Elizabethan) is Maria Dowling's introduction to William Latymer's *Cronickille*.⁵

³ Bernard, *Anne Boleyn*

⁴ The term "afterlives" is taken from the title, *Henry VIII and his afterlives: literature, politics, and art* (Cambridge, UK ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2009) edited by Mark Rankin, Christopher Highley and John King. For the afterlives of Elizabeth see for example, Elizabeth H. Hagemand and Katherine Conway (ed.), *Resurrecting Elizabeth I in Seventeenth-Century England* (Madison: Farleigh Dickinson University, 2007)

⁵ Maria Dowling, introduction to "William Latymer's Cronickille of Anne Bulleyne," in *Camden Miscellany, Camden Fourth Series, Volume 39* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1990)

Study of these afterlives provides insights into how history was deployed in different periods as well as the forces with which the memory interacted to produce the narrative. In the case of Anne Boleyn, some of the strongest forces were the national religious identity discourse, along with reactions to changes in the figures connected to her, specifically Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, and a reaction to the counter Catholic discourse. The existence of this strong and vitriolic Catholic polemic on Anne, a complete inversion of the Protestant portrayal, is perhaps the strongest indicator that this religious use of Anne Boleyn mattered. This Catholic element, produced almost entirely outside of England, also set her discourse in a European as well as English context, again offering possible deeper insight into the inside and outside forces that shape a country's national narrative and identity.

This thesis will focus primarily on published or highly circulated histories, English and ecclesiastical, and biographies of related figures, such as Henry, Elizabeth, and Cardinal Wolsey, to determine what the standard (English Protestant) portrayal of Anne was in each of the three periods focused on between 1558 and c. 1690. Where available, these texts will be compared against forms of history designed for greater public consumption, particularly dramatic productions. Works that contributed a particularly enduring conception of Anne will be more heavily examined. Contrast to the contemporaneous Catholic narrative will also occur to highlight the differences in choice over how to portray Anne and the dialogue between the two polemics. Anne's memory greatly reflected more than most the irreconcilability of the two doctrines and the use of history as a battleground. Given

that for the periods examined Protestant monarchs sat on the English throne and anti-Catholicism became increasingly the norm, the works produced in England were all Protestant while the Catholic narrative, by Englishmen and foreigners, was printed from abroad.

Throughout the thesis, these two opinions will be continuously referred to in the broad terms as Protestant or Catholic. This is in no way to discount the diversity of beliefs under these umbrella terms or to suggest that everyone in England was Protestant or even that all Catholics accepted the “Catholic” polemic. Indeed, there was a substantial population of Catholics in England who placed their loyalty to the monarch over loyalty to the Pope. Rather, the use of these terms follows the contemporary polarized application determined by whether or not the doctrine adhered to Rome. Each side perceived itself as moral and the other as profoundly corrupt in a caricatured fashion. In England, whether Anglican or dissenter, they could agree on the tyranny of the popish religion and the necessity of Protestantism. It was in this worldview that Anne’s memory was shaped by both sides.

After a brief prologue chronicling the treatment of Anne for the first few decades after her death, the first chapter will focus on the revival and rehabilitation of her memory during the reign of Elizabeth. It was during this period that she began to be employed as a Protestant martyr, used to both legitimize her daughter’s claim on the throne and encourage a return to and continuation of religious reform. The second half of the chapter will cover the Catholic response and creation of the counter-

history of Anne. It is in this chapter as well that Nicholas Sander's *De Origine ac Progressu schismatis Anglicani* will be introduced, arguable to most influential and persisting characterization of Anne that will continue to appear throughout the chapters.

The second chapter focuses on the early Stuart period and the treatment of Anne after her immediate relevance, in the form of Elizabeth, had disappeared and when the impending threat of Catholicism was for a time diminished. It is period which demonstrates the success of the Elizabethan discourse, but also a divergence of significance between the scholarly histories and the public plays and the correlation between Henry VIII's depiction and Anne's.

Finally, the third chapter will look at the surge in Anne's significance and popularity after the Restoration in the face of the Catholic threat in the succession crisis, including the first time she is used as a protagonist and the relationship between her memory and that of Elizabeth. By the end of this period Anne had been cemented into a place of prominence in the historical narrative of England, which at that point became legally defined as a Protestant country.

A Synopsis of the Important Events from the Life of Anne Boleyn⁶

Anne was born to Thomas Boleyn, a diplomat, and Lady Elizabeth Howard c. 1500 and had a sister Mary and a brother George, later Viscount Rochford. In 1513

⁶ The synopsis below works from the currently accepted chronology, although it attempts to acknowledge those used by the histories of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

she stayed for a year at the court of the Archduchess Margaret of Austria in the Netherlands before going to accompany Henry VIII's younger sister Mary to France as one of her Ladies-in-Waiting upon the latter woman's marriage to the aged French King. When the Louis XII died in 1515 and Mary Tudor returned to England, Anne remained in France, serving Queen Claude, for seven more years. It was during this time, according to some histories, that she was exposed to the ideas of reform through her interaction with the Duchess of Alençon, Marguerite of Navarre. It was also during Anne's last years in France that her sister Mary, who had returned to England in 1519, became Henry's mistress.⁷

She returned to England around 1522 and was soon established at Henry's court, where she was praised for her wit, her grace, and her beauty. She was courted by Henry Percy, son to the Earl of Northumberland, with whom she entered into a secret engagement; however his father refused the match and Anne was sent home. In addition, from Cavendish, there is the view that King Henry, already attracted to Anne, ordered Cardinal Thomas Wolsey to end the match, resulting in Anne's hatred for the Cardinal⁸. This betrothal is often left out of the earlier chronicles. Then and now, the question of when Henry's affection for Anne began received many different answers; the timing was important, however, as it determined whether Henry had begun thinking of the divorce before or after his infatuation with Anne began.

In 1528 "The King's Great Matter" was underway, in which Henry VIII claimed that his marriage to his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, was invalid as she

⁷ This relationship was only mentioned in the Catholic accounts for the period discussed in this thesis (c.1536-c.1690).

⁸ George Cavendish, "The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey," in *Two Early Tudor Lives*, ed. Richard S. Sylvester and David P. Harding (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), 32-36

had previously been married, albeit briefly, to his older brother Prince Arthur and therefore they were transgressing sacred law that forbid marriage between a man and his brother's widow. He argued this was why the marriage had produced no surviving sons, with only the future queen Princess Mary surviving into adulthood. Henry had sent to Rome for an annulment, even though they had received a dispensation at the time of their marriage, twenty years ago. The Queen, meanwhile, fought against this action, employing her nephew, Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor to her cause.

The divorce dragged on for years, during which Henry had begun courting Anne Boleyn. Again, there is debate over the degree to which Anne resisted or encouraged this courtship and how involved she was in the divorce process. In 1532 the King created Anne Marchioness of Pembroke, took her with him to Calais to see the French king, and upon their return, married her in private in January of 1533 although the issue of the divorce had not yet been settled. At the same time that Anne became visibly pregnant, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, and reformer, Thomas Cranmer convened a special court which declared Henry's first marriage as void, and his second marriage as legal and valid. She was crowned Queen in June 1533 and in September gave birth to Elizabeth.⁹ In 1532 Parliament had passed the Supplication against the Ordinaries and Submission of the Clergy which recognized the king rather than the Pope as having supremacy over the English Church and in 1534 Parliament declared Henry the Supreme Head of the Church of England, resulting in the country's schism from Rome. Thomas More's refusal to swear an oath recognizing

⁹ Catherine meanwhile became the Dowager Princess, recognized only as Prince Arthur's widow; however, she continued to view herself as Queen until her death.

this title resulted in his trial and execution. Meanwhile Henry bastardized Mary and replaced her with Elizabeth in the line of Succession.

In January 1536 Catherine of Aragon died and soon after Anne miscarried, invoking the king's displeasure and signaling the start of trouble. By this time, Henry's affections had transferred to Jane Seymour, and with Catherine dead he could remarry without concern that any children could be regarded as illegitimate. Depending on the text, at this time he either began to grow suspicious of Anne, to look for suspicious behavior, or was presented with rumors of her conduct. Following now the chronology of the histories, during a May Day tournament in Greenwich the King grew angry and stormed off, later issuing arrests for Mark Smeaton, Henry Norris, George Boleyn, and others, followed by a warrant for Anne's arrest the next day.¹⁰ Anne was charged with having carnal relations with the above men, and therefore of incest with her brother, and of committing treason against the King by discussing his death with some of the men. The men were tried first and convicted before Anne was condemned as well. All four men were beheaded on Tower Hill on May 17th. Two days later Anne was also beheaded, although it took place inside the Tower and by a swordsman from Calais. Her marriage to Henry was annulled and Elizabeth declared illegitimate.

Henry VIII would have four more wives: Jane Seymour, who died after giving birth to the future Edward VI; Anne of Cleves, a foreign princess whose marriage to the king was annulled; Katherine Howard, a relation of Anne Boleyn's who was also beheaded for adultery; and finally Katherine Parr, who outlived him.

¹⁰ The other men arrested and tried were William Brereton and Francis Weston. I leave them off only because the three listed above are the ones focused on by the narratives

Prologue: Gossip after the Execution: 1536-1558

In the aftermath of Anne Boleyn's execution, she faded into the background of public conversation, becoming in England a topic to be avoided, especially amidst the felicitous celebration of Henry VIII's marriage to Anne's former lady-in-waiting, Jane Seymour. There were a few who denounced Henry's actions, such as Thomas Wyatt, who had been imprisoned after Anne's trial for their association. When released, he wrote poems lamenting the innocent deaths of her alleged co-conspirators; he did not defend Anne, however, whose fate was too dangerous to debate.¹¹ Others outside of the country also viewed the circumstances of the queen's execution with skepticism, perceiving it as a means to reunite with Rome or as the King's reaction to boredom with her.¹² Within England, in public and at court, however, her existence was erased, badges torn down and renderings destroyed in an attempt to remove her from the visible history.¹³

This disregarding of Anne took place in writing as well, with her place and role being minimized as much as possible. Evasion of discussion on the executed queen held strong through the remainder of Henry VIII's life — in order to avoid the king's displeasure — as he wanted to forget that the relationship had ever existed. This hesitation of writing on Anne continued through Edward VI's reign, whether

¹¹ Joanna Denny, *Anne Boleyn: a new life of England's tragic queen* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2006), 319

¹² *Ibid*, 321

¹³ They were so successful at this systematic destruction of the physical reminders (besides Elizabeth) of Henry and Anne's marriage that only one set of their intertwined initials survived at Hampton Court Palace.

from caution towards a dangerous subject or a dislike of the subject herself. That is not to say that opinions and gossip did not circulate around the court and beyond, casting Anne as the harlot, — a reputation that was still present at Elizabeth’s ascension — however historical commentary was scarce. Meanwhile those who had and continued to support the queen found the atmosphere too dangerous to publish their, at the time, dissenting views.

There are, however, still some texts from the period that ventured to mention her in these first few decades following her death, although the majority of them were not circulated until after Henry’s passing. The main work published within Henry’s lifetime, a French history by Lancelot de Carles focusing on the Anne’s time as queen, for instance, was not published in England. Printed for distribution in 1545, *Histoire de Anne Boleyn Jadis Royne d’Angletterre* was actually finished on 2 June 1536, only a fortnight after Anne’s death, and therefore represents the earliest biography written on her. In the style of a tragedy, Carles constructed his narrative in verse and presented numerous details, such as how painful Elizabeth’s birth was.¹⁴

Eric Ives, in his biography of Anne, argues that Carles’ narrative was based on the version issued by the English Crown “for foreign consumption,” and that Carles’ account therefore was “the government line in translation.”¹⁵ Whether deriving the story from this or his own investigations, Carles proceeds without apparent condemnation and without the religious tone that pervaded the histories during

¹⁴ Maria Dowling, introduction to “William Latymer’s Cronickille of Anne Bulleyne,” in *Camden Miscellany, Camden Fourth Series, Volume 39* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1990), 37

¹⁵ Eric Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn: ‘the most happy’* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2004), 60-61

Elizabeth's reign and after.¹⁶ According to Maria Dowling, in her analysis of a later tribute to Anne, Carles portrays Anne as "the victim of hubris and of the wheel of fortune. Anne, he says, was basically good and virtuous, but ambition turned her head; as the wheel revolved she reached the height of triumph, only to be flung down again."¹⁷ Indeed, the account compliments her bearing at her trial, but also notes her involvement in the 'game of courtly love.'¹⁸ The detached tone of the French narrative does not give any extra prominence to Anne as a figure, but rather presents the events as an interesting tragedy.

This same neutrality is found in Edward Halls' *The Vnion of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lanceaster and Yorke* (popularly called *Hall's Chronicle*), published in 1548 one year after Henry VIII's death; it is one of the earliest histories to discuss Anne.¹⁹ Aside from extensive descriptions of Anne's coronation, in which Hall was involved, and Elizabeth's christening, the anecdotes are few and not always flattering. For instance, he includes the story of Anne donning a yellow dress in place of mourning garb after hearing of Catherine of Aragon's death.²⁰ In general, he presents the facts of her life as Henry's consort from her trip to Calais through her trial, her condemnation for high treason, execution by sword, and the acts of Parliament nullifying her marriage. As with Carles and later rehabilitated accounts of Anne, he also quotes her full scaffold speech. Notwithstanding remarks indicating distaste for Catholicism (appropriate under Edward VI's reign) — such as referring to

¹⁶ Dowling, "William Latymer's Cronickille," 37

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 37

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 37

¹⁹ Edward Hall, *Hall's Chronicle (The Vnion of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lanceaster and Yorke... 1548)* (London: printed for J. Johnson, 1809).

²⁰ *Ibid*, 818

the prophetess Maid of Kent, as a “holy Hypocrite” — Hall’s narrative strives to maintain neutrality, introducing Anne amidst differing contemporary opinions on her marriage to Henry.²¹

Hall’s Chronicle served as a major source for many later histories, among them John Foxe’s famous *Book of Martyrs* and Shakespeare’s main reference, *Holinshed’s Chronicles*. The long descriptive passages particularly are lifted from Edward Hall’s notes. This 1548 edition, produced one year after Hall’s death, however was a continuation of his first edition in 1542, which ended its narrative in 1532 and contained only a few isolated sentences on Anne. The successive years in the 1548 edition were compiled posthumously from Hall’s notes and drafts and therefore it is first in this edition, after Henry’s death, that Anne’s time as queen in chronicled. Additionally, with a stated purpose of recording Henry VIII’s triumphant reign, Ives argues that Edward Hall might have intended to “gloss over Anne’s marriage as something on which ‘the king was not well counseled.’ Anything else would be quite out of character for Hall’s hero king.”²² In the early years when Henry’s memory was still being determined, Anne Boleyn was a black mark on glorious representations of the king, and with no immediate need to discuss her, it was simple enough to banish her to the background. Still, the editor of the 1548 edition chose to describe Anne, while surprisingly passing over Edward’s mother, Jane Seymour, without much fanfare. Perhaps it was the dramatic end to Anne’s story that encouraged her inclusion more so than the mother of Henry’s heir.

²¹ Ibid, 796 – He indicates that some thought Henry should wait for the first marriage to be invalidated, others that it was godly and honorable and others still warning that it would bring the wrath of the Pope and Holy Roman Emperor, Catherine’s newpew.

²² Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn*, 60

With the ascension to the throne of Mary, Henry VIII's first daughter, the works featuring Anne Boleyn took on a more negative tone towards the late queen. Her portrayal in these accounts assumes the role of the seductress and, to a certain extent, the evil counselor, and she uses these qualities to settle grudges or flaunt her influence. The Anne in Polydore Vergil's *Anglica Historia*, published in 1555, for instance, causes Henry to abandon Catherine of Aragon and then delights in her matrimonial rival's death.²³ The number of sentences concerning Anne in these works is still relatively small, although she is portrayed as having had great influence over tragic—from the authors' perspectives—events. According to the biographies of Cardinal Wolsey and Thomas More, written by those close to them, both men's deaths resulted from Anne's manipulation of Henry.

George Cavendish, Wolsey's gentleman-usher and later biographer, claimed that Anne swore a grudge against the Cardinal after he (ordered unbeknownst to her by the already amorous king) caused the rupture of her secret betrothal to Henry Percy, recording her declaration "that if it lay ever in her power she would work the Cardinal as much displeas (as she did indeed after)."²⁴ He continues in his narrative, describing how Anne, once establishing herself, worked to turn the king against Wolsey, who as a result lost favor and support. Near the end Cavendish applauds his own escape from the "serpentine enemy about the king," that "night crow" Anne, cautioning that he could have just as easily received the king's indignation as his

²³ Polydore Vergil, *Anglica Historia (1555)*, edited by Dana F. Sutton (University of Birmingham Philological Museum, 2010), 60-62

²⁴ Cavendish, "The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey," 36

master had.²⁵ Similarly, Anne is accused of bringing about Thomas More's demise by driving Henry through "her importunate clamor" to force the Oath of Supremacy upon More.²⁶ Though he makes Wolsey the ultimate villain, William Roper, More's son-in-law, nonetheless shares in Cavendish's portrayal of a haughty and badgering Anne who held the power to sour Henry's affection towards his previous favorites. However, these texts do not provide information on Anne outside of her connection to the main subjects; her trial and fate are never mentioned.

Other accounts that do mention her death frame it in terms of her factual guilt; "Anne was caught in adultery and immediately beheaded, together with her lovers."²⁷ She is an adulteress, besmirched by her lack of chastity and sexual liaisons, and who received a fitting end. In the 1550s, Thomas Wyatt was added to her list of consorts, including in Nicholas Harpsfield's *Treatise on the Pretended Divorce* and *Cronico del Rey Enrico Otavo de Inglaterra* by an anonymous Spanish source.²⁸ In the *Pretended divorce*, Wyatt informs the king of this liaison, which occurred before Henry's courtship, and cautions him against marriage, but the king pays him no mind.²⁹ Harpsfield continues this sexual condemnation describing the charges against her, including incest, and compares her actions towards Wolsey and More to those of Salome, Herod's dancing niece who demanded the head of John the Baptist (Henry in

²⁵ Ibid, 141

²⁶ William Roper, "The Life of Sir Thomas More," in *Two Early Tudor Lives* ed. Richard S. Sylvester and David P. Harding (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), 238

²⁷ Vergil, *Anglica Historia*, 62

²⁸ Retha M. Warnicke, "The Eternal Triangle and Court Politics: Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn and Sire Thomas Wyatt," *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 4 (Winter, 1986), 575

²⁹ Nicholas Harpsfield, *A treatise on the pretended divorce between Henry VIII and Catharine of Aragon*, ed. Nicholas Pocock (London, 1878), 253

return is framed as Herod.)³⁰ Of all the texts from her death to Elizabeth's ascension, Nicholas Harpsfield's manuscript (it was not published until 1878) is the most venomous towards Anne.

As Retha Warnicke argues, these writers sought to discredit the Reformation through underlining Henry's foolishness at throwing over his good wife Catherine (and Rome) for the impure Anne.³¹ Certainly, this move linked the religious changes with motivations of lust, but also made Henry a figure under the control of those around him. Pointing out the flaws in Anne would also have further emphasized the virtues of Catherine and her victimization. However, while Anne serves this role, the attacks against her are nevertheless restrained, particularly in comparison to Thomas Cranmer and Wolsey (Cavendish's biography excluded). Indeed, Harpsfield refers explicitly to these two men as "the principal devisers and workers of the said unhappy divorce" before describing somewhat gleefully "what evil success happened to them."³² While Wolsey is the ambitious and greedy man responsible for Henry's separation from Catherine, Cranmer is the heretical figure who secured the marriage to Anne and the break with Rome. Anne's role is dwarfed by the villainy of these two men.

In addition, the rhetoric on Anne is contained to her illegitimacy as Henry's wife and poor character. This illegitimacy though did strengthen Mary's own claim to legitimacy by asserting the validity of her own parents' marriage. While the scandalous marriage is a smear on the Reformation, Anne is not tied in these works to

³⁰ Ibid, 254-5

³¹ Warnicke, "The Eternal Triangle and Court Politics," 575

³² Harpsfield, *Pretended divorce*, 288

the larger religious change. Her motivations for marriage are little discussed, but she is not the figure encouraging Henry towards reform. Neither is she associated with Cranmer's rise to Archbishop of Canterbury, aside from a connection through her father. Her grudge against Wolsey has nothing to do with the Cardinal's relation, but rather out of feminine revenge for a broken engagement. Nor do the complaints made against Anne seem to involve an implicit political statement about the legibility of Henry and Anne's daughter Elizabeth as Mary's heir. They might not have felt a need to do this with Elizabeth's apparent conformity to Catholicism and a recognition that Henry's will that named Elizabeth an heir was the same that facilitated Mary's ascent.

Although this vilification of Anne Boleyn would most likely have pleased Mary, who blamed the former for all her own misfortunes as well as the advancements of the reformation, it is unlikely that this portrayal of Anne derived from pleasing the new queen.³³ Rather, with Mary's ascent, Catholic writers, those who had suffered under Henry, or those who disagreed with his reform, felt the political climate was safe enough to produce their histories and biographies.³⁴ The 1555 publication of Polydore Vergil's *Anglica Historia* was the third edition of his history, but it was the first to extend the narrative beyond Henry VII's death in 1509 continuing it to 1537. Although he had finished this revision earlier, he held off on its

³³ Denny, *Anne Boleyn*, 321

³⁴ Many of these writers in fact had personal connections to the figures around the divorce and either had known Anne Boleyn or heard directly about her. Cavendish most certainly had known Anne, and Roper would have heard of her through Thomas More. Additionally, Nicholas Harpsfield had close ties to the More family, particularly to Roper. Polydore Vergil, meanwhile, had served as court historian to both Henry VIII and his father.

publication until 1555 due to the political climate.³⁵ With Catholicism restored, it was safer to circulate in England criticisms of the schism.

The sometimes scathing but almost dismissive tone directed towards Anne probably derived in large part from a feeling that her story did not possess relevance anymore. After all, Mary now sat on the throne and had returned England to the fold of Rome. With her marriage in 1556, there were probably hopes of an heir, and with Elizabeth's attendance of mass the Reformation's grip on the throne might have appeared as a thing of the past.³⁶ Anne is mentioned, and the statements concerning her are not flattering, but she is a passing figure in the narratives with little personal relevance to the present; her relationship to Elizabeth, for example, is not stressed. The executed queen, therefore, is a dramatic figure from a dark part of history, one who can be criticized, but then safely set aside without further discussion. While, when discussed, her death is given a providential reading, the brevity of her time as queen is stressed.

By the end of the Marian period, Anne Boleyn had a dark personality as an adulterer who had a role in the fall of two powerful men. She is presented as an unsuitable candidate for Queen who received the fate that she deserved. Warnicke describes Harpsfield and the anonymous Spanish chronicler as capturing "the state of gossip" in England about Henry and Anne; this description can most likely be

³⁵ Denys Hay, *Polydore Vergil: Renaissance Historian and Man of Letters* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 82-3

³⁶ Henry M. Shires, "The Conflict between Queen Elizabeth and Roman Catholicism," *Church History*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (December, 1947), 221

extended to the mentions of Anne in the other accounts from this period as well.³⁷ Especially with Catherine of Aragon's daughter on the throne, it would have been hard to resist the urge to defame the woman that replaced current Queen's mother. In this sense as well, Anne served as a foil to the goodliness of Catherine. These negative criticisms and remarks would serve as the roots of the polarized and vitriolic Catholic campaign against Anne that would emerge later in the century as a response to a rehabilitation of her character by Protestants.

At this point, however, these works were still just individual works not tied to a larger campaign or rhetoric. Most of these works, aside from Vergil's history, were still in manuscript form (Harpsfield's treatise would not be published until 1878), and therefore did not benefit from large circulation. When information was spread, as with Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey*, it was often through copied out excerpts; however even this distribution did not occur on a larger scale until the Elizabethan period. These works, since her death, containing Anne serve as the first accounts of her and the divorce. They have not yet been placed into the debate with each other. Mary's death and the ascension of Elizabeth would push Anne into the spotlight as the history of the divorce and break with Rome became a forum to debate the religious and political policies concerning England's Church and monarch.

³⁷ Warnicke, "The Eternal Triangle and Court Politics," 574-6

Chapter 1

Heretical Temptress and Pious Martyr: The Two Faces of Anne Boleyn in the Elizabethan Period (1559-1603)

Introduction

During the Elizabethan era, two diametrically opposed historical representations of Anne Boleyn emerged in political and religious discourse, each becoming the dominant form of her story to the party that introduced it. These conflicting sides emerged around disputes over Queen Elizabeth's legitimacy and the direction the Church in England should take, whether towards Catholicism or further reform. On the one side were those Englishmen who stood in fervent support of both Henry VIII's youngest daughter and a continuation of the Reformation that Henry had begun: they sought to defend Elizabeth's claim to the throne and encourage her to become the savior of the Protestants. On the other side were the English Catholic recusants in exile who took on the duty of removing Elizabeth from the throne on the grounds of her bastardy and heresy with the ultimate hope of restoring Catholicism to the realm.

The memory of Anne Boleyn became a powerful tool in these debates; she was both the mother of the current Queen and a key figure at the initiation of England's schism from Rome. In a time when both the Queen's and Church's pedigree were being determined, Elizabeth was often considered against her parents' reputations, raising the specter of their memories in the English and ecclesiastical

histories produced in the late sixteenth century. Through Anne, the sides could not only affirm Elizabeth's legitimacy or illegitimacy, but also inform the original motivations of the schism, either from "the king's unlawful lust" for the unfit Anne – as it was depicted by the Catholic recusants, – or from his crisis of conscience leading to a departure from a blasphemous marriage and a corrupt Papacy in favor of the goodly Anne and reform.³⁸

Though having roots in previous accounts, the two standard Elizabethan views on Anne Boleyn became intensely polarized. The pro-Anne Boleyn faction would come to portray Anne as the embodiment of the goodly, pious Queen: well-read in Scripture, virtuous, charitable and, in this case, an advocate for all reformers. They credited her in many cases with initiating the break with Rome and prompting the appointment of key reformists, such as Thomas Cranmer, during Henry's reign. In these histories, she is a queen who can scarcely do anything wrong. They gloss over her fall from grace and death, and there is little explicit reference to charges of adultery and treason. Instead, when her fall is discussed, she becomes an example of virtue wrongly accused and condemned; in essence she is portrayed as a protestant martyr, with the focus on her acceptance of death, rather than its causes.³⁹ The most popular and influential of these works was John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments of these Latter and Perillous Days, Touching Matters of the Church*, popularly referred to as Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*.

³⁸ Maria Dowling, introduction to "William Latymer's Cronickille of Anne Bulleyne," by William Latymer, in *Camden Miscellany, Camden Fourth Series, Volume 39* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1990), 32

³⁹ It was popular to use martyrs to teach 'the art of dying well in the Christian faith.' This theme was especially apparent in the martyrologies of John Foxe Warren W. Wooden, *John Foxe* (Twayne Publishers: Boston, 1983), 43

These texts encounter a major stumbling block though in the form of Henry VIII's historical reputation. There is a tension built into the telling of Henry and Anne's combined history in the Protestant or Pro-Elizabethan context: in promoting Anne there is an implicit condemnation of the King. In other words, in presenting Anne as a gracious, good queen, part of the fault for her tragic end must fall onto Henry. The fault is further compounded by Henry's hasty marriage to Jane Seymour soon after Anne's execution. However, Elizabeth's royal blood stemmed from her father, and it was only through his will that she inherited the throne.⁴⁰ Elizabeth took great strides to frame herself against the imperial backdrop of her father, who she held in high esteem. Therefore, a good presentation of Henry VIII was equally if not more crucial to Elizabeth's supporters, preventing him from being the antagonist to Anne Boleyn.

In opposition to the 'Protestant' accounts, the Catholic accounts, which emerged later in the century, depict this stage of Henry VIII's reign as one in which corruption, lust, and wickedness caused the King to turn his back on Rome and the true faith. Building off of Cavendish's and Roper's Anne, who asserts an ill-got influence over Henry and schemes to achieve her desires, the Catholic version of Anne is "full of pride, ambition, envy and impurity."⁴¹ Attributing to her a history of sexual promiscuity, these authors had no hesitation or doubt in the pronouncement of her guilt. Nicholas Sander's famous account, *De Origine ac Progressu schismatis*

⁴⁰ The Second Succession Act initially declared Elizabeth illegitimate and removed her from succession in 1536, and while the 1543 Act of Succession restored both her and Mary to the line of inheritance, both sisters still remained bastards – the dissolution of Henry's marriages with their mothers remained intact.

⁴¹ Nicholas Sander, *Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism*, trans. David Lewis (London: Burns and Oates, 1877), 25

Anglicani, initiated in large part this new vitriolic approach to Anne Boleyn, and his book, — originally published in 1585 — became the originator of several new accusations against Elizabeth’s infamous mother and the standard Catholic source on the Henrician Reformation for the succeeding centuries.⁴²

Ascension of a New Queen

On 17 November 1558, Mary I died, and Elizabeth, the last living child of Henry VIII and only child of Anne Boleyn, ascended to the throne at the age of twenty-five. Upon her succession a series of letters and treatises, dedicated to Elizabeth, were drafted by those who had personally known Anne during her time at court and as Queen. Coming from courtiers and those in Anne’s household, they proposed to present Elizabeth with anecdotes and memories of the mother she had never known. With Elizabeth on the throne, for the first time since Anne’s death the atmosphere seemed secure enough to openly proclaim positive stories of Henry’s second wife. Certainly anecdotes and praise for Anne, as the mother of the new Queen, became one form of compliment to Elizabeth.⁴³

In 1559, the Scottish theologian Alexander Alesius sent a letter to the young Queen recalling his memories of her mother from court and the circumstances of her

⁴² Christopher Highley, ““A Pestilent and Seditious Book”: Nicholas Sander’s *Schismatis Anglicani* and Catholic Histories of the Reformation,” *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 68, Nos. 1&2 (March, 2005), 151, 171

⁴³ John N. King, “The Godly Woman in Elizabethan Iconography,” *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 38, No.1 (Spring, 1985), 72.

fall.⁴⁴ While this letter was not a public statement, this and documents like it still demonstrated a concentrated effort to revive Anne. He narrates an exchange he claims to have seen in which Anne pleaded with the King while cradling the infant Elizabeth in her arms, illustrating the closeness of the mother to her child.⁴⁵ In part these works served to provide Elizabeth with testimonials of the mother she had never known, to create a bond between the two, and to portray a figure to be celebrated rather than condemned. She is the central figure in these letters and treatise, not just a figure in Henry's reign.

These personal positive reports served another function, that of encouraging Elizabeth to direct her religious policy towards completing the Reformation that had begun in 1534. At the time of her accession there were some doubts concerning where Elizabeth's religious loyalties resided, and after successive reigns of dramatically shifting policies towards faith, from Edward's ardent Protestantism to Mary's zealous Catholicism, people wondered what direction the new Queen would lead them in next.⁴⁶ Indeed, despite frictions with her staunchly Catholic elder sister, Elizabeth had still been seen to attend mass under Mary's reign, and for the first few weeks of her rule she still referred to herself in Catholic terms.⁴⁷ However, within her first year on the throne, Elizabeth swiftly reinstated England's separation from Rome and began laying out her plans for the Church with a new Act of Supremacy and the Act of Uniformity, both passed in 1559. The Act of Supremacy reinstated Henry

⁴⁴ Dowling, introduction to "William Latymer's Cronickille," 38

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 39

⁴⁶ Shires, "The Conflict between Queen Elizabeth and Roman Catholicism," 221

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 221

VIII's original separation from Rome while the Act of Uniformity established the Book of Common Prayer and began settling the Protestant direction of the Church.⁴⁸

One of the ways the early works on Anne sought to influence Elizabeth was by presenting her with a queenly exemplar through which the writers could advise the new ruler. This was one of William Latymer's motivations in drawing up his *A briefe treatise or cronickille of the moste vertuous ladye Anne Bulleyne late quene of England*, dedicated to Elizabeth.⁴⁹ Calling on the memory of the Queen's mother, Latymer — Anne's former chaplain — hoped to demonstrate the actions of a goodly queen and pay tribute to the other half of Elizabeth's lineage. In the dedication, he sets out his hopeful religious expectations for the new Queen, ending, "and fynaly to maytayne Christes true pure and syncere religion, to the honour of your crowne."⁵⁰ This 'true pure and syncere religion' is the one demonstrated and encouraged by Anne through his account.

Latymer extends the exemplar of Anne even further, transforming her into a ruling monarch, "to beare also the titill and name of a prince."⁵¹ He has Anne addressing councils, issuing punishments and ordering the distribution of prayer books. In presenting Anne as a prince, Latymer is able to use Anne as an example to Elizabeth in the sovereign realm as well. Nor was Latymer the only one to

⁴⁸ George Prothero. *Select Statutes and Other Constitutional Documents Illustrative of the Reigns of Elizabeth and James I* (Whitefish, Mont: Kessinger Publishing, 2005 (c 1894)), 1-20.

⁴⁹ It is unknown, however, if the work was ever presented to her. While only a working copy survives, Latymer received placement as one of Elizabeth's chaplains along with having his previous preferments restored, indicating a show of favor.

Dowling, introduction to "William Latymer's Cronickille," 27-8

⁵⁰ Latymer, "William Latymer's Cronickille of Anne Bulleyne," in *Camden Miscellany, Camden Fourth Series, Volume 39* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1990), 46

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 48

compliment Anne Boleyn in this fashion; she is likewise styled in Ulpian Fulwell's ballad history on Henry VII (1575) as "Prince Queen Anne."⁵² The title of 'prince' amplifies her memory beyond that of reality, overtaking Henry, elevating Anne, and transforming her into Elizabeth's glorious ancestor. Latymer's characterization of Anne is perhaps the most skewed and exaggerated portrayal of her, even going so far as to remove any flirtatious behavior from her conduct, and present her as a somber and pious ruler. This Anne was a sharp contrast already to the previous decades' remembrances.

Although Latymer's Anne was uncharacteristically powerful, a rehabilitation of her persona was required with Elizabeth on the throne. Although the strong anti-Elizabeth Catholic polemic would not start until later in Elizabeth's reign, Anne's reputation was still not in good-standing. This made simply ignoring Anne Boleyn an illogical choice, for only the negative images would remain. In addition, whether or not Anne was Henry's legal wife had immediate consequences on Elizabeth's standing. To this end, it was far wiser for pro-Elizabethans to shape Anne's memory on their own terms. Elizabeth herself recognized this, and took pains to visibly demonstrate the validity of her parents' marriage and reaffirm her place on the throne. At her coronation, among the parade pageants was a depiction of her royal grandparents, Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, followed by one of her own parents Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, which recognized Anne as Henry's legitimate wife and

⁵² Ulpian Fulwell, "An Epitaph on the death of *Queene Anne Bullayne*," *The Flower of Fame (1575)*, 1586 edition, London. Chadwyck.com

queen.⁵³ Anne was depicted with a crown and gilt scepter, marks of queenship. An effigy of Elizabeth came next, the sequence demonstrating her descent and legitimacy.⁵⁴

Elizabeth also took other legal actions involving Anne to bolster her legitimacy. Following the Acts of Supremacy and Uniformity, the third act of Elizabeth's reign recognized her claim to the throne, describing her as "rightly, lineally and lawfully descended and come of the blood royal."⁵⁵ The strong terms seem not only to refer to Henry's will, but also to a lawful marriage. Far more interesting of Elizabethan Acts, however, is one from the 1558-9 session of Parliament, entitled, *An Acte wherby the Quenes Highnes is restored in bloode to the late Quene Anne her Highnes Mother.*⁵⁶ The purpose of the Act was to recognize Elizabeth as Anne's child, naming her as the successor to any inheritance through her maternal family. With most of the family holdings already passed to other hands — Anne's childhood home, Hever Castle, for instance had become Henry's property before he gifted it to Anne of Cleves, — this willing link to her mother's line shows an acceptance, and not rejection, of her mother's side. In addition, it contains the phrase, "every Act, Record, Sentence, Matter or Writing whatsoever as is or shall be herunto contrary or repugnant, shall be from henceforth clearly and utterly void, and of no Effect," seeming to undo the attainder against Anne and the annulment of the

⁵³ Chris Skidmore, *Death and the Virgin Queen: Elizabeth I and the Dark Scandal that Rocked the Throne* (New York, NY: St. Martin's Press, 2011), 102

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 102

⁵⁵ Prothero. *Select Statues and Other Constitutional Documents*, 21

⁵⁶ John Strype, *Annals of the Reformation and establishment of religion, and other various occurrences in the Church of England, during the first twelve years of Queen Elizabeth's happy reign, Volume 1* (London: T. Edlin, 1725), 7

marriage.⁵⁷ There is a debate over the extent to which Elizabeth sought to associate with her mother as she never commented publically on her mother or on her innocence.⁵⁸ Some however point out not only the coronation pageant, but also Elizabeth's use of both her mother's motto — *Semper Eadem*, always the same — and falcon badge, along with the Queen's possession of a ring containing portraits of herself and Anne.⁵⁹ In total, however, it was not through her daughter's actions that Anne Boleyn was raised to prominence and engaged as a political and religious tool, but rather through those of the Protestant writers.

Protestant Praise & John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*

On 20 March 1563, the first edition of John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments of these Latter and Perillous Days, Touching Matters of the Church* was published in England by John Daye.⁶⁰ It was dedicated to Elizabeth, who was framed as one of the history's main heroines, as well as Emperor and redeemer of the Church.⁶¹ The author was an active reformist who had gone into exile after losing his tutoring position during Mary's reign, and while abroad, he had begun constructing a Protestant martyrology. His *Acts and Monuments* of 1563 was an expansion of this early work,—finished in 1559—*Rerum in Ecclesia*, which he nearly tripled in size,

⁵⁷ Ibid, 7

⁵⁸ Eric Ives just states that no vindication of Anne was ever published – Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn*, 50

⁵⁹ Susan Doran, *Queen Elizabeth I (The British Library Historic Lives)* (NY: NYU Press, 2003), 15; Denny, *Anne Boleyn*, 325-6

Denny, *Anne Boleyn*, 325

⁶⁰ Warren W. Wooden, *John Foxe* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1983), 11

⁶¹ Woodblock placing Elizabeth within the letter C for Constantine, establishing a link between the religious emperors.

spanning the history of the English church and anti-Catholic protest from the year 1000.⁶² He had spent his time abroad researching, gathering accounts of Protestant martyrs and also drew on previous English chronicles. His “respect for documentary evidence and accurate reproduction of primary texts and sources” was still novel in the period.⁶³ Unlike the earlier Latin manuscript, Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments* was deliberately presented in English, enabling wider spread of his work; it was a book designed for consumption by the English public.⁶⁴

The book was an immediate success, garnering the popular name ‘Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*,’ and Foxe himself received a prebend on the Queen’s instruction.⁶⁵ An expanded two volume second edition, also in English, followed in 1570, and contained additional woodcuts and a new dedication to the queen. It was this expanded work that became so famous and intertwined with the Church’s history that in 1571, a canon law was issued to install a copy of the *Book of Martyrs* into all churches and the homes of the Church dignitaries.⁶⁶ Two more official editions would be released during Foxe’s lifetime, in 1576 and 1583, although there were limited changes to the sections concerning Anne Boleyn.⁶⁷ The effects of its popularity were significant in England. The book was known to most subjects, and Sir Francis Drake even took a copy on his voyages.⁶⁸ Foxe’s work became a source for numerous other

⁶² Ibid, 5-12

⁶³ Ibid, 23

⁶⁴ Ibid, 11; Felicity Heal, “Appropriating History: Catholic and Protestant Polemics and the National Mix,” in *The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, ed. by Paulina Kewes (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 2006), 125

⁶⁵ Wooden, *John Foxe*, 10, 17

⁶⁶ Ibid, 13

⁶⁷ The sections on Anne Boleyn, for example, remained mostly equivalent between the 1570 and later editions.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 41

English histories, including Holinshed's Chronicle, the main source of William Shakespeare. Foxe himself was elevated to a celebrated and almost mythic status, and became identified as the main figure of the Protestant presentation of history. This popularity and accessibility also served to make the *Book of Martyrs* the standard English Protestant narrative, particularly concerning the origins of the reformed Church of England.

In *The Acts and Monuments*, Foxe introduces Anne in the midst of his chronicle on Henry VIII's divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Aragon. He depicts Henry as grappling with his conscience, believing that his union with his brother's widow defies God's law and that the marriage must be repealed. Only after this discussion is Anne introduced, thereby eliminating her as the cause of the divorce and establishing the realm as one that suffered from an unsanctified marriage and papal corruption. Framed against the context, Anne becomes the method through which these sins will be corrected. Henry's marriage to Anne enables "a prosperous and happy change for vs, beyng diuorced from the foresaid Princesse [Catherine] and also from the Pope both at one tyme."⁶⁹ In the 1563 edition, her role as an agent of deliverance from Rome begins even before her marriage, with Foxe asserting, "[the Pope's] whole power and authority began vtterlye to be abolished, by the reason and occasion of the most vertuous and noble Lady, Anne Bullen, who was not yet married to the king. Howbeit in great fauor, by whose godly meanes and moste vertuous

⁶⁹ John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (1570 edition) (Sheffield: HRI Online Publications, 2011), 1237

councill, the kynges minde was daiely inclined better and better.”⁷⁰ Anne here is a religious councilor and advisor to the king, introducing him to the concepts of reform.

Anne is frequently described throughout *The Acts and Monuments* as actively working on behalf of the reformist cause. She is “a speciall comforter & aider of all professors of Christes Gospell, as well of the learned, as the vnlearned,” “maintained many learned men in Cambrige,” and brought several others into favor with the king.⁷¹ In this same passage, Foxe goes on to describe her numerous works of charity, both as Queen and before, including the giving of weekly alms of coin and cloth along with extra donations to the poor. Another anecdote refers to a small purse she always carried to disperse coins to any needy person that she encountered.⁷² Additionally, Anne reinforces ‘vertuousness’ amongst her ladies, so that “netiher was there sene any idleness then amongst them, nor any leasure to folowe” more scandalous pastimes.⁷³ Foxe offers almost no background information and little detail on other aspects of Anne’s life throughout these passages, instead maintaining her personage throughout the text in terms of her religious behavior and actions.

The acts of alms giving and overseeing courtly virtue were similarly expressed throughout Latymer’s *Cronickille*, crediting to Anne the virtues of charity and diligence in her steadfast donations to the poor, along with chastity and temperance in the conduct of the court and herself. These writings fit into the Protestant construct of the archetypal godly woman who acted as “embodiments of

⁷⁰ John Foxe, *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online* or *TAMO* (1563 edition) (Sheffield: HRI Online Publications, 2011), 564

⁷¹ Foxe, *TAMO* (1563), 564; Foxe, *TAMO* (1570), 1237

⁷² Foxe, *TAMO* (1570), 1237

⁷³ *Ibid*, 1237

pious intellectuality and divine wisdom.”⁷⁴ These were learned women who promoted the reform cause, as Anne did through the appointing of reformist thinkers and discussion with Henry over issues of faith. Likewise Ulpian Fulwell’s ballad praises Anne’s ‘pious intellectuality’ to the extent that he compares to Athena, saying “And Pallas for her wisdom seemed/ to sojurne in her hed” while Foxe compares her to the Biblical Deborah.⁷⁵ Anne applies this wisdom in *The Acts and Monuments*, when she brings Henry’s attention to an anti-Catholic pamphlet in her possession, *Supplication for the beggars* by Simon Fish, whom Henry then recalls from exile and protects.⁷⁶ In this, Foxe’s work also builds upon the idea of queen consorts as intercessors with the king, as it is Anne who through ‘godly meanes and moste vertuous councell’ turns the King towards reform.⁷⁷

Aside from the account of her pious activities, Foxe only accounts for a few other moments in Anne’s life: her coronation, the birth of Elizabeth, and finally her arrest and death. These are the standard moments of her life covered in the histories during this period. Foxe acquired ample details for Anne’s coronation and the christening of Elizabeth, including descriptions of the ceremonies, persons, and costumes, from the chronicle of Edward Hall, an eyewitness to the former event.⁷⁸ The importance of these events was amplified by their unique circumstances: Anne’s was the last coronation of a queen until Mary I and Elizabeth now ruled.⁷⁹ That being

⁷⁴ King, “The Godly Woman in Elizabethan Iconography,” 41

⁷⁵ Fulwell, *Flower of Fame*, 40, lines 55-56; Foxe, *TAMO* (1583), 1106

⁷⁶ Thomas S. Freeman, “Research, Rumour and Propaganda: Anne Boleyn in Foxe’s ‘Book of Martyrs’,” *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Dec., 1995), 802

⁷⁷ King, “The Godly Woman in Elizabethan Iconography,” 42

⁷⁸ Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn*, 326

⁷⁹ Denny, *Anne Boleyn*, 321

said, however, in *The Acts and Monuments*, Elizabeth's christening far outweighs her birth, for which he only notes, "[Anne] was brought a bead and deliuered of a faire Lady."⁸⁰ The lack of emphasis on Elizabeth's birth keeps Anne's importance more on her effect on the English reformation, than on her delivering the new Queen.

This contrasts Foxe's first account of Anne, a descriptive passage in his 1559 *Rerum* published in part, as with many others in that year, to flatter the new Queen. Indeed, high among his praises to Anne is in her role as a mother and deliverer of the current Queen; he argues that the country owes her a debt for giving birth to Elizabeth who "raised up again" the reformation.⁸¹ However, in the same passage, he also repeatedly stresses Anne's own involvement in the Reformation, describing how the independent English Church was "brought about this first time by Anne."⁸² This early discussion of Anne Boleyn presents several themes that would appear throughout the pro-Anne and pro-Elizabeth discourses: the linking of Anne and Elizabeth through a religious cleansing of the Church, forming an inheritance from Anne to Elizabeth of a duty towards the state of the Church, and, therefore, crediting of Anne with the initiation and motivation for the break from Rome and creation of the Church of England.

John Aylmer, affirmed this idea even more strongly that same year (1559) stating, "was not quene Anne, the mother of this blessed woman [Elizabeth], the chief, first, and only cause of banishing the beast of Rome, with all his beggarly

⁸⁰ Foxe, *TAMO* (1570), 1237

⁸¹ Thomas S. Freeman, "Research, Rumour and Propaganda: Anne Boleyn in Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs,'" *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 38, No. 4 (Dec., 1995), 799

⁸² *Ibid*, 799

baggage?”⁸³ Once again the line of descent from Anne to Elizabeth is stressed, and Anne’s role in the reformation asserted. Aylmer explicitly places the responsibility for the schism with Anne alone; she is the ‘first and only cause’ of the break, and without her the reformed Church of England could not have come into existence. These powerful compliments propel Anne forward in significance; she is not just an incidental person nor solely a queen or mother, but a bringer of reform to a corrupted church.

When the narrative arrives at Anne’s arrest, trial and death, in the 1563 edition of *The Acts and Monuments*, John Foxe detachedly summarizes these last few months of Anne Boleyn’s life with the statement “the most noble and worthy ladye Quene Anne Bulen, after that she had by the space of iii yeares liued Quene, she was caste into the Towre, together with her brother the lord Rochford, and diuers others, which shortly after were executed the xix day of Maye.”⁸⁴ This brief comment fails to address the charges raised against Anne and provides no judgment on her innocence or guilt. Although the following passage waxes on Anne’s merits and laments her death, declaring “I knowe not by what vnhappy destiny...that those things which are most excellent, are sonest violentlye taken awaye as vnworthy for the world,” he still refrains from exonerating her or even implicating anyone in her downfall.⁸⁵ Perhaps he assumes the reader possesses sufficient knowledge, or perhaps he considered directly confronting the scandal too dangerous. This section of Foxe’s narrative underwent great revision in the 1570 and later editions, including an expansion to

⁸³ Dowling, introduction to “William Latymer’s Cronickille,” 42

⁸⁴ Foxe, *TAMO* (1563), 581

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 581

both the account her arrest and Foxe's praise of her 'godly' behavior. He also intimates Anne's innocence towards the unnamed charges and the involvement of papists, who he stated viewed Anne as "a great enemy vnto the Pope."⁸⁶ He argues that Catholics surrounding the king, particularly Stephen Gardiner, fed doubts about Anne to the king.⁸⁷

Despite the additions made to the later editions, Foxe's narrative on the fall of Anne Boleyn leaves much to be desired, in way of both detail and commentary on the charges made against her. His most damning remarks, again from the later editions, come from the linking of Anne's death to anti-reform schemes, a position that was reiterated by many pro-Elizabethans around him.⁸⁸ Works from this period in general offer scant detail on the end of Anne Boleyn's life, possibly assuming audience knowledge or not wishing to remind their readers of her ugly fate. Aside from certain anecdotes, most positive accounts present Anne in the abstract in terms of her good religious standing.

The collaborative English history, *Holinshed's Chronicle*, records these avoided details, though still in brief form. He provides the charges against her — treason, — the judgment, the names of those killed with her, and the detail that she was beheaded by sword.⁸⁹ In the 1587 edition, one of the contributors added her defense during her trial, indicating, "she made so wise and discreet answers, that she

⁸⁶ Foxe, *TAMO* (1583), 1097

⁸⁷ Foxe, *TAMO* (1570), 1272-3

⁸⁸ Alexander Alesius and John Bridges were among the Elizabethan writers who made this connection, citing papist slander against her character contributed to her fall.

⁸⁹ Dozens of people contributed to the 1577 edition of the *Chronicle*, including Raphael Holinshed. The 1587 edition was then produced after his death. - Annabel Patterson, *Reading Holinshed's Chronicles* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 3-4

seemed fullie to cleare hir selfe of all matters laid to hir charge,” and alluding to her innocence.⁹⁰ The Chronicle then changes tone, summarizing the same praises of her as mentioned above, and refers readers to *The Acts and Monuments* as “I might rather saie much than sufficientlie inough in praise of this noble queene.”⁹¹ With the reference to Foxe, the chronicle seems to concur with the prior’s presentation of her death as that of a martyr who died well in and for the reformed Christian faith.⁹² John Bridges, in *Supremacie of Christian Princes*, explicitly states this conception of Anne, declaring that the Catholics and Henry “made hir a sweet sacrifice to God and a most holy martyr.”⁹³

One of the difficulties these supporters of Anne and Elizabeth encountered was the depiction of Henry VIII. In addition to ordering her execution, Henry was also responsible for the deaths of countless reformers after her death. Especially with appeals to Anne’s innocence or the proposition that she was framed, there is a tacit rejection of Henry’s actions towards his second wife. As previously mentioned, Henry provided Elizabeth with her claim to the throne, the same as he had for Mary, and the basis for Elizabeth’s charge over the church. In an analysis of Henry’s historic memory, Alec Ryne and Mark Rankin argue that by Elizabeth’s reign his own story had been mythicized and politicized; he provided a historical example for many

⁹⁰ Raphael Holinshed, *The Holinshed Chronicles*, 1587 edition, Volume 4, The Holinshed Project, 940

⁹¹ Ibid, 940.

“I might rather saie much than sufficientlie inough in praise of this noble queene as well for hir singular wit and other excellent qualities of mind, as for hir fauoring of learned men, zeale of religion, and liberalitie in distributing almes in reliefe of the poore, I will refer the reader vnto master Fox his volumes of Acts & Monuments, where he...ouerthrowth the sinister iudgements, opinions and oniections of backstoiters against that virtuous queene”

⁹² Wooden, *Foxe*, 30,43

⁹³ Dowling, “William Latymer’s Cronickille,” 42-43

discussions, including royal succession and England's interaction with foreign ministers.⁹⁴ Many writings greatly praised Henry VIII, such as Fulwell's ballad, but many others found it difficult to promote both of Elizabeth's parents. Silence towards the circumstances of Anne's death, like in *Flower of Fame*, was one method of handling this dilemma, as was minimizing Henry when the writers discussed Anne outside of the factual events. Another was to apply great ambiguity to the late king.

Foxe used this latter method, treating Henry with great diplomacy, while somewhat diminishing his legacy and making him, as Ryne claims, "an innocent scarcely in control of his own court, swayed by his councilors and easily led astray."⁹⁵ John Bridges also took this approach, saying Henry had been "beguiled by such false papistes."⁹⁶ Presenting Henry as misguided by those around him provided a way to avoid condemning him for ending the life of a supporter of reformists, though this required a different sacrifice of the king's character. Ryne argues that unlike the other figures in *The Acts and Monuments*, Foxe is unable to place Henry in either heaven or hell, but rather claims ignorance on the king's ultimate fate, leaving it to be judged by others.⁹⁷ However, Foxe goes slightly further, implicitly assigning guilt to Henry through two instances. The first is an anecdote about how the noble Protestants and princes of Germany severed ties with Henry (having been linked through the Schmalkaldic League) after hearing of Anne's death, showing that they at

⁹⁴ Mark Rankin, "The literary afterlife of Henry VIII, 1558-1625," in *Henry VIII and his Afterlives: Literature, Politics, and Art*, ed. by Mark Rankin, Christopher Highley and John N King (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 94-5

⁹⁵ Alec Ryne, "The slow death of a tyrant: learning to live without Henry VIII, 1547-1563," in *Henry VIII and his Afterlives: Literature, Politics, and Art*, ed. by Mark Rankin, Christopher Highley and John N King (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 88

⁹⁶ Dowling, "William Latymer's Cronickille," 42-43

⁹⁷ Ryne, "The slow death of a tyrant," 88-9

least blamed Henry for what had occurred. In the second instance, Foxe describes Henry's marriage to Jane Seymour three days after Anne's execution as "a greate clearyng vnto her," hinting that Henry desired her death in order to re-marry.⁹⁸ On the whole, however, Henry's public image came to rely on the first half of his reign, portraying him as a Renaissance warrior-king, and towards his daughter, according to Ryne, "his function became simply to provide legitimacy to [her], while retreating to become as much of a stock figure of kingship as possible."⁹⁹

Two Queens on One Isle

Using Henry and Anne as legitimating figures to Elizabeth became increasingly necessary after 1568 when Mary Stuart, the deposed Queen of Scotland, fled to England seeking asylum. Mary, the great-granddaughter of Henry VII, was both Elizabeth's cousin and a legitimate heir to the throne; she was also a strong Catholic. The presence of two queens, both heirs to the English throne, together on one isle increased the tension surrounding Elizabeth's legitimacy, for unlike Elizabeth, there were no doubts of paternity surrounding Mary Stuart. From 1568 to 1587, the duration of Mary Stuart's time in England, several plots formed with the purpose of overthrowing Elizabeth and replacing her with her Catholic cousin. Also it was one of the goals of an uprising in Northern England in 1569. The following year, 1570, saw a papal condemnation of the English prayer book, whilst in England there were increasing statues against Catholics. That same year, Pope Pius V published a bull of

⁹⁸ Foxe, *TAMO* (1570), 1272; Freeman, "Anne Boleyn in Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs,'" 810

⁹⁹ Ryne, "The slow death of a tyrant," 90

excommunication against Elizabeth, deposing her and releasing English Catholics from loyalty towards the Queen. With all English Catholics now potential traitors and with papal involvement in schemes against Elizabeth, the need to support the Queen increased, and a growing militant and increasingly anti-Catholic Protestantism feared what would happen if the Queen were replaced.¹⁰⁰

Assuring the validity of Anne's marriage to Henry, in spite of the king's Parliamentary acts to the contrary, was one method through which Protestants hoped to strengthen Elizabeth's position. Thus in *Flower of Fame*, published in 1575, Fulwell refers to Anne throughout as "king Henries lawfull mate" and "lawfull spowse," while Bridges' *Supremacie of Christian Princes* in 1573 calls her "[Henry's] firste true and lawfull wife."¹⁰¹ Not only is the stress placed on the legality of the union between Henry and Anne, and therefore of Elizabeth's claim to inheritance, but Bridges' addition of 'firste' firmly discounts Catherine of Aragon's marriage, further supporting Anne's. Similarly, the pro-Elizabeth texts — whether English histories, ecclesiastical histories, or other genres — pointedly referred to Catherine as the Dowager Princess after the divorce, acknowledging the invalidity of her marriage to Henry.¹⁰² In many cases, the writers correspondingly emphasize the timing of Henry and Anne's courtship as after the divorce had begun, removing scandalous aspects. This renewed stress on protecting Elizabeth from scandal is most likely what prompted Foxe to add a defense to the passage on Anne's death. Not only did this defense allude to Anne's innocence, but it furthermore objected to every act of

¹⁰⁰ Shires, "The Conflict between Queen Elizabeth and Roman Catholicism," 226-229

¹⁰¹ Fulwell, *Flower of Fame*, 38, lines 12, 17; Dowling, "William Latymer's Cronickille," 43

¹⁰² Dowager Princess was the title granted to her as the widow of Crown Prince Arthur, her first husband.

Parliament that sought to undermine Elizabeth's place in the succession, claiming that they resulted from papist blackmail against Henry.¹⁰³

Elizabeth's supporters also faced the challenge of how to distinguish the Queens from one another in Elizabeth's favor. As they were both female, writers could not take the obvious route of denigrating Mary due to her status as a woman, as highlighting this 'flaw' would also harm Elizabeth's standing. Indeed, John Knox's *Monstrous Regiment of Women*, which slandered Mary Tudor and Mary Stuart among others, had not been well received upon Elizabeth's ascension. Not to mention that Mary had fulfilled many of her feminine duties in marrying and producing a male heir. Some tried to remain within the female frame, distinguishing the queens from each other by placing them at opposing ends of femininity: Elizabeth as the virgin married to her church and her country, and Mary as all aspects associated with womanly weakness and tyranny.¹⁰⁴ This still presented a problematic polarity as it reinforced the subordination of the female in a kingdom where the reality of female rule was still new.¹⁰⁵

Interestingly, Anne in her princely and religious role had early on been used as a tool to temper the argument of weak female rulers. In John Aylmer's 1559 response to John Knox's *A Monstrous Regiment of Women* he provided Anne as the example of the good a woman could do from the throne:

¹⁰³ Foxe, *TAMO* (1570), 1273

¹⁰⁴ Anne McLauren, "Gender, Religion, and Early Modern Nationalism: Elizabeth I, Mary Queen of Scots, and the Genesis of English Anti-Catholicism," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 107, No. 3 (June 2002), 745-6, 752

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 746

Was not quene Anne, the mother of this blessed woman [Elizabeth], the chief, first, and only cause of banyshing the beast of Rome, with all his beggarly baggage? Was there ever in England, a greater feate wrought by any man then this was by a woman? I take not from kyng Henry the due praise of broaching it, nor from that lambe of God King Edward, the finishing and perfigting of that was begon, though I give hir hir due commendacion ...the croppe and roote was the quene, which God had endewed with wisdom that she coulde, and given hir the minde that she would do it.¹⁰⁶

According to Aylmer, the acclaim for the greatest feat performed in England lies with the female and queenly Anne Boleyn. It was she who rid England of what its reformers perceived as its greatest foe, in fulfillment of a providential role. Aylmer continues, connecting the great deeds wrought by the mother to the great deeds done by the daughter: “who brought in the light of Gods worde into Englande? A woman. Who lighteth now again the candle after it was put oute? A woman.”¹⁰⁷ He thus attributes both the English reformation, and any prosperity emerging from it, to this lineage of women, a legacy passed along the female line to reinforce Elizabeth’s worthiness towards her paternal inheritance of the crown.

This legacy from Anne to Elizabeth played into the other major strategy of distinguishing the English Queen from her Scottish counterpart. With the problems inherent in the gendered dialogue supporters of each instead drew the battle lines around the religious image of each monarch. Mary was assumed into the Catholic cause just as Elizabeth allowed herself be appropriated into the Protestant’s. Seeing in the reformers staunch support, Elizabeth let them use her as their icon and their champion.¹⁰⁸ Writings took on an apocalyptic nature, casting Elizabeth as the “living

¹⁰⁶ Dowling, “William Latymer’s Cronickille,” 42

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 42

¹⁰⁸ Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *The Spanish Armada: The Experience of War in 1588* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 35

embodiment of Protestant godliness and zeal” against the Anti-Christ, who found its embodiment in Mary.¹⁰⁹ In this argument, it was Mary’s Catholicism specifically that barred her from succession, and she was cast as the Jezebel, treasonous and sexually incontinent.¹¹⁰ Meanwhile, the portrayal of Elizabeth followed the same line as that of Anne Boleyn, including conceptualizing them both as the Biblical figure Deborah.¹¹¹ This paralleling imagery, much like Aylmer’s words, forms a link, or legacy, between the two women.

In making Anne the religious exemplar, as well as the initiator of England’s freedom from Rome, these reformist writers gave Elizabeth an inherited religious destiny from her mother. Just as she had received the crown from Henry and a duty to the realm, so too did Elizabeth receive from Anne a duty towards upholding the reformation. This combination of princely and religious roles was a way to strengthen the importance of Elizabeth to England. As to why Anne was cultivated into the religious predecessor, instead of leaving it simply to Henry, his actions after Anne’s death complicated his relationship with reformers.

To this end, in England, Anne became a prominent figure in the separation from Rome, a virtuous icon through which to demonstrate unto others how to behave as a proper Christian, especially as a Christian queen. She was a patron of the Church as was her daughter, and through this symbolic legacy, Elizabeth’s connection to her supporters, the Church, and England was strengthened. However, the Protestants were not the only ones to assign a critical role to Anne Boleyn in the English schism. As

¹⁰⁹ King, “The Godly Woman in Elizabethan Iconography,” 59

¹¹⁰ McLauren, “Gender, Religion, and Early Modern Nationalism,” 758-9

¹¹¹ Fernández-Armesto, *The Spanish Armada*, 35

powerful a tool as she was to the reformist camp, she would be equally utilized by the Catholic opposition, who transformed every compliment to her into a scathing rebuke, and cast her as the Jezebel who passed on her sins to Elizabeth.

Nicholas Sanders and the Catholic Rebuttal

The strongest voices in this Catholic rebuttal belonged to the English Catholic recusants in exile on the Continent. Opposing both Elizabeth's claim to the throne and the state's persecution of English Catholics, these writers pledged their aid to the Pope, who had been actively plotting Elizabeth's overthrow since he excommunicated her in 1570.¹¹² They penned scandalous narratives of the period from the English schism through Elizabeth's reign to try to rouse support abroad for a foreign intervention in England and the deposition of Elizabeth in favor in Mary. Focusing on the events of the divorce and the schism, the Catholic texts sought to highlight Elizabeth and the Reformed Church of England's illegitimacy and immorality. There was an intensification of objections from the Marian period, a new vitriolic quality to the remonstrations that coincides with the idea argued by Felicity Heal, among others, that these Catholic works were in direct debate with the Protestant discourse.¹¹³ They followed the same themes introduced by the Protestant

¹¹² Shires, "The Conflict between Queen Elizabeth and Roman Catholicism," 225

¹¹³ Felicity Heal, "Appropriating History: Catholic and Protestant Polemics and the National Past," in *The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, ed. by Paulina Kewes, 105-128 (San Marino: Huntington Library, 2006), 106. Christopher Highley also argues for this debate, stressing the timing of a Catholic text published just two years after the fourth edition of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* – see Christopher Highley, "'A Pestilent and Seditious Book': Nicholas Sander's *Schismatis Anglicani* and Catholic Histories of the Reformation," *Huntington Library Quarterly*. Vol. 68, Nos. 1&2 (March, 2005), 156

discourse—the mythic depiction of Anne, her role in the schism and a religious and moral legacy inherited by Elizabeth—but inverted Anne from pious to sexualized.

The most popular of these texts was the priest Nicholas Sander's *De Origine ac Progressu Schismatis Anglicani*, published posthumously in 1585 by another priest, Edward Rishton. Sander was heavily involved in the counter-reformation movement and efforts to overthrow Elizabeth. His previous work, *De visibili monarchia*, published 1571, constructed an English Catholic martyrology and fully supported Pope Pius V's excommunication order. Sander had begun composing the *Schismatis Anglicani* in 1572 while working as an advisor on English affairs to Pope Gregory XIII; following this he spent five years negotiating with Philip II over pensions for Catholic refugees and trying to get the king to launch an attack on England.¹¹⁴ He furthermore participated in attempts to foment rebellion in Ireland, where he died in 1581. At the time of his death, his *Schismatis Anglicani* was unfinished; Edward Rishton edited and completed the third chapter, concerning Elizabeth. The timing meanwhile of Rishton's publication in 1585 came just two years after a renewal of Elizabeth's excommunication and a reprint of John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*.

Christopher Highley summarizes well the role of Sander's book by stressing not only that it was the first published narrative a recusant Catholic perspective, but also that:

With its sensational political contents and easy narrative style, the *Schismatis Anglicani* became a "succès de scandale" among Catholic

¹¹⁴ Pollen, Dr. Nicholas Sander," 37

readers on the Continent, while it was reviled by Protestants for vilifying the Tudors and elaborating a counter-narrative to the dominant Protestant version found in canonical texts such as Foxe's.¹¹⁵

Although originally published in Latin, and therefore restricted to the learned elite and clergy, widespread interest in English affairs prompted vernacular translations.¹¹⁶ Within two years, it was translated into French, and within the first ten years, there had been fifteen editions and further translations into German, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, and Polish.¹¹⁷ It would not be published in English, however, until the late eighteenth century. The reception of the text was so large across the Continent that it became the standard Catholic narrative for well over the next century.

The roots of Sander's narrative in previous works, especially Nicholas Harpsfield's *Pretended Divorce*, show themselves at the basic level in the portrayal of Henry as a man so consumed with lust that he throws over the goodly and pious Catherine in favor of the haughty and inconstant Anne. However, Sander spends more time emphasizing the depravity of these events, and not only spends more time discussing Anne Boleyn than any previous author, but also is the first, on either side of the debate, to extend back her biography to her time in France and her childhood. The greatest change in Sander's text compared to earlier works, however, is his addition of new accusations against both Anne and Henry that further condemn the causes of the schism and Elizabeth's claim to the throne. Anne becomes the central

¹¹⁵ Christopher Highley, "'A Pestilent and Seditious Book': Nicholas Sander's *Schismatis Anglicani* and Catholic Histories of the Reformation," *Huntington Library Quarterly*. Vol. 68, Nos. 1&2 (March, 2005), 152

¹¹⁶ *Ibid*, 155

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, 154; J.H. Pollen, "Dr. Nicholas Sander," *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 6, No. 21 (January, 1891), 41

villain full of “pride, ambition, envy, and impurity” in this new argument that taunts the Protestant discourse by likewise making her, as Aylmer said, ‘the crope and roote’ of the break with Rome.¹¹⁸

While previous accounts for or against Anne Boleyn had started her narrative with either Henry’s first awareness of her or their marriage, Sander incorporates her youth into his account, and establishes a long pattern of sexual impropriety that sharply contrasts Foxe and Latymer’s Anne who served as the moral watch towards her ladies. According to Sander, Anne “sinned first” at fifteen with both her father’s butler and his chaplain before going to France where she became known as the ‘English Mare’ and the ‘royal mule’ for “her shameless behaviour.”¹¹⁹ In addition, Sander claims that Anne only adopted “the heresy of Luther to make her life and opinions consistent,” aligning her further with the image of Jezebel, a name that was also associated with her daughter, and removing any sincerity from her actions.¹²⁰ Much like the contrast of Elizabeth I and Mary Stuart, the two depictions of Anne Boleyn took on the two extremes of femininity. In this light, her later adultery is an unsurprising continuation of this wicked and lustful woman.

Sander further reflects these moral failing with the most famous and vivid physical description of Anne Boleyn, describing her as having a “sallow complexion, as if troubled with jaundice” with a projecting tooth, six fingers on her right hand and

¹¹⁸ Nicholas Sander, *Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism* (1585), trans. and with introduction by David Lewis (London: Burns and Oates, 1877), 25

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 25-6

¹²⁰ Ibid, 26

a “large wen under her chin.”¹²¹ This depiction does not seem to have its origins in previous writings, as there appeared to be a general consensus on her beauty.¹²² Sander’s audience would have read these monstrous physical deformities as proof of her inner corruption, arising from both her heresy and blatant sexuality. In addition, the inclusion of the wen linked Anne with witchcraft, an idea that comes from Anne’s trial, when she was accused of bewitching Henry.¹²³ Highley remarks that the allegations of witchcraft and sexual promiscuity exploited “a common cultural coupling of the libidinous and the demonic woman” that would have captured readers and provided a clear condemnation of Anne. Where in Foxe’s and others’ accounts, her beauty illustrated her purity, in Sander’s her ugliness condemns her.

Sander heightens the depravity of Anne and this period of English history by accusing Henry of fathering Anne Boleyn. According to Sander, Anne was conceived while Thomas Boleyn was out of the country, and it was known that Henry VIII had been the father. According to Retha Warnicke this statement was, “an enlargement of rumors current during Anne’s lifetime that her mother had been the king’s mistress;” nevertheless it was an inflammatory claim with enormous implications for perceptions of Elizabeth.¹²⁴ In addition to charges of bastardy, her conception was now shrouded in incest, a sin against nature, making her hold over the throne even more of an affront against God. Further darkening the situation, Henry is made aware

¹²¹ Ibid, 25

¹²² Cavendish, for example, refers to her as “this gorgeous lady,” *Life of Wolsey*, 39. For the link between Anne’s physical description and witchcraft, see Retha Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn: Family Politics at the Court of Henry VIII* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 245

¹²³ Highley, “A Pestilent and Seditious Book,” 162

¹²⁴ Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn*, 244

of this truth by Thomas Boleyn, but swears the latter to silence, maintaining that he will marry Anne regardless, therefore making Henry aware and complicit of the sin.¹²⁵ Anne's miscarriages in turn were a result of this incest, as a punishment from God.

According to Highley, the "shapeless mass of flesh" to which Anne gave birth also took on a symbolic significance in relation to England's break with Rome. He argues, "Sander identifies Anne's monstrously productive body as a locus of schism when he says her union with Henry "gives birth to that evil thing which banished [Catholic truth] out of the land."¹²⁶ Therefore Anne, who "fills the court" with heretics, gives birth to "Protestant error" not only "metaphorically," as Highley says, but also literally in the form of Elizabeth, who continued the heretical reform.¹²⁷ It is Anne that brings forth heresy and schism, diminishing Henry's role in this aspect. Once again, Sander plays off the Protestant and pro-Elizabethan writings that applauded Anne for bringing forth the reform and its future vehicle, Elizabeth. Highley continues that Sander has Anne "embody heresy," and that understanding this, her physical deformities resonate with the "discourses of monstrosity in sixteenth-century religious polemic" that contorted popular figures into mutated human-animal figures, such as a two-headed Henry VIII or the "pope-ass" monster.¹²⁸ Sander's stress on the connection between Anne and heresy diverges from the pre-Elizabethan Catholic accounts, which generally passed over any link between her and reform.

¹²⁵ Sander, *Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism*, 27

¹²⁶ Highley, "A Pestilent and Seditious Book," 163

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, 164

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, 163-4

The publication of *Schismatis Anglicani* came at a time when the number of plots for revolts in Scotland, Ireland, and England and with plots for Elizabeth's death all intensified, among them the failed Babington plot of 1586. The investigations into this plot resulted in the arrest and execution of Mary Stuart in 1587 on charges of treason after a letter of hers was found, linking her to the conspiracy. Her death resulted in an uproar across Europe and an intensification of the exiled recusants' desire to wage war against Elizabeth. Many were outraged at the fate of the Scottish Queen and there was a deepened sense of Catholic militancy that developed into the notion of a "Catholic crusade against England."¹²⁹ The following year, the Spanish Armada launched against England and Elizabeth by Philip II became infused with this crusading mentality, and the figure of Mary Stuart was adopted as one of the causes' martyrs.¹³⁰

Though the major causes that prompted the attack were English piracy and Elizabeth's support of Dutch Protestants, Sander and Rishton's rhetoric was employed as a justification of the action. The English Catholic, William Allen, for instance, fully utilized the accusations in the *Schismatis Anglicani* to rouse support for the Spanish invasion. Allen, a friend of Nicholas Sander, had also served as an English advisor to the Pope in 1585 and was appointed as Cardinal of England at the request of Philip II.¹³¹ His work, *An admonition to the nobility and people of England and Ireland concerning the present wwarres made for the execution of his Holines sentence, by the right and mightie Kinge Catholike of Spaine*, issued in 1588, and

¹²⁹ Highley, "A Pestilent and Seditious Book," 171

¹³⁰ Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *The Spanish Armada: The Experience of War in 1588* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 39-40; 47

¹³¹ Shires, "The Conflict between Queen Elizabeth and Roman Catholicism," 228

coinciding with the Armada's launch, was a call for rebellion among the Catholics still in England. In his entreaty, Allen repeats Sander's damning allegations describing Henry's "incestuous copulation with Anne Bullen."¹³² Going further than Sander, Allen directly links this to Elizabeth's ineligibility as Queen, calling her "an incestuous bastard, begotten and borne in sinne, of an infamous courtesan Anne Bullen" before listing her crimes against the English people.¹³³ Allen is further believed to be the author of a broadsheet, *A Declaration of the sentence and deposition of Elizabeth, the vsurper and pretended Quene of Englande*, that repeats the claim of Elizabeth's bastardy out of "incestuous adultery." This broadsheet accompanied the Spanish ships and was meant to be distributed throughout England upon the Armada's success, spreading the Catholic discourse through England.¹³⁴

Sander's version of the schism was appropriated by the none-English as well. The Spanish and Jesuit historian Pedro de Rivadeneira's *Historia Ecclesiastica del Scisma del Reino de Inglaterra*, published in 1588, was most likely commissioned with the intent of supporting Philip's actions with a reminder to its readers of the rotted origins of the current English queen and church. It is evident that Rivadeneira based his work off of that of Sander as many of the passages are almost direct translations of the English priest's comments. For example, his description of Anne's physical appearance, "era Ana alta de cuerpo, el cabello negro, la cara larga, el color algo amarillo, como atiriciado, entre los dientes de arriba

¹³² William Allen, *An admonition to the nobility and people of England and Ireland concerninge the present vvarres made for the execution of his Holiness' sentence, by the highe and mightie Kinge Catholike of Spaine. By the Cardinal of England* (1588) EEBO, ix

¹³³ Ibid, xi

¹³⁴ Fernández-Armesto, *The Spanish Armada*, 47

le salía uno que la afeaba; tenía seis dedos en la mano derecha, y una hinchazón como papera," matches precisely with that of Sander's.¹³⁵ He also reiterates Sander's claims of Anne's sexual youth and the idea that Henry is her father. Rivadeneira's and Allen's adoption of Sander's arguments demonstrates how the latter's narrative acceptance as the standard version; its inflammatory wording and the polarization of Anne was precisely what the Catholic polemic needed to strengthen its case.

Recognizing that aspersions against her parents are then transferred to Elizabeth, this Catholic polemic emphasizes language and anecdotes that draw on the concept of lineage and inheritance. *Schismatis Anglicani*, for example, focuses this inheritance on the female line, implicitly and explicitly paralleling Elizabeth to her mother, and illuminating problems centered in the female body. The introduction of Henry's affair with Anne's mother, for example, would further stress to readers a lineage of whoredom among the Boleyn women, as Henry had also taken Anne's sister Mary Boleyn as a mistress. Elizabeth could have been seen to continue this tradition with her own preferential treatment of her favorite Robert Dudley, with whom it was widely rumored that she had a sexual relationship. In more direct instances, there is a repetition of terms applied to the two queens; both women for example are framed as Jezebel.¹³⁶ Corrupting the Protestant argument, Anne therefore bestowed upon Elizabeth both an immoral and heretical legacy.

¹³⁵ María Cristina Quintero, "English Queens and the Body Politic in Calderón's "La cisma de Inglaterra" and Rivadeneira's "Historia Eclesiástica del Scisma del Reino de Inglaterra," *MLN*. Vol. 113, No. 2, Hispanic Issue (March, 1998), 271

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, 168

Unlike the discourses in support of Elizabeth, these Catholic accounts do not face any difficulty with the construction of Henry VIII's persona. Since Mary Stuart did not inherit her claim to the throne from Henry, the Catholic writers had no qualms in condemning him with as much fervor as they did Anne for his treatment of Catherine of Aragon, his daughter Mary, and English Catholics in general. Rather, they followed the conventional European view, as argued by Mark Rankin in his construct of Henry's historical legacy, portraying the English king as not only an egomaniacal and sacrilegious tyrant, but also a schismatic, adulterer, murderer, blasphemer, and wife-killer.¹³⁷ Indeed in these narratives it is Henry that is guilty of the knowledge of his incestuous relationship with Anne (it is never clear if she is made aware of this fact), therefore showing his lack of conscience and morality. This incest also reveals the hypocrisy in Henry's argument for divorce from Catherine due to their affinity, especially since Sander states that Henry had no doubts over the validity of his marriage to Catherine.¹³⁸ Henry is also presented as the "sexually vulnerable man" who does anything to please Anne, worshiping her instead of God and until he becomes a cuckold.¹³⁹ These works present him as a king ruled by his lust, which is then manifested in Anne; it is a condemnation, but also a cautionary tale against desire, greed, and the abuse of power.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Mark Rankin, "The literary afterlife of Henry VIII, 1558-1625," in *Henry VIII and his Afterlives: Literature, Politics, and Art*, ed. by Mark Rankin, Christopher Highley and John N King (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 75-6

¹³⁸ Sander, *Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism*, 17

¹³⁹ Highley, "A Pestilent and Seditious Book," 162; Sander, *Rise and Growth of the Anglican Schism*, 85-6; 50

¹⁴⁰ For further discussion of the Catholic depiction of Henry, see Highley, "A Pestilent and Seditious Book," 159-162

Although the Armada failed and hopes for resubmitting England to the influence of Rome declined, after 1588, the Catholic polemic against the reformed Church in England had solidified. Following the tone and barrage of new accusations put forth by Sander, English and foreign writers found a way to strike at the foundations of the reform and at Elizabeth by converting the arguments of the English queen's supporters to their opposite extremes. From Foxe's pious, charitable, and moral Anne was raised the sexual, tyrannical, and heretical adulteress who ruptured the country. Sander states, "all English Protestants...honour the incestuous marriage...as the well spring of their gospel, the mother of their Church, and the source of their belief;" as the Protestants portrayed, Anne was indeed responsible for the schism, but in a corruptive, incestuous and abominable way. The salaciousness of this standard Catholic characterization made for powerful rumors that would resist attempts to eradicate them, and that would require a continuation of the debate over the story of the English schism from Rome for centuries.

Conclusion

By the closing of the sixteenth century, Anne Boleyn had become a central figure to the history of the schism in England not only in the English reformist narrative, but also in the Catholic polemic circulating abroad. This attention on Anne from both sides, brought on by Elizabeth's ascension, was a sharp change from the previous discourses, which had often sought to minimize discussion of her. Elizabeth's rise to the throne, however, prompted a revision of Anne that recognized,

and in doing so confirmed, the ability through her relationship with Henry VIII, to either validate or invalidate both Elizabeth and the reformed Church of England. These writings developed Anne as a, if not the most, fundamental figure for the historical moment of the schism from Rome. It is to her that authors attribute reformist leanings at this time, and Anne Boleyn provided a template around which supporters could construct a positive legacy for Elizabeth, and avoid the problematic reversals in Henry's decrees.

The extent to which these supporters were successful is apparent in the vehemence of the Catholic response to the portrayal of Anne in which, as was stated for Elizabeth, "[her] image-makers had done their work only too well, and all the enemy's rage was focused on the icon they had created."¹⁴¹ The praise and emphasis placed upon Anne in the Protestant context in turn motivated the opposition to grant her the same degree of influence; the Protestant discourse directly created the Catholic rebuttal and determined around what themes and facts the argument would be drawn. This back-and-forth rhetoric became key to the development of Anne Boleyn as a prominent historical figure as after Elizabeth's death the Catholic discourse continued to follow the argument set out by Sander. Over the next century, English Protestants would be confronted by this Catholic rhetoric, which they chose to respond to depending on how threatened they felt the Protestant identity of England. When they did respond, however, they were prompted to return to their original argument and reaffirm the themes of this Elizabethan portrayal of Anne Boleyn.

¹⁴¹ Fernández-Armesto, *The Spanish Armada*, 46

However, in the aftermath of Elizabeth's death Anne lost some of her relevancy as the immediate need for the legitimization theme vanished as the Stuart house came to power. Elements of her story would persist, demonstrating the success at which the Elizabethan writers revised her, particularly in comparison to Henry VIII who in many places underwent a critical review. Her association with reform, for instance would be maintained while her innocence and the Catholic role in her death were amplified. However, she would no longer be the mythic princely initiator of the English schism. Instead she would be played off the revisions of Henry VIII and emphasized as a victim of popish plotting. Meanwhile, her connection with Elizabeth created by the writers during the late sixteenth century would be transformed but nevertheless strongly affirmed particularly in terms of the religious inheritance.

Chapter 2

Negotiating the Role of Anne Boleyn in Early Stuart Period

(1603-1649)

Introduction

With decline and death of Elizabeth I, as her councilors began preparing the way for her successor, interest in promoting and defending Anne Boleyn to a specialized degree in turn waned. The effect on her standing becomes apparent in the case of George Wyatt's *Life of the Virtuous Christian and Renowned Queen Anne Boleigne* from 1603.¹⁴² Begun near the end of Elizabeth's lifetime, with the encouragement of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Wyatt's biography was intended as a great defense of Anne Boleyn — particularly in response to Sander — that would join in a larger project of refuting any claims the Pope had in England.¹⁴³ However, a few years after Elizabeth's death, Wyatt laments that although he “was entreated by some who might command me to further this endeavour,” none of the expected help ever came.¹⁴⁴ The arrival of James seemed to diffuse the need for this project, signifying perhaps a larger loss of interest in Anne. Although George Wyatt's biography, the first one dedicated to Anne, is now a common source, it remained in

¹⁴² George Wyatt, Esq, “Extracts from the Life of the Virtuous Christian and Renowned Queen Anne Boleigne,” in *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, Volume II* by George Cavendish, ed. by Samuel Weller Singer (Chiswick, 1825)

¹⁴³ George Wyatt, “The Papers of George Wyatt Esquire of Boxley Abbey in the County of Kent,” in *Camden Fourth Series Vol. 5* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1968), 19
Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn*, 50

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*, 23-4

manuscript form and did not gain much popularity in the seventeenth-century.¹⁴⁵ Perhaps if Elizabeth had lived a few years longer, the full project would have materialized and gained popularity. As it was, no more works with Anne as the main subject would emerge until after the Restoration. The presence of Elizabeth on the throne had brought about the revival of Anne and given her history a purpose. However, while her immediate relevancy declined, there had been a significance attached to her that would be experimented with by different writers and different genres in the Early Stuart period.

Following James I's ascension to the throne of England, the portrayal of Anne Boleyn and other figures from the Tudor period shifted as the legitimation of Elizabeth that had driven the narrative for so long ceased to be necessary. Much of the emphasis in policy switched to promoting the new Stuart line, the significance of sharing a king with Scotland, and the extent of power afforded to the crown in contrast to the Parliament. Anti-Catholic sentiment still persisted, but it was not surrounded by the same succession crisis that had plagued the late queen, and many religious discussions centered on the type of protestant Church policy. Though the Tudors remained popular subject matter, there is a decreased relevance of the English Schism as the battleground for the validity of the Church of England in this period and many ecclesiastical histories turn instead to debates over the origins of

¹⁴⁵ It was eventually collated into the appendix of George Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey* — a source that, while greatly used, was itself not printed in until 1641.

Christianity in Britain.¹⁴⁶ As a result, Henrician era begins to be developed in other ways, joining the queue of examples of kingship, good or bad. That is not to say that the break with Rome is not stressed, but this shift allows greater manipulation of the figures in the dramas and greater objectivity in the histories.

In this atmosphere representations of the Henrician period, and in turn Anne Boleyn, diverged based on the genre in which they appeared. The theater manipulated the history into symbolic portrayals to entertain and educate. These plays focused on Henry VIII, who stood as an exemplar to the kings and royals who patroned the plays. In these productions, including Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, Anne is relegated to the background. She is not an active figure; in part her role seems to serve as an acknowledgement of historical fact as the main action is carried out by others. The connection to Elizabeth, as well, favors Henry over Anne, although Anne's role as mother is acknowledged. However, in the conversations of the deceitful Catholic figures of the English plays, not only is the theme of conspiracy against her referenced, but also the influence that she possessed. These are very minor moments, however, they indicate a small recognition of the Elizabethan conception of Anne. In contrast to her small relevancy to these plays, however, is her large role in the Spanish play by Calderón demonstrating the maintenance of the Catholic discourse abroad.

Meanwhile the histories give greater consideration to Anne usually in the framework of analyzing sympathetically her trial and execution. Anne is presented as

¹⁴⁶ See John Spurr, "A special kindness for dead bishops": The Church, History, and Testimony in Seventeenth-Century Protestantism," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 68, No. 1-2 (March 2005): 313-334

the target of a papist conspiracy that feared her influence over the King. Though her own reformism is not as greatly discussed as in the previous period, the authors have the Catholics identify her as the obstacle to restoring Romish rule, and thus establish her indirectly as having a large role in advancing the reformation. However, to a greater degree, Anne often serves to exemplify the inconstancy and tyranny of Henry VIII who both raises then shuns her due to his changing loves and lusts. His reign becomes framed against his marital adventures and doctrinal inconsistencies, as by the seventeenth century, there was a greater willingness to recognize the faults in Henry, and in his reformation. Despite what can be seen as the roots of the discourse of the six wives of Henry VIII, Anne, above all the later wives, is given greater prominence. In this sense, her importance under Elizabeth's reign was enough to begin to implement a greater exploration of her life in full; as Anne once again rises in prominence in the late seventeenth-century, it would likewise prompt an expansion in the following years that cement Anne's place as a prominent figure of English history.

Another major theme that maintained Anne during this period was the specific refutation of Sander's *Schismatis Anglicani*, which remained the leading Catholic work on the Continent, republished in 1610 and 1628, along with its adaptations, such as Rivadeneira's work. The drama *La cisma de Inglaterra* by Pedro Calderón de la Barca was based on this Catholic interpretation.¹⁴⁷ The persistence of Sander prompted writers to reply; the choice to respond in and of itself demonstrates a degree of recognition over the importance her history could have, with one author in the

¹⁴⁷ Although his direct source was Rivadeneira

1640s stating he felt “constrain’d...to vindicate both her honor and her progenitors those foul calumnies which in the book of Nicholas Sanders...are cast upon them.”¹⁴⁸

Although Anne no longer served as a royal exemplar, her relationship to Elizabeth was nevertheless maintained in the scholarly works and debates under both James I and Charles II. While the public historical representations in the form of plays minimized Anne’s bond with Elizabeth, relegating the former to the background, the opposite occurred in the written works where Anne is emphasized over Henry in relation to Elizabeth in terms of description and influence over their daughter. For instance, in William Camden’s influential *The True and Royall History of the Famous Empress, Elizabeth, Quene of England* he dedicates the majority of the “Preparation to the History” to describing Anne, asserting her importance by the degree of attention he gives her. In comparison, the rest of Henry’s life consists mostly of a run-through of his marital exploits.¹⁴⁹

Though it would be hard to argue that she remains Aylmer’s ‘croppe and roote’ of change in England, across both genres there is the maintenance of certain characteristics of Anne developed in the Elizabethan period demonstrating how successfully they had become ingrained to her memory. Her religious persuasion and virtue remain intact, as does the concept that she was targeted by Catholics for her faith. She is still highly praised, although from a wider array of compliments, such as her grace of jollity. Meanwhile, anecdotes from pre-Elizabethan records, such as her

¹⁴⁸ Edward Herbert, *Autobiography of Edward Lord Herbert of Cherbury; The History of England under Henry VIII (1649)*, reprint from Kennet’s Fol. Edition, 1719 (London: Alexander Murray, 1870), 401

¹⁴⁹ William Camden, *Annales: The True and Royall History of the famous Empres, Elizabeth, Queene of England* (London, 1625), 20-26

wearing a yellow dress after Catherine's death, are left out, indicating a degree of protection and idealization even as her relevancy wanes.

The Start of the Stuart Line

Elizabeth I's demise signaled the end not only to her reign, but also to the house of Tudor, after which the succession reverted to the children of Henry VIII's elder sister, Margaret, and thus to James, who was already king in Scotland.¹⁵⁰ As such, the state of Elizabeth's legitimacy did not impinge upon his right to the throne, diminishing the immediate need to support Anne's validity as Henry's wife. Although early plots to supplant him existed, —the Main Plot wanted to put his cousin Arabella Stuart on the throne while the Gunpowder Plot planned to replace James with his daughter Elizabeth — the new king did not face another widely supported contender to the throne. Furthermore, he arrived in England already having reigned in Scotland, with a queen, a daughter, and two sons; after nearly a century of uncertainty and three rulers with no children, the succession finally seemed secure. The new situation in England, thus, was quite different than the one faced by Elizabeth, and consequently reduced the necessity for the arguments and figures invoked in her reign.

To further solidify the transfer of the crown from Elizabeth to James, many writers and artists portrayed Elizabeth as confirming James as her heir while

¹⁵⁰Despite Henry's removal of Margaret's heirs from the royal line and Elizabeth's lack of a will, James I & VI ascended to the throne with little fuss, prepared for the transfer by his correspondences with Sir Robert Cecil.

Mark Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain 1603-1714* (London: Penguin Books, 1996), 67, 70

depicting the latter initially as the phoenix-like reincarnation of the late queen, most famously in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*. Not only did this provide the acknowledgement and blessing of Elizabeth on the new royal house, but it also depicted James as the providential successor. However, the new King also signified a return to male rule and as such the royal exemplars reverted to male figures, removing another outlet of Anne's use as a template for Elizabeth.

Indeed, James encouraged the recourse to patriarchal systems, while downplaying the female inheritance.¹⁵¹ For instance, James, in all probability exercising strategic timing, did not arrive in London until after the funeral of Elizabeth I and later proceeded to move both Elizabeth's and his own mother's remains, raising the prominence of the latter while leaving the position next to Henry VII open for himself.¹⁵² Indeed, James preferred comparison to Henry VII, whose alliance, via his marriage, of the houses of York and Lancaster James paralleled to his own hopeful unification of Scotland and England, which was thus portrayed as fulfilling a divine plan of union initiated in 1485.¹⁵³ This plan reaffirmed James as Elizabeth's destined successor, but placed the emphasis instead on Henry VII. Though he still faced the dilemma of religious division along with disputes over

¹⁵¹ Elizabeth H. Hageman, introduction to *Resurrecting Elizabeth I in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. by Elizabeth H. Hageman and Katherine Conway (Madison: Farleigh Dickinson University, 2007), 17

Frances Dolan, *Whores of Babylon: Catholecism, Gender, and Seventeenth-Century Print Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999), 135

¹⁵² Hageman, *Resurrecting Elizabeth I*, 18; Peter Sherlock, "The Monuments of Elizabeth Tudor and Mary Stuart: King James and the Manipulation of Memory," *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 2 (April 2007), 265-267.

¹⁵³ See David Woolf, *The Idea of History in Early Stuart England* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 55, 141-2; David Well Baker, "Jacobean Historiography and the Election of Richard III," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 70, No. 3 (September 2007), 311

authority between himself and the Parliament, the new king's focus was on drawing his two kingdoms closer together.

Meanwhile Henry VIII, the other source of Anne's narrative, was left in a more ambiguous position. Although playwrights found means to make Henry relevant to James, in general, the Stuart king attempted to maintain a distance from him, specifically any comparison that could link him to the earlier king's impropriety.¹⁵⁴ This left the histories with a greater range of options for how to approach the dead king, some choosing to maintain him as a complimentary mythic figure, particularly in dramas, while others investigated his vices and tyrannical behavior, typically in general English histories. Indeed some of the more violent attack on Henry appeared in narratives that received royal support. Towards Anne, this revision interestingly did not spark critique or criticism but rather sought to emphasize the injustice of her fate as a remark both against Henry and, more importantly, papists.

This then was the arena in which the figure of Anne held the most sway: protestations against Catholics. Though the specific circumstances that had shaped Anne Boleyn into a tool of Protestant virtue passed with the deaths of Mary Queen of Scots and Elizabeth, the atmosphere in the early seventeenth-century was still highly religiously charged. The anti-Catholicism that had grown under Elizabeth became tied to the developing English Protestant identity, which came to associate Catholicism with treason. This belief received its confirmation through the Bye Plot of 1603 and, more famously, the Gunpowder Plot of 1605, in which a group of English Catholics planned to blow up the House of Lords while the King and his

¹⁵⁴ Rankin, "The literary afterlife of Henry VIII," 106

family were present. Though James at first punished only those connected to the plot, he soon began enforcing harsh measures against the Catholics and writers continued to expound upon the evils of papists. Here Anne, already created as a martyr by the previous decades work, answered a need, and correspondingly the attention given to a belief in Romanist conspiracies against her increased.

Anne Boleyn in the Theatrical Realm

Among the genres producing historical accounts, those from the theater engaged heavily in providing visual characters and lessons that reflected the current political and social circumstances while flattering the ruler. Anne appears onstage in only one English play opened in the early seventeenth century, Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, in an extremely passive form, while the action concentrated on Henry VIII as the main demonstrative figure.¹⁵⁵ Her minimization and passivity in large part reflect her decreased relevancy to current events, however, the fact that the playwrights chose to include her, however minimally, demonstrates at least some standardization of her inclusion in any narrative of Henry VIII. At the same time, there are slight allusions to her importance in the references of other characters. This might have been enough for the audience to recognize, particularly if they were familiar with the *Book of Martyrs*. On the whole, however, the early Stuart dramas gave Anne neither much attention nor influence indicating her retreat as a figure of importance.

¹⁵⁵ This minimization seems to relate to the focus of the play rather than any lingering scandal surrounding Anne as Kim Noling argues. No English history since Mary I's reign had perceived her as guilty. Her death would have been more associated with Romish plotting than any guilt of her own. See Kim H. Noling, "Grubbing up the Stock: Dramatizing Queens in Henry VIII," *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (Autumn 1988), 298

History plays in England, especially those concerning its own figures, had become increasingly prevalent from the 1580s onwards. Those themed around past royalty in particular answered the growing interest in “the doings of kings and queens” and provided an opportunity to offer critiques or praise of current leaders through the symbolic exemplars of their predecessors.¹⁵⁶ In large part these plays relied upon the audience “to see in the characters upon the stage the figures of real persons of the present or recent past.”¹⁵⁷ Knowledge to some degree, both of the history and current events, was expected in order to expand upon the hints and brief statements tailored to avoid the censors. Statements about religion, for instance, had to be handled with care and specific doctrines were usually unmentioned. While curtailed in this regard, the theater had the advantage of being able to manipulate the chronology and exaggerate certain features of the characters, or invent new ones to present more mythic forms to entertain while reflecting on current events.

Shakespeare’s final history, *Henry VIII (All is True)*, premiered in 1613 with performances before both the regular theater-goers and the royal court.¹⁵⁸ The play, now usually recognized as a collaborative work with John Fletcher, focused on the King’s divorce from Catherine of Aragon, commencing with the treason trial against Buckingham in the 1520s and ending with a prediction about the grand reign of Elizabeth’s successor at her christening. As with his previous plays, Shakespeare

¹⁵⁶ Ian W. Archer, “Discourses of History in Elizabethan and Early Stuart London,” *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 68, No. 1-2 (March 2005), 215

¹⁵⁷ Daniel Woolf, “From Hystories to the Historical: Five Transitions in Thinking about the Past, 1500-1700,” in *The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, ed. by Paulina Kewes (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 2006), 43

¹⁵⁸ William Shakespeare and John Fletcher, *Henry VIII (All is True)*, ed. by Gordon McMullan (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2000), 2.4.169-178

once again employed Holinshed's Chronicles (1587 edition) as his source, evident particularly in the detailed descriptions and stage directions for Anne's coronation procession, and was no doubt familiar with Foxe's passage on Anne, if only from its references in Holinshed. At the time it was produced, Shakespeare's theater company had come under the patronage of James I, a fact reflected in its name-change to "The King's Men;" a royal attention that most influenced the messages and characterizations of the play, particularly of Henry.

In an analysis of Henry VIII's place in the Jacobean royal court, Mark Rankin argues that this late history play was "designed specifically with a Stuart royal audience in mind" and was intended to "flatter the perceived interests and agendas" of the current king.¹⁵⁹ Therefore, Shakespeare's Henry was portrayed how the playwright conceived that James saw himself: overcoming faction — in the forms of Wolsey and Gardiner who plot against Anne and Cranmer — and, in Henry's dismissal of Wolsey and arguments during the divorce, asserting his "supreme authority in religious affairs."¹⁶⁰ Howard Felperin as well perceived a "whitewashing" of Henry, where the removal of the more negative aspects of his reign resulted in a "historical myth...barely a step removed from mere propaganda."¹⁶¹ It is a myth fashioned to reflect upon James and that recalls the imperial Henry VIII from Elizabethan histories.

¹⁵⁹ Mark Rankin, "Henry VIII, Shakespeare, and the Jacobean royal court," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 51, No. 2 (Spring 2011), 349+

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 349+

¹⁶¹ Howard Felperin, "Shakespeare's Henry VIII: History as Myth," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (Spring 1966), 245

Conversely, Anne's own place in the story is relatively minor with respect to those around her. In place of Anne, Catherine of Aragon, whose 374 lines dwarf Anne's 58, serves as the female lead opposite Henry, and her complex, active and sympathetic character far outshines the rather simplified Anne.¹⁶² Despite her own rise being set against Catherine's fall, Anne's character remains far more underdeveloped. Appearing in only three scenes, and only speaking in two, Anne's place in the narrative is subverted with respect to those around her, rendering her as more of a plot device rather than a character in her own standing. Although Anne's arc demonstrates her rise from an unidentified lady in her first scene to a crowned queen, Christopher Cobb correctly states, "the play is obviously not her story, and the spectators have not been invited to identify their satisfaction with her success."¹⁶³ Cobb argues that the juxtaposition of the coronation scene — Anne's wordless and final appearance — between those of Catherine of Aragon's decline, as well as the lack of attention devoted to her in the rest of the play leaves the audience "disinterested."¹⁶⁴ To this extent, her inclusion seems more as corroboration with historical fact. The trajectory of the drama also results in the strong queen Catherine's displacement by the "will-less" Anne who is queen only through appearance rather than action or influence.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² Kim H. Noling, "Grubbing up the Stock: Dramatizing Queens in Henry VIII." *Shakespeare Quarterly*. Vol. 39, No. 3 (Autumn, 1988), 299

¹⁶³ In her first scene, she is one of several ladies at Wolsey's feast; she is only identified when Henry pulls her aside to dance

Christopher J. Cobb, *The Staging of Romance in Late Shakespeare: Text and Theatrical Technique* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007), 225

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 225-6

¹⁶⁵ Kim Noling, "Woman's Wit and Woman's Will in *When You See Me, You Know Me*," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 33, No.2 (Spring 1993), 327

Highlighting the play's interest in praising James, the drama ends with Cranmer's glowing prophesy about the greatness of Elizabeth's successor, in which he declares, "Who from the sacred ashes of her honour/ Shall star-like rise as great in fame as she was/ And so stand fixed [...] He shall flourish, / And, like a mountain cedar, reach his branches/ To all the plains about him."¹⁶⁶ Shakespeare inserted Henry into the christening scene, making him visually present as the parent and predecessor of Elizabeth, thereby not only establishing James as the providential heir of Elizabeth, but also of Henry himself. The baby Elizabeth in turn becomes the temporary placeholder of the male succession.

On the one hand, Anne's place as Elizabeth's parent is subverted to Henry; her final appearance on stage occurs well before the announcement of Elizabeth's birth. Despite this however, the compliments that Anne receives throughout the play are framed as a foreshadowing of the birth of Elizabeth. Chamberlain upon conversing with her remarks, "Beauty and honour in her are so mingled...this lady may proceed a gem/ To lighten all this isle," while Suffolk comments, "from her/ Will fall some blessing to this land which shall/ In it be memorized."¹⁶⁷ Even if this admiration derives more from Anne serving as the ideal wife and queen who delivers an heir, it nevertheless links Anne to the blessings that her daughter would bring. This celebrated would also have been transferred to James's own wife, Anne, as the mother of Princess Elizabeth Stuart, who just prior to *Henry VIII*'s premiere had married the protestant Frederick, Elector of Palatine. These commendations then are

¹⁶⁶ Shakespeare, *Henry VIII*, 5.4.43-55

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 2.3.76-9; 3.2.50-2

praise of the reproductive ability of mothers to spread Protestantism through the destinies of their children.

In two brief lines by Catholic characters, Shakespeare also references her as the target of evil papists. As Wolsey plots against the King's desire to marry Anne, he vents about her low position and faith that as "A spleeny Lutheran, and not wholesome to/ Our cause, that she should lie i'th' bosom of/ Our hard-ruled King."¹⁶⁸ Wolsey highlights her faith as a danger to Catholicism and further supposes that once she 'lie i'th' bosom,' or shares a bed with Henry, she will be able to influence him towards Lutheranism. Additionally, after Wolsey's fall, Gardiner, a Catholic bishop, plots against the reformers, stating, "it will ne'er be well.../ Till Cranmer, Cromwell (her two hands) and she/ Sleep in their graves."¹⁶⁹ Cranmer and Cromwell, who have more significant roles in the play, serve as her supporters, once again linking Anne with Protestants close to the king. Gardiner identifies Anne as not only the threat to Rome but as one of three figures upon whom the continuation of the schism rests. These two references allude to the possibility of a powerful influence by Anne, which in a sense will become transferred to her daughter. These moments then are significant, although they are overpowered by the action of the rest of the play.

The other surviving play in which Henry VIII has a stage presence leaves Anne out of the narrative altogether, referencing the later part of the King's reign well after the schism. First presented in 1605, *When You See Me, You Know Me* by Samuel

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, 3.2.87-100

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 5.1.29-32

Rowley took a diverse approach to Henry from the later Shakespearean history by centering on the education of the king's son, Edward, and giving greater discourse to the religious issues.¹⁷⁰ Unlike Shakespeare's Rowley's earlier play's main concern was with the evangelical Protestantism of prince Edward and, eventually, of the King. In this, at least for Henry, anachronistic Protestant enthusiasm, Rankin contends that, like Shakespeare, Rowley shaped the King's portrayal with his patron in mind.¹⁷¹ In this case though, the patron was not James I but rather his son, the crown prince Henry Frederick, for whom Rowley's acting company was renamed "Prince Henry's Men." Rankin contends that Henry VIII, and no doubt Edward as well, therefore served as an exemplar for the young prince who many hoped would be more militant in his Protestant doctrine than his father and that *When you see me* aimed "to fashion the prince's emerging reputation for zeal."¹⁷²

Despite setting his narrative in a later time, Rowley still included a single reference to Anne Boleyn in a conversation between Wolsey and Gardiner after Jane Seymour's death recalling her effect on the realm. As the two Catholics ponder who the next queen will be, Gardiner exclaims:

I fear, false Luther's doctrine's spread so far,
Least that his highness, now unmarried,
Should match amongst that sect of Lutherans.
You saw, how soon his majesty was won
To scorn the pope, and Rome's religion,
When queen Anne Bullen wore the diadem.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ Samuel Rowley, *When You See Me, You Know Me (1605)*, ed. and introduction by Karl Elze (London: Williams and Norgate, 1874)

¹⁷¹ Rankin, "Henry VIII," 367+

¹⁷² *Ibid*, 367+

¹⁷³ Rowley, *When You See Me*, 15-16

This statement acts much like Wolsey's own comment on Anne in *Henry VIII*. Not only is she linked to Lutheranism, but Gardiner's words also imply that Anne's presence brought about the King's change in religion, granting her more sway than in Shakespeare. Wolsey's response to Gardiner is a confession that it was he who caused Anne to lose her head, increasing his villainy by specifying him (impossibly by historical fact) as the Catholic who caused her fall.¹⁷⁴

This confession also invokes more strongly the belief that Anne's death occurred as a papist conspiracy and no fault of her own for fear of what she would accomplish if she remained. Later in the play, Gardiner similarly plots against Katherine Parr, who he also calls Lutheran, hoping to convict her of treason and make her "shorter by a head."¹⁷⁵ Doing so recalls Anne's explicitly mentioned fate and links the absent queen to the witty and independent Parr. Rowley's handling of Anne is interesting because while he demonstrates that she is not crucial to every story of Henry VIII, he still recognized not only her existence, but also her impact and death.

The story of the schism was not limited to England in this period, but also appeared in foreign theaters, in the form of Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *La cisma Inglaterra* (*The Schism in England*), performed before the royal court in Madrid in 1627.¹⁷⁶ Perhaps Calderón had been aware of Shakespeare's play while drafting his

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, 16

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 60; Noling, "Woman's Wit and Woman's Will," 327-8

¹⁷⁶ Though the play had previously been dated to a later period, documentary evidence suggests this earlier date – see Ann L. Mackenzie, introduction to *The Schism in England* by Pedro Calderón de la Barca, trans. by Kenneth Muir and Ann L Mackenzie, 1-44 (Warminster: Arts & Phillips, 1990), 1-2

own, focusing as well on the events of the divorce; however Calderón carries the narrative through the death of Anne Boleyn, ending with Henry's repentance for his actions and his promotion of his daughter Mary — actions appropriate for the Catholic audience. Throughout the play, Henry admits that his first marriage was valid, but that he is too consumed by his lust for Anne to stop his pursuit of the divorce, only to discover Anne's untrue affections resulting in her execution. Whereas Shakespeare had referred to Holinshed's *Chronicles*, Calderón's source has been credited as Rivadeneira's *Historica Ecclesiastica* (1588), the near-translation of Nicholas Sander's infamous work.¹⁷⁷ Their figures of the treacherous Anne, lustful Henry, pious Catherine, and ambitious Wolsey find dramatization in Calderón's play, maintaining the previous century's Catholic polemic, though heavily toned down for the censors.

La cisma reflected a renewed surge of interest over English affairs and dramatization of events that reflected the negative effects of the schism.¹⁷⁸ The schism was a shock with continuing implications for countries dealing with England, and in the case of *La cisma*, recent events recalled the historical example. The drama's timing followed the failure of the Spanish Match, a proposed marriage under James I between the then crown prince Charles and the Infanta María. In the preceding decades, James had worked to negotiate an end to the Anglo-Spanish war, for which a marriage treaty was long considered; however, the engagement had fallen apart soon after Charles had traveled to visit the princess unannounced in a failed attempt to woo her. Produced at a time when they were again warring with the

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, 4-5

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, 4

English and watching Charles argue with France over his wife's dowry, *La cisma* reflected the danger of marriage to a schismatic English king and an acknowledgement of the fate the Infanta had escaped. Meanwhile, the playwright presented the saint-like and strong Catherine as "the embodiment of a national identity," promoting the ideal of the Spanish wife.¹⁷⁹

As a Jesuit, like Rivadeneira, Calderón would have recognized the lessons available in the history, though great care, however had to be taken to prepare this figure of Anne for the stage, leaving out any explicit reference to incest or sexual misdeeds. Her accused lovers, for instance, are reduced to the character of Charles, the French Ambassador, with whom she does not actually commit adultery. Another dramatic alteration is once again the extension of Wolsey's life to keep him as the main antagonist. The choice of all three of these plays to frame Wolsey as the chief villain illustrates at least just how negatively he was perceived by all parties, if not knowledge of this thematic device from the English plays. Furthermore, to avoid the censors, neither Henry nor Anne ever utter, nor in Anne's case commit, any heresy, nor is the English king ever shown as the Head of the Church of England.¹⁸⁰ Instead, in both the sexual and religious realms, the play finds more subtle and symbolic means to hint at the truth. Despite this, the play offers no doubt about Anne's corruptive nature.

¹⁷⁹ María Cristina Quintero, "English Queens and the Body Politic in Calderón's "La cisma de Inglaterra" and Rivadeneira's "Historia Eclesiastica del Scisma del Reino de Inglaterra," *MLN*. Vol. 113, No. 2, Hispanic Issue (March, 1998), 263

¹⁸⁰ Mackenzie, introduction to *The Schism in England*, 22-25

The drama opens to Henry asleep at his desk, dreaming of the specter of Anne Boleyn who stands beside him and promises to erase all that he writes down.¹⁸¹ The vision of this phantasm results first in Henry erasing his defense of the sacrament of marriage and then throwing down a letter from the Pope and raising one from Luther to his head.¹⁸² Both actions are unintentional and come even as he swears his devotion to the Roman Church, his wife, and his daughter Mary, leaving the King unnerved and anxious. From the first moments of the play before she is even introduced, the action therefore arranges Anne as the cause of Henry's break with his wife and with Rome, and Henry, though his beliefs run contrary, is powerless to stop himself from symbolic acts of heresy. She becomes "the theatrical vehicle in displacing blame for the schism away from Henry VIII" as heresy "is embodied in the figure of Anne."¹⁸³ The repudiation of this heresy at the end through Henry's recognition of his daughter Mary is thus symbolized in the decapitated body of Anne laying at their feet as they sit enthroned.¹⁸⁴ From the tradition of Sander and Rivadeneira, though they criticize Henry as well, Anne's villainy explained Henry's shift in behavior by depicting the blasphemy of the schism as the good king ruined by the tempting woman. For this audience, there was no cause to renegotiate Anne's persona, and her graphic end — a headless corpse on stage — clearly sent the message that her reputation was as negative as ever.

Despite being the heretical incarnation, her religion is only discussed once when Calderón employs her suitor, Charles, to propose that though "she seems a

¹⁸¹ Calderón, *The Schism in England*, 49

¹⁸² *Ibid*, 53-55

¹⁸³ Quintero, "English Queens and the Body Politic," 273

¹⁸⁴ Calderón, *The Schism in England*, 185

Catholic in public, / I have a strong suspicion that in private/ She is a Lutheran.”¹⁸⁵

The solitary mentions relied on the cultural memory to supply the appropriate characteristics of the religion and Anne’s faith. As Ann Mackenzie argues, in Spain, “Charles’ single reference would have been enough...to recall in imaginative vividness what it had heard and read...concerning [Anne’s] Protestant wickedness.”¹⁸⁶ Thus in belief and sexuality, Calderón’s theatrical Anne continues the Catholic tradition. Furthermore she actively contrives with Wolsey to remove Queen Catherine, and upon her elevation to queen, she betrays the Cardinal, prompting the king to strip him of his possessions. Her ambition, “self-love,” and “villainous countenance” — as identified by both the drama’s fool Pasquín and her own lover — earn Anne her downfall, and maintain the Catholic histories’ device of her serving as a foil to Catherine’s goodness.¹⁸⁷ Anne also stands in as a representation for her daughter, who is never mentioned throughout the play, much as Shakespeare refrained from alluding too much to Mary. Each play recognizes the history and national spirits that it incorporates and well as the expectations of the royal court.

In each case, the theatrical productions tapped into the historical myths and contemporary undercurrents on kingship and religion to present an entertaining and instructive take on the textual narratives. These plays occurred very much in the

¹⁸⁵ William Shakespeare and John Fletcher, *Henry VIII (All is True)*, edited by Gordon McMullan (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2000), 337 (3.2.99); Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *The Schism in England*, trans. by Kenneth Muir and Ann L Mackenzie (Warminster: Arts & Phillips, 1990), 69

¹⁸⁶ Ann L. Mackenzie, Introduction to *The Schism in England* by Pedro Calderón de la Barca, trans. by Kenneth Muir and Ann L Mackenzie, (Warminster: Arts & Phillips, 1990), 25

¹⁸⁷ Calderón, *The Schism in England*, 69, 77

public realm where such considerations were necessary and thus where the story being presented was rarely without a message. These depictions of Anne, therefore, are particularly tailored to suit the needs of the dramas' message. Though her minimal influence indicates a certain loss of current relevance, her appearance in the English plays implies a desire or necessity at some level to invoke her in discussion of Henry VIII. It can be argued that, if nothing else, her lack of exposition demonstrates that the audience could be trusted to remember her. Her whole persona in the Spanish play revolves around (censor-appropriate) manifestations of her heresy and sexuality. Meanwhile, while the English plays do not place great emphasis of importance on her, the comments, particularly those uttered by the Catholics reference the impact of her existence on the moment of the Henrician Reformation. The fact that these remarks come from Catholics rather than herself perhaps acknowledge the converse emphasis placed upon her in the papists discourse, or to avoid the censors, or simply to reaffirm the connection between Catholics and her death.

Jacobean Historiography and the Tudors

In the late Elizabethan and early Stuart period, the field of history had undergone several changes, in large part due to the influence of the antiquarian and library movements that had been gaining force since the late sixteenth century, which placed large emphasis on original sources and thus encouraged the collection of

manuscripts, treaties, letters and diaries both native and from abroad.¹⁸⁸ Indeed, the early seventeenth century saw the expansion in the size, number and types of libraries as the importance of documentation and verification over polemic increased.¹⁸⁹ Sir Robert Cotton, for instance, whose collection was described as “the finest and most accessible institution for research in early seventeenth-century England,” assisted several notable historians of this period including William Camden and John Speed.¹⁹⁰ In addition, these libraries facilitated greater collaboration between writers, such as Francis Godwin’s attempts to complement Camden’s work.

At the same time, possibly in part because the Jacobean divine plan concentrated on the ends rather than the means, it was now permissible to write about the faults the figures that carried out the Schism from Rome, particularly Henry, while maintaining the outcome as providential. At the same time, the main discussion of the Henrician Reformation stemmed from national narratives and royal biographies rather than the ecclesiastical histories. Instead these latter accounts shifted their argument to the other contested church history: the quest for origins.¹⁹¹ These works sought to establish continuity between early Christianity in England and the current Church, though it was not a unified discourse; the different strands of English Protestantism — high church, low church, Puritan, Arminian, etc. — each strove to make their cases in these arguments.

¹⁸⁸ F. Smith Fussner, *The Historical Revolution: English Historical Writing and Thought 1580-1640* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), 97-98

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 60-2; W.H. Herendeen, “William Camden: Historian, Herald, and Antiquary,” *Studies in Philology*, Vol. 85, No. 2 (Spring 1988), 192-3

¹⁹⁰ Fussner, *Historical Revolution*, 62; Woolf, *The Idea of History*, 66

¹⁹¹ Felicity Heal, “Appropriating History: Catholic and Protestant Polemics and the National Past,” in *The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, ed. Paulina Kewes, 105-128 (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 2006), 115

In consequence during the early Stuart period the historical examinations of the life and reign of Henry VIII underwent a critical revision of the good king presented in Elizabethan chronicles. His reputation and esteem declined as the narratives criticized his inconsistent religious beliefs, destruction of the monasteries, and his dramatic marital life in tones ranging from balanced to scathing: Sir Walter Raleigh wrote, “If all the pictures and patterns of a merciless prince were lost in the world, they might all again be painted to life out of the story of this king.”¹⁹² With Elizabeth no longer on the throne, and indeed as the one whose will removed the Stuarts from the succession, there were no political restrictions concerning the dead king’s portrayal. Although in the public theatrical field Henry became a kingly exemplar, in the historical texts James looked to other monarchs like Henry VII for comparison and the theme of divine union.¹⁹³ The result was what Daniel Woolf calls a general ‘ambivalence’ towards Henry that allowed for a more non-partisan examination of the King and those around him, including Anne Boleyn.¹⁹⁴

While the Jacobean histories confirm the facts about Anne established in the Elizabethan narratives and chronicles — she is beautiful, virtuous, charitable, and supportive of reformers, —they diverge from the old accounts by focusing in large part on her trial and death, the elements that had previously been avoided. The death of Elizabeth removed the lingering hesitation over discussing the accusations made against Anne, but it was most of all, the new attitude towards Henry that enabled the historians to address the question of how she had come to be executed. They devout

¹⁹² Sir Walter Raleigh, *The History of the World, Volume I (1614)* (Edinburgh 1820), xiv-xv

¹⁹³ Rankin, “Henry VIII,” 349+; Woolf, *The Idea of History*, 55,141-2

¹⁹⁴ Woolf, *The Idea of History*, 141

less time on the assertion of the invalidity of Catherine of Aragon as Queen and the validity, in turn, of Anne, which has the sense of an accepted fact at a time when the crown was not threatened by assertions to the contrary.

The works further concur on Anne's reformist faith, that this faith incurred the animosity of the papists at court, particularly Wolsey, and that her death was due in part to Catholic persuasion and rumors. This thread that had been briefly mentioned or alluded to before became a definite fact. As John Speed put it, "it seemeth very plaine, that the crimes supposed against this Christian Queene Anne, were matters contriued by the deuise of the Pope, and his Instruments her enemies."¹⁹⁵ The description of the papists' enmity towards her increases from the older accounts and promotes her as a victim of the evils of Catholicism at a time in which suspicion of the group was imbedded in the English identity. This ability to present Anne, particularly as the mother of Elizabeth, as having been persecuted by Catholics no doubt went far in preserving her positive presentation even as Henry became open to critique. With confirmation from the Gunpowder Plot, the belief continued that Catholics sought the destruction of Protestant rulers, and Anne further justified this idea.

The books also contain far more assertive affirmations of her innocence with none of the hesitation found in the previous histories. Whereas the prior accounts often shied away from her death, the Jacobean texts center their attention upon it,

¹⁹⁵ John Speed, *The history of Great Britaine under the conquests of ye Romans, Saxons, Danes and Normans Their originals, manners, warres, coines & seales: with ye successions, lives, acts & issues of the English monarchs from Iulius Caesar, to our most gracious soueraigne King Iames* (London, 1611), EEBO, 771

permitted by the looser constrictions on her story brought about by Elizabeth's death. Concerning her defense of herself at the trial, they expand upon Foxe, writing, "shee seemed to cleare all the matters laid to her charge" and that "hauing an excellent quicke wit, and being a ready speaker, did so answer to all obiections, that had the Peeres giuen in their verdict according to the expectation of the assembly, shee had beene acquitted."¹⁹⁶ They also present the anecdote of Henry Norris refusing to falsely condemn her in trade for a pardon along with the general lack of evidence presented against her. These affirmations advance the element of conspiracy in Anne's tale. Her innocence is obvious to the authors — so great is Godwin's certainty that he vows, "An Act of Parliament against her shall not worke on my beliefe," — leading them to investigate the true reasons for her death, and demonstrate the evil influence of Catholicism. Her innocence and trial become a way to expand upon her victimhood, and employ her as a prominent example of innocence condemned.

Where the records begin to differ appears in the assignment of guilt beyond that of the papists. While Foxe and others had hinted at Henry's desire to be rid of Anne through the haste in which he remarried, Godwin and Camden carried the accusation further, giving Henry equal responsibility to the Catholics in Anne's death. In *Annales of England*, published a few years after Speed in 1613, Francis Godwin exclaims:

I say, you shall easily be persuaded with mee, that the insatiable Prince glutted with the saiety of [Anne], and out of the desire of variety seeking to enjoy another [Jane], did more willingly give eare to the treacherous calumnies of

¹⁹⁶ Speed, *The history of Great Britaine*, 771; Godwin, *Annales*, 138-9

the malicious Popelings, than either benefitted an upright Judge, or a loving husband.¹⁹⁷

According to Godwin, the Catholics, as before, targeted Anne for her reformist views, however, to do so they took advantage of the King's fickle nature that moved from one lust to another. The King meanwhile allowed Anne's innocent death to occur to satisfy his changed desires, marrying Jane, according to Godwin, with his former wife's blood still fresh on his hands.¹⁹⁸ The King's tyranny is so great that the author goes as far as to mourn for the loss of Wolsey, the typecast villain, as after his death no one remained to contain or steer Henry.¹⁹⁹ A providential tone directs this account, so that Anne's untimely death, "God seemed to revenge in the immature end of the Duke of Richmond," the king's bastard son.²⁰⁰ This same providence permits Godwin's verbal lashing of Henry while preserving the good of the Reformation and Anne becomes the victim of spousal and Catholic cruelty. Henry's listening to Catholic advice, which leads to the death of the innocent and good Anne likewise reinforces the dangers of papist-like counsel too near a king.

In his biography of Elizabeth I's reign meanwhile, William Camden explicitly avows Henry's blame describing the King as "giuing himself to new Loues, to distrusts, to wrath, to murder, and to blood; to make way to his new Loue Jane Seymor, he accused Anne...[of] haue[ing] defiled his Bed."²⁰¹ Camden denounces

¹⁹⁷ Godwin, *Annales*, 142

¹⁹⁸ "And then consider but the Kings precipitated Nuptialls the very next day after the death of his former Wife, yet scarce interred, and with whose warme bloud his imbrued hands yet reaked." Ibid, 142

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, 97

²⁰⁰ Ibid, 142

²⁰¹ Camden, *Annales*, 24. Godwin's own opinion of Henry may have been informed by that of Camden as the latter's biography of Elizabeth inspired his own narrative of the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary, which he intended to compliment Camden's work.

the King even more directly than Godwin, naming Henry as the constructor and implementer of the lies, rather than only accepting those of others. Given that Camden's work focused on Elizabeth, with only the brief introduction to explain her parentage and events prior to her reign, his choice of facts and anecdotes provides an indication of what he considered the most important facets of their stories. Camden's account continues as a list of Henry's mistreatment of his succeeding wives and a statement about his persecutions of both papists and Lutherans.²⁰² This appraisal of Henry makes Anne one of many victims of the King's chaotic rule and marital life. With Henry's attacking of all religious sides, he is motivated only by his lusts and whims, and the references to Anne's own faith and modesty are increased.

Of Elizabeth's two parents, the larger part of Camden's introduction to the *Annales* is dedicated to Anne, even including a brief account of her childhood, serving to associate the late Queen with her mother over her father. He was not alone in this regard. Responding in 1616 to a Catholic treatise by James I's former chaplain, Ben Carier, claiming that Elizabeth pretended to both be Catholic and Calvinist, George Hakewill wrote that all knew she would be Protestant because her mother had been so:

Now the mother being thus affected...in likelihood the daughter had benee that way also affected, whether the breach with Rome by her mothers marriage had bene made or no. It was S. Pauls argument to Timothie...so may we, by the same reason, from the faith which dwelt in them mother of Queene Elizabeth, make some coniecture of her faith, that it was not different from her mothers.²⁰³

²⁰² Camden, *Annales*, 24-5

²⁰³ George Hakewill, *An answer to the treatise written by Dr. Carier* (1616), EEBO – This work was in general a rebuttal to Carier's defense of reverting back to Catholicism and Rome.

Hakewill asserts Elizabeth's Protestantism through that of her mothers, to the degree that even without the schism she would have been a Protestant. The late Queen's religion then was a direct inheritance from Anne Boleyn, endowing the latter with a further importance to the religious identity of England by crediting her as the source of Elizabeth's direction for the Church.

Interestingly these writings of Godwin, Camden and Hakewill were all sponsored in some form by James I; Godwin received royal support and had his history published by the royal printer, John Bell, while James had commissioned Camden's biography of Elizabeth and Hakewill's refutation of Carier.²⁰⁴ This provides in part an estimate of the skill and prestige the authors had. While it is unlikely that the King commissioned specifically these depictions of Anne, it nevertheless shows this support of Anne over Henry and her close link to Elizabeth did not bother him.

The emphasis on Anne as a victim of Henry's changing passions did not extend across all the narratives. John Speed's 1611 *The history of Great Britaine* still closely followed the template set by Foxe and Aylmer.²⁰⁵ Familiarly, Anne's main trait through his narrative is her Protestantism, and Speed maintains her as central to the reformation in England, referring to her as "the chiefe, ... most fauourable to those learned Diuines, that laide mans saluation vpon the Rocke Christ, next [...] procuring a tolleration from the king for them."²⁰⁶ He continues, relating her charitable work

²⁰⁴ Woolf, *The Idea of History*, 126

²⁰⁵ *Ibid History*, 70-1

²⁰⁶ Speed, *The history of Great Britaine*, 771

and appointment of learned men, as well as her Christian attitude facing her death.²⁰⁷

While Speed's account demonstrates continuity with the past rhetoric, it also continues in the Jacobean trend of extrapolating on the Catholic involvement in Anne's death, referring to her as the brave Hester that the Romanists, like Haman, sought to ruin. He likewise also connects her to Elizabeth when calling her "a Phenix indeed," connecting Anne to her daughter's famous symbol.²⁰⁸

The question of why Anne did not undergo the same critical revision as Henry VIII is an interesting one. In large part, the victimization of Anne served to highlight the King's faults. As mentioned above her ability to be deployed as a pawn of Catholic schemes most likely protected her particularly as anti-Catholicism became further entangled with the English identity. There was no motive to change the image of her as a Protestant martyr, and expanding on her death made her a more sympathetic and developed figure. Indeed it is likely that she became more developed because they recognized the potential in Anne as a warning against popery. The growing nostalgia for Elizabeth could have influence the treatment of her mother as well. The preservation of the good Anne also indicates an acceptance by the Jacobean authors of her Elizabethan presentation even though they sought to use original sources. The innocent and victimized reformist Anne therefore *was* the historical fact. What is more, this acceptance also permitted the development of the relationship

²⁰⁷ Ibid, 772-3

²⁰⁸ Ibid, 770

between Anne and Elizabeth that the previous century's writers had tried to assert despite the Queen's own silence on the matter.

This affirmation of Anne's character also developed from the historians re-engaging in the discourse with Nicholas Sander's *Schismatis Anglicani*, a text that each of Jacobean histories refuted either directly or in allusion. As previously mentioned, countering specifically Sander's portrayal of Anne had been one of the motivations of George Wyatt who referred to the Catholic writer throughout in such colorful words as "the Romish fable-framer," "Roman legender," and "railing Romanist."²⁰⁹ Likewise, John Speed seemed to have Sander in mind when he remarked, "accursed therefore be the pen... whose Serpents mouth to uphold his God the Pope, hath spewed out his poison of untruthes."²¹⁰ Furthermore, Wyatt and Godwin refer to Henry and Catherine of Aragon's marriage as 'incestuous,' co-opting the most horrifying of Sander's claims towards the marriage he had defended.²¹¹ Much of the continued support for Anne therefore arises from a refusal to give any credence to 'the Romish fable-framer,' and a necessity — with an implicit acknowledgement of some degree of her importance — to condemn the argument created in response to the Elizabethan Protestant rhetoric, by re-deploying and reaffirming parts of that rhetoric.

²⁰⁹ George Wyatt, "Extracts from the Life of the Virtuous Christian and Renowned Queen Anne Boleigne," in *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey, Volume II*, by George Cavendish, ed. by Samuel Weller Singer, 175-215 (Chiswick: C. Whittingham, 1825), Google eBook, 190, 193, 196

²¹⁰ Speed, *The history of Great Britaine*, 770

²¹¹ Wyatt, "Extracts," 184; Godwin, *Annales*, 66

Decline and War

During Charles I's reign, the tensions over the King's authority versus the Parliament's, mounting dissatisfaction, and a host of other elements from the English, British, and European contexts, gave way to civil war in the British Isles and decades of turbulence.²¹² Under these circumstances, the importance of Anne Boleyn, along with the Henrician Reformation and most of the distance past, even those relating to civil war, dropped off and people struggled to deal with the immediate circumstance in which they found themselves. As Daniel Woolf put it, "after 1642 there was simply little point in repeating again the lessons of 1399 and 1485; those of more recent weeks and months seemed much more pressing."²¹³ Much of the writing of the war and Interregnum, therefore, was centered on explaining how the events of the recent past had come about, first with the war, then the regicide and Protectorate.

Even before this, however, writings dealing with the Henrician period had dropped off, with a few exceptions. In the 1620s, histories by Camden and Godwin were reprinted in English translation, however few original histories, theatrical revivals or highly popular new editions concerning Henry or Anne were released after this. This decrease corresponded with the general trend, described by Daniel Woolf, wherein by the mid-1630s, English historiography had "settled into a state of stagnation."²¹⁴ Meanwhile the theatrical presentation of historical example also declined after an ordinance against stage plays in 1642 crushed the professional

²¹² I refer to it here as the 'civil war' as the term "The English Civil War" is the general term used for it, although this belies the numerous complications and involvement stemming from figures and influence outside of England.

²¹³ Woolf, *The Idea of History*, 247

²¹⁴ *Ibid*, 246

theater.²¹⁵ Some Tudor era figures did remain prominent in the religious discourse; for instance Laud, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was paralleled by the Puritans to Cardinal Wolsey as another case of “pontifical tyranny,” while Laud’s supporters in turn blasted the Edwardian Reformation.²¹⁶ This focus on Wolsey likely encouraged the publishing for the first time of Cavendish’s biography in 1641, which would have introduced on a larger scale than manuscript fragments another perception of Anne. However, all the genres of historical writing in England would treat it with selective blindness concerning Anne, incorporating her enmity with Wolsey and, in the theater, her relationship with Henry Percy, while leaving out Cavendish’s more sinister accusations.

The two other works that bear mention from this period, both for their timing — during the war at a time when Anne had low relevance to the occurrences — and the large success enjoyed by each, were Richard Baker’s *A chronicle of the Kings of England* (1643) and Edward Herbert, Lord Cherbury’s *The History of England under Henry VIII* (1649). Baker’s Tudor-style chronicle, which garnered massive public popularity, maintains the now traditional perspective on Anne though it is more detailed than the Jacobean accounts, a trait it shares with Herbert’s biography, though it does offer one new explicit statement that bears considering. After pointing out in standard fashion the absurdity of the charges against Anne, Baker comments that her death is not so surprising given all the enemies she would have had as a Protestant, and that, “perhaps in that respect, the King himself not greatly her friend: (for

²¹⁵ Elizabeth Howe, *The First English Actresses: Women and drama 160-1700* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1

²¹⁶ Paul L. Wiley, “Renaissance Exploitation of Cavendish’s “Life of Wolsey,”” *Studies in Philology*, Vol. 43, No.2 (April 1946), 139-40

though he had excluded the Pope, yet he continued a Papist still).”²¹⁷ In this comment, Baker presents Henry’s lingering Catholicism as an explanation for his tyranny, taking the king far away from his Elizabethan or Shakespearean portrayal and framing his abuse of Anne again in terms of an anti-Catholic rhetoric.

Herbert’s biography, conversely, does attempt a rehabilitation of the king and a non-partisan approach to many of the figures, incorporating English and foreign sources. He finished the work around 1640, but it was not published until the year of Charles I’s execution in 1649, yet the author was only minimally involved in the Civil War, and his history does not seem to be a commentary on these events — indeed, he was more critical of Charles — but rather a work done out of genuine interest, and in a style more like the proceeding century. To call him completely objective, however, would be wrong.²¹⁸ He reiterates the Jacobean narrative, though in an analytical manner, demonstrating the successful incorporation of Anne’s defense into the story even when the stakes were not high, including the dismissal of Sander, which he calls “fiction.”²¹⁹ He does however assign Anne an active role in Wolsey’s downfall and a malice that is dropped in the next period to not conflict with her virtuous image.

Conclusion

²¹⁷ Richard Baker, *A chronicle of the Kings of England, from the time of the Romans government [sic] unto the raigne of our soveraigne lord, King Charles* (London 1643), EEBO, 45

²¹⁸ The claim of “complete objectivity” and “impartiality” is made by Paul Wiley in “Renaissance Exploitation of Cavendish’s “Life of Wolsey,”” 136-7. Even aside from the Anne though, the biography is hardly unbiased, trying to defend Henry while condemning Wolsey

²¹⁹ Herbert, *History of England under Henry VIII*, 401

The early Stuart period diverged in many ways from the Elizabethan over the presentation of Anne Boleyn as her story became less and less relevant to the current events. The death of the queen freed writers to expand upon the elements of her life that had previously been avoided, particularly her death. These descriptions, excepting Herbert, are often passionate, showing a commitment to Anne's innocence and honor, and therefore a desire or need to take the time to defend her. She had not, therefore, regressed in her general use or significance in the histories. The public realm in the form of the theatrical showed another story in terms of her importance in which mentioning her was sufficient, although these mentions did carry meaning. At the same time, even here she maintained the trappings of her virtue and reformism. The result, therefore, was a period in which Anne's significance and representation granted to her by the previous century was recognized, but toned down and rather expanded in a less mythic manner. The Catholic polemic, meanwhile, continued in the same vein as before, though there was less active engagement between the writers inside and outside of England, aside from the consistent dismissals of Sander.

The next period would once again see the rise in relevance of the histories of the schism, as well as of Elizabeth, which would draw on the expansions in biography and function — the increased emphasis on a papal conspiracy — made regarding Anne in the early seventeenth century as she became not only relevant, but central to the discourse on the early English Reformation, and, through that discourse, important to the identity of England as a Protestant country.

Chapter 3

Defending the “Protestant Kingdome”: Anne as a Protestant Protagonist during the Succession Crisis (1660-1690)

Introduction

In the late seventeenth century, following the restoration of the English monarchy, a sequence of crises broke out as a result of the perceived heightened threat of Catholicism to the realm and the proximity of popery to the throne. This fear reached its apex when it became clear that the heir to the throne was Catholic. At this point, it had been over a century since there was a Catholic monarch, and the last Catholic claimant to the crown had been Mary, Queen of Scots; now it appeared that England's continued separation from Rome could be in jeopardy. As a result, the Protestant discourse refocused itself once again on the example and history of the Tudor period to try to ensure that the religious changes instituted in that period, excluding those of Mary I, could not be reversed, especially the break from Rome. Moreover, they sought to remind people of the dangers of Catholicism and in some opinions, why the papist heir should not be allowed to inherit.

In this renewed attention on both the schism and the Elizabethan example, Anne Boleyn surged in importance with multiple histories referring to her with phrases like “one of the most considerable Figures in this History.”²²⁰ In an argument

²²⁰ Anonymous, *The History of the Life, Victorious Reign, and Death of K. Henry VIII* (Fleet Street, London 1682), EEBO, 72

that sought to portray a continuity and progression of reform to the present day, she provided necessary spiritual and legal links. Simultaneously, the story of her death — which thanks to the early Stuart period was much discussed — fed into the fierce anti-Catholic sentiment, which appeared not only in histories but also in laws.²²¹ Not only were the previous depictions of Anne that stressed the validity of the schism, her contributions to and belief in reform, and her victimization at the hands of papists continued, they were also advanced in significance and prominence so that she became a central figure in two major works of the period, from very different genres, that each obtained a high degree of success and popularity that continued well into the next century.

At a time when the literary and scholarly approaches to history were diverging, Gilbert Burnet's *The history of the Reformation of the Church of England of the progress made in it during the reign of K. Henry VIII* followed the latter, stressing original sources and the use of logic to argue for the lawfulness of Protestant reforms to the kingdom since the schism.²²² This included not only the king's royal supremacy over the church, but also the legitimacy of Elizabeth, in order to certify that the religious settlement she brought about was in all ways valid. This required discussion of Anne in legal and moral terms. His other major goal in this work was to engage directly with the adversarial Catholic polemic, which still retained the same

²²¹ In 1673 and 1678 Parliament passed the Test Acts, which in effect was designed to exclude Catholics from the Houses of Parliament

²²² Martine Watson Brownley, "Sir Richard Baker's "Chronicle" and Later Seventeenth-Century English Historiography," *Huntington Library Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 4 (Autumn, 1989), 483

claims from the Elizabethan period, in a point-by-point refutation. It is in this facet that his high valuation of Anne appeared as Burnet constructed his refutation of the Catholic narrative around its perspectives on her, acknowledging and confirming that her depiction was central to any argument in favor of the schism. In this sense, not only does he portray her as important to the time, with all the previously confirmed complimentary characteristics, but he further recognizes the potency of her memory in the discourses.

Meanwhile, in the theatrical realm, John Banks transformed Anne into the central protagonist in the tragedy *Vertue Betray'd*. She competes for attention with no other queen, and even Henry is subverted in importance, becoming an amorous king whose opinions he reverses in every scene he appears in. It is a play that celebrates Anne's martyrdom by showing multiple figures contriving against her, all sinister and all Catholic, even at the end the King. Furthermore, the drama develops the idea of the relationship between Anne and Elizabeth, stressing this lineage over that of Henry, and increasing Anne's significance by tapping into that of Elizabeth, who from the nostalgia of the early Stuart period had developed into one of the most powerful Protestant heroes.

These two works approach Anne in very diverse ways, with the first tapping more into logic and the latter into emotion, with the ultimate result of elevating her in the Protestant discourse, while at the same time increasing the ways in which she could be described. These depictions of her worked to promote and defend the once again threatened protestant identity of England, which by now had operated for over a century. In this period once again English Protestants engaged with opinions from

outside of the country, pushing them to strengthen their own version of the history. By the end of the seventeenth century, the Protestants succeeded in asserting England as a Protestant country, thereby preserving the praiseful and significant image of Anne, which due to the renewal of attention had become a stock figure in the English history, accepted as a person who needed to be not just mentioned, but described and discussed.

Anti-Catholic Hysteria: The Popish Plot and Exclusion Crisis

Despite the relative calm following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 under Charles II, by the late 1670s panic and crisis again gripped the country deriving from the fear of a Catholic succession to the crown. Charles II, though he conceived several illegitimate children, had failed to produce an heir by his wife, leaving his Catholic younger brother, James, Duke of York, as the heir presumptive. James' faith, already suspected, had been confirmed in 1673, after his refusal to swear an oath against transubstantiation, and his subsequent second marriage to the Catholic Mary of Modena.²²³ English Protestants had already felt an intense anxiety over Charles's own Catholic wife, his measures of religious tolerance, and his overtures of friendship to France, then under the rule of Louis XIV, the champion of Catholicism. Now the possibility of James as king presented the threat that he would return the Church, and England, to the fold of Rome. Moreover, if James had a son with his new wife — his

²²³ Tim Harris, *Politics Under the Later Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society 1660-1715*, (New York: Longman Group UK Limited, 1993), 56-7

previous marriage had only yielded two daughters who by Charles's command had been raised protestant — it could signify a permanent return to Catholic rule.

The atmosphere of Restoration England was thus heavily laden with panic and alarm over the religious implications of the near future. This went hand-in-hand with a renewed surge in suspicion and hate directed towards Catholics that pre-dated the public a of James' faith. Following the Thirty Years War, man Englishmen, viewing the retreat of Protestantism in the face of the ascending Catholic superpower France, perceived their country as one of the last holdouts against popery. This fear of Romanism from abroad was complemented by heightened suspicions of papist schemes within Europe. Nothing captured this anxiety more than the widespread hysteria that followed the revelation of the Popish Plot in the years 1678-79. The conspiracy, unveiled by a man named Titus Oates, revolved around a plot by Jesuits, with French assistance, to assassinate the king and replace him with James, prompting an uprising of twenty thousand Catholics in London to massacre the Protestants. The plot was also entirely fabricated, but it correlated with the prevailing fears and the memories of past plots, resulting in overwhelming acceptance and belief.²²⁴

²²⁴ The plot incorporated elements of the Spanish Armada, the Gunpowder Plot, and the claim that London would be burned to the ground recalled the more recent Great Fire of London in 1666. In the aftermath of this destructive fire, which started at a bakery in Pudding Lane, Catholics and foreigners, particularly Frenchmen, were among those to whom blame was appointed. The plot further received confirmation from two incidents: the death of the magistrate with whom Oates had met and the discovery of letters on the Duchess of York's secretary that discussed both the return of Catholicism to England and a French triumph over the country. – Mark A. Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain, 1603-1714* (London: Penguin, 1997), 252-4; Tim Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and his Kingdoms* (London: Penguin Books, 2006), 137; John Miller, *Popery and Politics in England, 1660-1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 156-7. See also John Kenyon, *The Popish Plot* (London: Heinemann, 1972)

The result of this panic was an increase of anti-Catholic messages in various forms of rhetoric and propaganda, such as William Darrell's *The increase of popery in England, since the reformation made by King Henry VIII* (1681), that sought to highlight the dangers presented by papists.²²⁵ John Miller describes, "Anti-Catholic propaganda was concerned to show, not only the ridiculousness, impiety and superstition of Popery, but also its dreadfulness as a *political* phenomenon as evidenced by English Protestants' past struggles with Catholicism."²²⁶ Writers turned to figures and stories from history that captured these sentiments and ideas to further prove and justify their point. Anne Boleyn's story provided an example where Catholic scheming contributed to the death of an English Protestant queen. Not only did it demonstrate the malice of popery, but it was also part of a larger plot attempt to re-appropriate England for Rome. Nor would writers have had to strive too hard to demonstrate this connection; the involvement of Catholics in Anne's case had long since been established and this element had only grown more prominent over the past century.

Other Tudor figures played into this rhetoric as well. The image of the scheming and treasonous papist, full of ambition and deceit, along with the general corruption of the Roman church, continued to be exemplified in the figure of Cardinal Wolsey. Late seventeenth-century playwrights continued to extend his lifetime to supply him as the Catholic villain. He also served as a warning to kings of taking papist advice, a message of increased importance at a time when Charles seemed to

²²⁵ William Darrell, *The increase of popery in England, since the reformation made by King Henry VIII* (London 1681). EEBO.

²²⁶ Miller, *Popery and Politics in England*, 73

be surrounded by Catholics. However, it was Elizabeth who was truly the central icon of the Protestant rhetoric, firmly transformed by the time of the Restoration period into the mythic the defender of the Protestant faith and the model for the English religious identity.²²⁷ Tracts, biographies, and plays dealing with her all flourished during this era.

One of the largest debates in which she was invoked was the issue of Catholic succession. Compounded by the Popish Plot, anti-Catholic sentiment further manifested itself in the Exclusion Crisis, an attempt by the Whig party in Parliament to exclude James from the royal succession which reached its height from 1679-1681. Some argued for the crown to pass instead to James' firmly Protestant daughter, Mary, while others promoted the legitimizing of Charles's natural son, the Duke of Monmouth, who also a Protestant.²²⁸ According to Erika Mae Olbricht, several historians and playwrights turned to the case of Elizabeth I and Mary, Queen of Scots, as the analogy to their current Catholic succession crisis.²²⁹ The historical example warned of the plots and treachery papists would employ against the crown if there was a chance of a Catholic succeeding, a lesson which would have found its parallel in the Popish Plot.

Samuel Clarke's *The History of the Glorious Life, Reign, and Death, of the Illustrious Queen Elizabeth*, first published in 1682, was one such work that engaged with the relationship between the two queens, drawing parallels between Mary and

²²⁷ Erika Mae Olbricht, "'Take from me first the softness of a Woman': Rewriting Elizabeth's Execution of Mary Stuart during the Seventeenth-Century Succession Crisis," in *Resurrecting Elizabeth I in Seventeenth-Century England*, edited by Elizabeth H. Hageman and Katherine Conway, 220-38 (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007), 220-1

²²⁸ Charles, however, refused to even consider this latter option.

²²⁹ Ibid

the Plot.²³⁰ Also within this politically charged biography is an introduction, which, modeled off of Camden's *Annales*, provides a chronology of Anne Boleyn.²³¹ As with Camden, this inclusion pointedly recalls Anne's story to the reader before proceeding with the history of Elizabeth, so that in the subsequent catalogue of Catholic treachery Anne's memory is not far behind. Like in the late sixteenth century, the presence of Elizabeth increased the attention given to her mother. Even if this inclusion was just the now standard format for a biography of Elizabeth, it still indicates how closely related to her daughter Anne was coming to be.

Anne also appeared in a more legal role in the succession discourse. The Exclusion Crisis had raised the question of how integrated Protestantism had become into the institutions of the English state, particularly in regards to the Church and the Monarchy — not only did it ask if there was there legal basis to remove Catholic heirs, but also whether a Catholic ruler could return England to the sphere of the Pope. In response, writers sought out stories and cases that supported an essential Protestant requirement for the throne. There was heightened sensitivity to attacks on the Church of England's validity so that published texts, like Gilbert Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, also stressed the legality of Henry and Elizabeth's actions regarding the Church out of fear that a Catholic might disregard them as the invalid actions of a

²³⁰ Ibid, 221, 224

²³¹ Samuel Clarke, *The History of the Glorious Life, Reign, and Death, of the Illustrious Queen Elizabeth*, 2nd Edition (London 1683), 1-8

Indeed, it is apparent that Clarke modeled this passage off of Camden's, including Henry's role in her downfall and the belief that Prince Edward had been cut out of his mother's stomach.

schismatic and a usurper.²³² This revived the detailed arguments that underlined Anne as Henry's first lawful wife to legitimate Elizabeth's birth and succession, and therefore her religious settlement and reign which then formed the basis for Protestant arguments.

Although sentiment for James's removal remained strong among the general population, Charles II exercised his influence and skill to ensure that the succession stayed as it was.²³³ Charles did urge his brother to abandon at least publically his Catholicism for the sake of the crown, but he placed greater importance on maintaining the royal prerogative. He dissolved a series of Exclusionist Parliaments, and even when the Commons passed the Exclusion Bill in October 1680, it failed in the House of Lords due in large part to the king's firm stance against parliamentary involvement in the succession.²³⁴ The Tories, promoting royal prerogative, gained the upper hand in the government in late 1681, halting further serious attempts to legally exclude the Duke of York. The exclusionist polemic still continued over the next few years until Charles II finally died in 1685 and his brother became James II. Three years later in 1688 James would lose the throne in the so called Golden Revolution to his Protestant daughter and son-in-law, Mary Stuart and William of Orange, whose acquisition of the crown was bolstered by the years of exclusionist

²³² Gilbert Burnet reported that he had in fact heard James II remark this concerning Elizabeth. See Thomas S. Clarke and Helen Charlotte Foxcroft, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1907), 207

²³³ Kishlansky, *Monarchy Transformed*, 259

²³⁴ *Ibid*, 257-8

discourse that promoted the evils of Catholicism and the continuation of Protestant rule, a discourse that had utilized and expanded the significance of Anne Boleyn.

Gilbert Burnet and the Return of Sander

In 1679 at the height of the anti-papist feeling, as Exclusion sentiment grew, Gilbert Burnet published *The history of the Reformation of the Church of England of the progress made in it during the reign of K. Henry VIII* to defend the Church against Catholic accusations of its sacrilege and invalidity.²³⁵ The work was so well received at the time that both houses of Parliament voted to give him thanks and asked him to expand the history.²³⁶ Indeed, the book was such a success that it became the standard history of the Reformation for the next century, particularly where Anne was concerned. It is surprising then that though most of Anne's modern biographers, including Retha Warnicke, use it as a source, there has been little analysis conducted on it.²³⁷ Scholars that do discuss Burnet for the most part focus

²³⁵ Gilbert Burnet, *The history of the Reformation of the Church of England of the progress made in it during the reign of K. Henry VIII* (London 1679), EEBO

This was followed by a second volume in 1681 that covered the reign of Elizabeth I

²³⁶ Martin Greig, "Burnet, Gilbert (1643–1715)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004); online ed., Jan 2008
[<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4061>]

²³⁷ See Retha Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn: family politics at the court of Henry VIII* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989)

instead on his later works under both William III and Queen Anne I during the early eighteenth-century.²³⁸

While Burnet was driven by anti-Catholic sentiment, his initial motivations for constructing his history had not come solely from the anxiety around the Popish Plot, but rather from the publication of a French translation of Nicholas Sander's infamous book, *Origine Schismatis*, in 1676.²³⁹ The book had been greeted by avid excitement and discussion in France to the degree that Burnet was approached "by some persons of great Worth and Eminence" to draft a rebuttal.²⁴⁰ While English histories by this period had often made a point to refute Sander, in the late 1670s, this refutation was not merely one element, but rather the inspiration for an entire history, suggesting renewed and indeed heightened stakes involved in the Reformation's portrayal and perhaps an escalation of popularity in Sander. While reprints of the English Catholic's book had been issued repeatedly over the past century in various languages including German, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish, Burnet's volume was the first to systematically refute it.²⁴¹ The possibility of a papist ruler who could overthrow the advancement of the Reformation raised the stakes to defend the foundation of the current Church of England, and counter arguments that the schism was a sacrilege to be undone and affirm England's journey in establishing the true faith.

²³⁸ For an analysis of Burnet's later work see, Andrew Starkie, "Contested Histories of the English Church: Gilbert Burnet and Jeremy Collier," in *The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, ed. by Paulina Kewes, 329-345 (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, c2006)

²³⁹ Ibid, Preface [image 7]

²⁴⁰ Ibid

²⁴¹ Highley, "A Pestilent and Seditious Book," 154

Though it does not comment directly on the issue of James, the dedication to Charles II measures the greatness of the kings against whether they maintained a protestant national church and cites his faith that as “Defender of the Faith,” Charles will not let the church falter.²⁴² The book itself defends the belief that the English Church represented the true Church, and that although there were flaws, the Reformation occurred by providential plan. In the subsequent years, Burnet would demonstrate himself as a supporter of the Exclusion policy before eventually ending up in the court of William and Mary, whom he would serve through the Golden Revolution and after. His *History*, in line with these later actions, supported the idea that Protestantism was a requirement for an English monarch and thus that the Reformation was a continuous progression into the present. This argument hinged on the reputation of the Reformation’s first moments.

With the repudiation of Sander as one of his stated goals, the bulk of Burnet’s criticism and confutation of the dead Catholic revolves around the latter’s description of Anne Boleyn. Relatively early in the book, Burnet pauses in his narrative to give an account of Anne, “she being so considerable a Person in the following Relation.”²⁴³ He initiates her story with a direct quotation of Sander’s description of Anne, against which he then frames his own counter-argument, stating:

But all this of Anne Boleyn is so palpable a lie, or rather a complicated heap of lies, and so much depends on it, that I presume it will not offend the reader to be detained a few minutes in refutation of it...It leaves also a foul and lasting stain both on the Memory of Anne Boleyn, and of her incomparable Daughter Queen Elizabeth. It also derogates so much from the first Reformers, who had some kind of dependence on Queen Anne Boleyn, that it seems to be

²⁴² Burnet, *History of the Reformation*, [image 4-5]

²⁴³ Burnet, *History of the Reformation*, 41

of great importance for directing to Reader in the judgment he is to make of persons and things, to lay open the falsehood of this account.²⁴⁴

In this passage, Burnet explicitly lays out the issues at jeopardy deriving from Anne's history; the facts of her life play out not only in the memory of Henry, Elizabeth, and early reformers but also have bearing on the virtue and legality of the schism and Elizabeth's rule, and therefore the current Church of England. Many of these themes were present during the initial construction of her positive revision under Elizabeth as well, but Burnet's statement also stresses Anne's own historic memory. She is a figure whose life outside of the regnal narrative has come to require consideration. He gives Anne great significance, initiating his work, designed to promote a Protestant lineage, with her reputation. By his argument, discussion and defense of Anne in turn defends the Protestant identity of England. This consideration and protection takes on a new strength as he strives to fully disprove Sander claim's rather than dismiss him as his predecessors had done.

Burnet's progression through her history applies both logic and original source information to contradict Sander's remarks in a generally composed tone, avoiding the emotional phrasing he found distasteful in other accounts of the Reformation.²⁴⁵ For instance, he contends that she would not have attracted the interest of the Kings of France and England, nor sustained those of the English King for seven years, if she had possessed the physical deformities and lewd character Sander attributes to her.²⁴⁶ In these moments of frank logic he expresses his wit along with his frustration with the Sander myth. Concerning the accusations of incest,

²⁴⁴ Burnet, *History of the Reformation*, 41-2

²⁴⁵ Ibid, [image 6]

²⁴⁶ Ibid, 42

Burnet uses a variety of original documents — many of which he accessed from Sir Robert Cotton's, the early Stuart antiquarian, collection.²⁴⁷ In this sense, his history appears much like those of the succeeding century that stress research and objectivity, and indeed future historians would differ to his formula and rebuttal.²⁴⁸ Furthermore, his approach indicates that to Burnet not only was it important to support the moral foundations of the Reformation, i.e. refuting the incest charges, but that there was also required a complete invalidation of Sander's text in total so that it could not be again deployed against Protestants. As Sander had highlighted Anne for his malice, through her defense Burnet was able to strike at the credibility of the long-time source of the Catholic polemic.

In a departure from the historical tradition pertaining to Anne's descriptions, Burnet permits flaws in her persona, though none that would actually tarnish her character.²⁴⁹ He concedes, "She was of a very cheerful temper, which was not always limited within the bounds of exact decency and discretion," and as for the men charged, "their zeal in serving her was thought too warm and diligent to flow from a less active Principle than Love."²⁵⁰ At the same time, he reaffirms the Foxean compliments of charity and of supporting reformers. Anne also causes Henry to permit an English Bible while later a repentant Anne seeks forgiveness from Mary

²⁴⁷ Ibid, 43-44; [image 8]

²⁴⁸ See Paul de Rapin Thoyras, *The history of England, as well ecclesiastical as civil. Vol. vii. Containing the reign of Henry VIII* (London 1731), Eighteenth Century Collections Online, 350-1

²⁴⁹ The other exception to this tradition being Edward Herbert's *The History of England under Henry VIII* who portrays Anne as being directly involved with Wolsey's downfall, motivated in part by a desire for revenge

²⁵⁰ Burnet, *History of the Reformation*, 197

Tudor.²⁵¹ Both the flaws and virtues are supported by early evidence and present an admired, cheerful, religious, if slightly naïve, Queen. Though seeming at odd with each other, this description allows Burnet to preserve the memory of Anne while strengthening his argument against attack by acknowledging some flaws in her character.

She no longer has to be the unblemished moral figure emphasized from the previous periods, but can rather be a more nuanced figure. Moreover, the description of her relaxed decorum provides an explanation of how her enemies conceived of the charges of adultery and why those particular men were chosen as her accomplices. Meanwhile his detailed explorations of the faults in the trial add legality to her innocence atop of the established moral and religious reasoning. Henry, Burnet treats somewhat ambiguously, stating that “it is plain, the King was resolved to be rid of her, and her Daughter,” but refrains from additional malice.²⁵² With the Catholic threat once again looming, Henry’s character required some rehabilitation from the remarks of Camden and Godwin, at least in the historical texts. From his preference to logic over emotional phrasing and to better refute Sander, Burnet presents relatively unpolarized figures.

To be certain, Burnet produces a much fuller and more detailed account of Anne than most in previous periods, so that from reading it, she truly does appear as a ‘considerable’ person. She is deserving of a more complete biography that place her actions in the wider context of her character and experiences as had been done for so

²⁵¹ Ibid, 203

²⁵² Ibid, 203

long with eminent figures like Henry VIII and Elizabeth. Woven throughout are specific examples her involvement in the advancement of reform in England including her instances of charity. In one instance, Burnet relates the not often used anecdote in which Anne supplies Henry with *The Supplication of the Beggars*, wherein she provides him with information of reformist views.²⁵³ In another instance, he describes how the English Universities (still Catholic at this time) feared “that [Anne’s] Greatness and *Cranmers* Preferment would encourage Heresie,” thereby referencing contemporary opinions to indicate the perceived level of her influence and placing her in tandem with the other recognized architect of the schism, Cranmer.²⁵⁴ Though these sentences are nestled into an expansive narrative, these moments seem to point to the fact that the Reformation would not have occurred at that moment without the presence of Anne. The knowledge of the daughter who would succeed to the throne establishes a continuation between the two so that Anne (and Henry’s) first actions pave the way for Elizabeth’s settlement.

Though concerned with the reputation of the Church of England, Burnet’s narrative nevertheless promotes the victimized status of Anne, particularly through her own helplessness to reverse the proceedings. His work does this on two levels as well, for his Anne is both a victim of her own time, and of the blemishes attached to her memory by Sander. This status as a victim of circumstances and the plots of Catholics extended from the real past to the narrative discourse, so that there was the perception that even after a person’s death, Catholics would still seek to destroy them. History was an active political tool, and the power that it had in shaping and re-

²⁵³ Ibid, 160

²⁵⁴ Ibid, 87

shaping the past was well recognized. Even as historians increasingly strove for narratives supported by facts, the implications of these depictions on the present persisted, and the writers chose to craft their history according to the long-argument of the past to which they belonged, with divisions along factional, national, and religious lines.

Burnet's *History of the Reformation* was not his final discussion of Anne. The following decade witnessed a volley of rebuttals and censures between Burnet at various French historians, in which the latter group defended Sander. In 1686, writing from exile in the Netherlands where he was in service to Mary and William — after leaving London to escape the ire of newly crowned James II, with whom he was out of favor — he issued a criticism of ninth book of the French historian Antoine Varillas' *Histoire de l'heresie* (1682), dealing with England.²⁵⁵ It was afterwards published in London in 1689, following the Golden Revolution. In it he highlighted the history's factual errors, a substantial number of which revolve around Anne Boleyn and Sander's depiction of her. He proceeds again through the same refutations that he worked through in his own history, including the rejection of Henry as Anne's father, lamenting that "[Varillas] is resolved to keep up the credit of the blackest

²⁵⁵ Antoine Varillas, *Histoire de l'heresie* (Lyon 1682).

Burnet's self-exile resulted from a combination of his loss of position in England starting under Charles II from the end of the Exclusion crisis on — in which he had sided with the exclusionists. This fall from favor came about because of his anti-Catholic writings and sermons and a meeting with Charles in which he chided the king's immoral personal life. The success of the first two volumes of his *History* during the years of crisis also ensured his disfavor with James, who upon becoming king did not permit Burnet to kiss his ring. See Clarke and Foxcroft, *A Life of Gilbert Burnet*, 207-8; D.R. Woolf, "Narrative Historical Writing in Restoration England: A Preliminary Survey," in *The Restoration Mind*, ed. by W. Gerald Marshall, 207-251 (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1997), 234.

falsehoods” that Burnet had already disproved.²⁵⁶ Apparently not sufficiently satisfied with this response, he issued a continuation of his criticisms the following year, still with one or two more comments on Anne.²⁵⁷

Then in 1688, nine years after the initial publication of Burnet’s book, Joachim le Grand, another French historian, released *Histoire du divorce de Henry VIII, roy d'Angleterre, et de Catherine D'Arragon* containing both a defense of Sander’s work and refutation of Burnet’s subsequent history.²⁵⁸ A year later, still in the Netherlands, Burnet responded to le Grand in a letter to their mutual acquaintance Monsieur Thévenot in which he rebukes le Grand’s claims; the letter was subsequently printed in London.²⁵⁹ Content wise, although le Grand proclaimed a defense of Sander, he abandoned the long-dead historian’s description of the Anne despite it being “the chief thing aimed at by Sander” in order to discredit Elizabeth, perhaps indicating that Burnet had succeeded in part at removing Sander as the wholly accepted source.²⁶⁰ He nevertheless presented Anne as a “false prophet.”²⁶¹

²⁵⁶ Gilbert Burnet, *Reflections on Mr. Varillas's history of the revolutions that have happned in Europe in matters of religion and more particularly on his ninth book that relates to England* (Amsterdam 1686), EEBO, 117

²⁵⁷ Gilbert Burnet, *A continuation of reflections on Mr. Varillas's History of heresies particularly on that which relates to English affairs in his third and fourth tomes*, (Amsterdam 1687)

²⁵⁸ Joachim le Grand, *Histoire du divorce de Henry VIII, roy d'Angleterre, et de Catherine D'Arragon* (Amsterdam 1763)

²⁵⁹ Gilbert Burnet, *A letter to Mr. Thevenot containing a censure of Mr. Le Grand's History of King Henry the Eighth's divorce* (London 1689) – he signs the letter from the Hague

²⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 4

²⁶¹ Gilbert Burnet, *The history of the divorce of Henry VIII and Katharine of Arragon with the defense of Sanders, the refutation of the two first books of The history of the reformation of Dr. Burnett / by Joachim le Grand ; with Dr. Burnett's answer and vindication of himself* (London 1690)

Clearly the attention to and interest in the history of England's Reformation was elevated not only in England. This international debate stemmed from active concern and attempts by different parties and nationalities to assert their definition of the Reformation, slightly analogous to when the polemic battles lines had been drawn in the Elizabethan period, once again with Anne taking a central role, only now without the immediate presence of Elizabeth — though certainly the rise of the latter's influence. Throughout these occurrences, the published, public nature of the debates and the rapidity of the responses are incredible. Burnet's letter to Thévenot, for instance, was reprinted the following year along with a summary of the debate between the authors for those who had not yet read both histories.²⁶² There was an audience for these debates then, a desire to follow the state of the Reformation's history. Attempting to ensure the survival and success or even victory of their versions of the narrative, the historians were actively engaging in addressing the 'errors' of other perspectives. These errors had consequences on the interpretation of current Church of England's foundation, and therefore consequences relating directly to the contemporary crisis of succession and defense for the revolution.

Much of Burnet's account invokes Anne Boleyn in her ability, which had diminished in the first half of the seventeenth-century compared to the previous age, to give legitimacy to Elizabeth. While before this legitimation had functioned to support Elizabeth's claim to the throne, it now further served to support the Acts passed and changes initiated during her realm, particularly the settlement of the

²⁶² Ibid, 1-4

Church of England. Meanwhile Burnet not only defends the moment of schism and the early reformers through a defense of Anne's moral character, but also reminds the readers of her own active engagement in advancing the Reformation. Burnet drew out several powerful roles from the figure of Anne, in a work that came to be the new accepted standard history and which was read by those in and outside of England. Through she is not the main subject and though the narrative continues after her death, by this history, the Reformation could not have occurred without the presence and Protestant inclinations of Anne.

Anne as the Protagonist: John Bank's *Vertue Betray'd*

At the same time that Gilbert Burnet's history addressed Sander and Anne's importance, she emerged as a significant figure on the stage in the drama, *Vertue Betray'd: or Anna Bullen*, by John Banks, originally performed and printed in 1682.²⁶³ The first play to feature Anne Boleyn as the lead protagonist, *Vertue Betray'd* quickly became a stock play of the Duke's Company and a huge success with a second edition revival occurring in 1692, another edition in 1705, followed by twelve more editions over the eighteenth-century.²⁶⁴ Ending with the actual outcome of her execution, Bank's play presents the fictionalized story of Anne Boleyn's ill-fated, but chaste, relationship with Henry Percy, as she becomes the center of plots initiated by those around her. However, in the last acts of the play, Anne becomes the

²⁶³ John Banks, *Vertue Betray'd: or Anna Bullen (1682)* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1981).

²⁶⁴ Diane Dreher, introduction to *Vertue Betray'd: or Anna Bullen (1682)* (Los Angeles: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, 1981), vii.

source of Elizabeth's Protestantism whose death at the hands of papists will be avenged through the success and legacy of her daughter. In the midst of the succession crisis, Bank's play taps into not only the fear of papist counselors or their desire to bring down Protestant rulers, but also the idea of England's destiny as a Protestant nation.

The restoration of the monarchy in 1660 had also witnessed the recreation of the professional theater, which had been shut down in 1642. The revived theater underwent many changes, among them the introduction of women to the professional stage and an increase in female protagonists.²⁶⁵ The other shift derived from the political pessimism and disillusionment following the fighting and chaos of the previous decades that resulted in darker moods in play.²⁶⁶ Elizabeth Howe describes how by the 1670s and 1680s, this pessimism caused plays to turn away from the old heroic and male-dominated tragedies to those in which the protagonist had less power and agency, resulting in the genre of "she-tragedy" that focused on the suffering of virtuous women.²⁶⁷ Banks himself was a major pioneer of the "she-tragedy," and it was in this theme that he constructed *Vertue Betray'd*.

The main source for the plot of Bank's play was a French novel by Marie-Catherine de Barneville, Madame d'Aulnoy, entitled *The Novels of Elizabeth, Queen of England; Containing the History of Queen Ann of Bullen*, translated into English

²⁶⁵ Elizabeth Howe, *The First English Actresses: Women and Drama 1660-1700* (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1992), x; 110

²⁶⁶ Ibid, 109; J. Douglas Canfield, "Royalism's Last Dramatic Stand: English Political Tragedy, 1679-89," *Studies in Philology*, Vol. 82, No.2 (Spring, 1985), 236

²⁶⁷ Howe, *The First English Actresses*, 108-9

and printed in London in 1680.²⁶⁸ D'Aulnoy's novel fell under the genre of secret-history — fictional narratives that purported to uncover the hidden stories of notable figures — that had become increasingly popular in England.²⁶⁹ In this case, Queen Elizabeth instructs one of her nobles to finally tell the story of her mother that had been kept silent. The book lent the play the elements concerning Henry Percy and Elizabeth Blount, however, it lacks the religious context developed in *Vertue Betray'd*. For instance, while d'Aulnoy has Henry Norris plant suspicion of Anne's infidelity in Henry's mind, in order to have her for himself, Banks places all the scheming with the Catholic Wolsey — albeit with help from Blount.²⁷⁰ And whereas Anne's fall comes about solely from the King's inconstancy in the secret-history, in the final act, Bank transforms her death into a papist conspiracy.

Vertue Betray'd opens immediately after Anne's marriage to Henry VIII and her coronation as Queen. Having been tricked by her ambitious family into thinking that Henry Percy, her betrothed, had married someone else, Anne reluctantly consented to marry the King who had been pursuing her. In return Percy, who knows nothing about the subterfuge, weds another. Upon discovering the deception, Anne struggles to maintain her duty as wife and Queen, but cannot abandon her (chaste) love for Percy. Meanwhile, she becomes the target of a plot contrived by Cardinal Wolsey — once again with an extended lifetime — and the King's former mistress,

²⁶⁸ Madame d'Aulnoy, *The Novels of Elizabeth, Queen of England; Containing the History of Queen Ann Bullen*, trans. by Spencer Hickman (London 1680), EEBO. — The story in the original French had been printed in Paris around 1676.

²⁶⁹ Brownley, "Sir Richard Baker's "Chronicle,"" 491-2

²⁷⁰ In the novel, Wolsey actually attempts to place Anne on the throne, in hopes that he will be able to control her and therefore Henry. In addition, he flees before Anne assents to marry Henry.

Elizabeth Blount, to remove Anne from her new position.²⁷¹ As Wolsey initiates rumors to Henry on Anne's inconstancy and adultery and turns his mind towards Jane Seymour, Blount tricks Anne's brother, Lord Rochford, who is infatuated with Blount, into addressing his love letters for Blount to his sister. Their scheme succeeds and Henry arrests Anne along with her brother, Henry Norris, and Mark Smeaton, who are then all executed. The play ends with Anne's prophecy for her daughter before she exits for her death and the King's realization of Wolsey's treachery.

As with the dramas of the early Stuart Period, Wolsey is revived in the role of the main antagonist as the scheming and dishonest Catholic. It is he who seeks Anne's disgrace as only with her death "shall Rome be Absolute."²⁷² He is also the influence behind the crown, called "King Cardinal" by Blount, who manipulates Henry to achieve his ends, particularly the death of Anne.²⁷³ At a time when the current king, Charles II, was surrounded by Catholics, not only in the form of his brother, but his own wife, his mistress, and their priests, Wolsey's control over the crown would have appeared all the more dangerous and relevant. His first words on stage regard his fear of the possible contrary effect of Anne on Henry who might "pawn his Faith, and turn an Heretick."²⁷⁴ Indeed the King, a perpetually inconstant figure, wavers back and forth between the wily Cardinal and virtuous Anne throughout the play. Once she is condemned and her influence removed, Henry reverts back to Catholicism, instructing the young Elizabeth that she must love the

²⁷¹ Historically, Elizabeth Blount had been Henry's mistress far earlier in his reign by whom he had his illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy.

²⁷² Banks, *Vertue Betray'd*, 5.1.5

²⁷³ *Ibid*, 1.1.103

²⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 1.1.96

Pope. This characterization then disavows Henry as any bringer of reform, leaving that role to Elizabeth and Anne Boleyn.

Indeed, throughout *Vertue Betray'd*, Anne and Elizabeth represent the only visible figures associated with Protestantism, with Cranmer referenced as the latter's godfather. As such, there is a strong association between them from the moment Elizabeth appears. Though she only emerges in the fifth and final Act, it is clear that Elizabeth is connected firmly both to reform and to her mother, pleading for her mother's life as she disputes with her father about the Pope.²⁷⁵ Like Anne, Elizabeth also recognizes the danger and deceitfulness of Wolsey and all Cardinals — who she assumes wear cloaks to hide their cloven feet — though she does not yet have the ability to stop him. In this manner, the drama establishes a religious parallel between the two that portrays Elizabeth as the strong successor to her mother's beliefs. Banks then aligns the princess solely with her mother in the contrasting scenes where first Henry disavows Elizabeth as his child and sends her away, only to be followed by Anne's repeated identification of Elizabeth as her own and Anne's wish to "hold her but a moment long."²⁷⁶

It is in Anne's final words to her daughter, however, that the Banks explicitly constructs the vision of the succession of Protestantism from Anne to Elizabeth when the former pronounces:

Thou, little Child,

²⁷⁵ For more discussion on Elizabeth's portrayal in *Vertue Betray'd*, see Kim Noling, "Unpropping the Princess: John Bank's Revision of Shakespeare's Elizabeth," in *Resurrecting Elizabeth I in Seventeenth-Century England*, ed. by Elizabeth H. Hageman and Katherine Conway, 205-219 (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2007)

²⁷⁶ Banks, *Vertue Betray'd*, 5.

Shalt live to see they Mother's Wrongs o're paid
In many blessings on thy Womans State.
From this dark Calumny, in which I set,
As in a Cloud; thou, like a Star, shalt rise,
And awe the Southern World: That holy Tyrant,
Who binds all *Europe* with the Yoak of Conscience,
Thou shalt destroy, and quite unloose his Bonds,
And lay the Monster trembling at thy Feet.
When this shall come to pass, the World shall see/
Thy Mothers Innocence reviv'd in thee.²⁷⁷

Anne's rhetoric here is a large shift from the rest of the play, and the first moment in which she herself acknowledges her faith and identifies her death with the papists as her revenge will come from their defeat in England. This oath furthermore gives Elizabeth's struggles against Rome a personal motivation, in addition to the providential, tying Anne's memory to the state of Catholicism in Rome and making Elizabeth a crusader in her mother's name. Her decree also proves to be prophetic on multiple levels forecasting not only the Elizabethan settlement — in its mythic perspective — but also the journey of Anne's historical memory and representation. It was during Elizabeth's reign after all that Anne was "reviv'd" in the discourse in a complimentary light, enabling the acceptance of belief in her innocence. Bank was not the only one to comment on the history of Anne's reputation; the anonymous biography of Henry likewise reported that "The Popish Party...endeavored all they could to asperse her memory."

According to Kim Noling, this speech was designed to parallel Cranmer's prophecy at the end of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, which was revived also by the Duke's Company, in an effort to challenge to the earlier play's portrayal of the

²⁷⁷ Ibid, 5.1. 447-458

principle characters.²⁷⁸ In this rebuttal, Banks demonstrates the new impact accorded to Anne in the period by seizing the focus from Cranmer and Henry VIII in that final scene, investing it instead in Anne. This dialogue between the two plays makes Bank's choice of aligning Elizabeth with her mother over her father even more deliberate and emphasizes the female nature of Elizabeth's spiritual and destiny-filled inheritance. The Protestant defender thus avenges the Protestant martyr.

The fact alone that Anne Boleyn was the starring role of the drama indicated how far her prominence had risen since Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*. Her rise and fall did compliment the theme of the 'she-tragedy,' however, it was still recognized as a historical rather than fictional world, and as such playwrights would have chosen figures that the audience could recognize. Bank's two other female-lead dramas by comparison featured Jane Grey, the Nine Day Queen, and Mary, Queen of Scots, famous, if not infamous figures. They were also ruling queens, which elevates Anne's status even higher; she herself only appears on stage as Queen, departing from the French novel which began her story far earlier. Further strengthening her position is the devaluation of Henry VIII, who is neither the male-lead nor the main antagonist. Instead, the drama has the audience focus on Anne thereby giving her comments and actions added weight; in a sense, the play demonstrates that the story of the reformation could be told through her.

This idea of female succession poses an interesting question at a time when there was once again a king on the throne. Both the prologue and the epilogue to *Vertue Betray'd*, "written by a Person of Quality," announce that it is "neither [a]

²⁷⁸ Noling, "Unpropping the Princess," 207;214

Whig nor Tory Play,” referring to the concurrent parliamentary debates over whether to exclude James as a Catholic from the succession.²⁷⁹ However, the emphasis on the reformist females could have been an allusion to Mary and Anne Stuart, James’ protestant daughters, and thus intended to promote the exclusionist policy. The play was revived under both of their reigns when it would have flattered the concept of protestant female rule, much like plays and biographies of Elizabeth. Additionally, the late Restoration period seemed one in which a greater interest in female historical figures was developing, not just with Anne and Elizabeth, but also Jane Grey and Mary, Queen of Scots, for example.²⁸⁰

Many writers support the play’s claim to non-partisanship; Katherine Rogers for instance refers to it as a tragedy without politics.²⁸¹ However, the political implications of another of Bank’s plays, *The Innocent Usurper*, or, *The Death of the Lady Jane Gray*, have been recognized, and contemporary restrictions on some of his works demonstrated a perception at least by some of opinions on policy.²⁸² There is certainly a strong anti-Catholic rhetoric, especially in the depiction of Wolsey as “an evil caricature of the Catholic Church.”²⁸³ Following the Popish Plot, the theater filled with both dramas that denounced and ridiculed Catholicism as well as those that celebrated Elizabeth, placing *Vertue Betray’d* in good company.²⁸⁴

²⁷⁹ Banks, *Vertue Betray’d*, prologue

²⁸⁰ And again, all of these women contributed to elements of the current issues and were the examples that were the closest and nearest in time

²⁸¹ Katharine M. Rogers, “Masculine and Feminine Values in Restoration Drama: The Distinctive Power of *Venice Preserved*,” *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, Vol. 27, No. 4, *The English Renaissance and Enlightenment* (Winter 1985), 397

²⁸² Canfield, “Royalism’s Last Dramatic Stand,” 250-1

²⁸³ Dreher, introduction to *Vertue Betray’d*, vi

²⁸⁴ *Ibid*, iv-vii

The mythic Elizabeth, as the staunch defender of the Protestant faith, was a large symbol during the Exclusion crisis as many sought to affirm this faith as imbedded in the nation, the Church, and for many, the monarchy. Though present only as a child and then briefly, this is the Elizabeth incorporated into *Vertue Betray'd*. By linking this image of Elizabeth to Anne, it enriched the former's destiny by placing it in an extended history; the Elizabethan Settlement was more than the Queen's choice, it was a fate she inherited, much like how James I argued he was predestined to bring together England and Scotland. Combining the history of Elizabeth's conflicts against Catholic countries and Rome with the papist conspiracy against Anne also corroborated the fear of how far the Pope would go to reclaim England. Anne's martyrdom illustrated people's fears over not only Catholic advisors, but also Catholic kings: Bank's Henry was shown praising the Pope as he ordered his wife's death. During the high anti-Catholicism of the time along with the desire for figures to confirm the intrinsic Protestant identity, the themes present in Anne Boleyn's story enabled her to be employed in response to this atmosphere. In doing so, she became a stock figure — a protagonist — in the Protestant English struggle to affirm and protect the Protestant identity of England.

Conclusion(s)

An interesting concurrence from this period that deserves some acknowledgment is the degree of exchange between England and France particularly in reference to Anne Boleyn. Gilbert Burnet's history had been written in response to

a French edition of Sander's book, and the dialogue that this rebuttal prompted occurred between Burnet and French historians. John Bank's play, in turn, drew inspiration from a recent French novel that had been translated into English. Nor was Madame d'Aulnoy's secret history the only French literature to feature Anne Boleyn. Madame de La Fayette's novel *The Princess of Cleve*, translated into English in 1679, contained a passage in which French Queen narrates the life of Anne Boleyn to the fictional princess of Cleve.²⁸⁵ In an interesting mixture of portrayals, La Fayette depicts Anne as beautiful and talented, yet ambitious and prideful; she mentions the Sander-based idea of Henry as Anne's father, yet also refers to the beheaded queen as falsely accused. The passage does not seem to serve a religious purpose, but rather a comment on the history of the English Court and a general interest in Anne Boleyn's life.

The English translations of these works align with the Francophile feeling present in at least the court of Charles II. All these works, novel and history, confirm the importance given to her by the English and Sander, though negatively in the histories, however the larger question lies in the apparently large, yet varied, interest in Anne Boleyn in France during this period. It is a question that for this paper at least will remain unanswered. Concerning the development of a historical persona, however, this exchange of ideas, in debates and translations, indicates that Anne's transformation into a stock figure did not occur within the isolation of England, but rather resulted in part from interaction with outside perceptions.

²⁸⁵ Madame de La Fayette, *The Princess of Cleves: the most famed romance* (London 1679), EEBO, 103-107

Indeed, this active interaction, with other contemporary opinions and previous works, with opposing assessments and traditional representations, and with the existing political and religious context, is what continued to drive Anne's narrative forward. The heightened tensions over the threat of Catholicism in England intensified both the anti-Catholic and English Protestant identity discourses. This combined with the presence once again of the contrary narrative of Sander resulted in a heightened use of Anne Boleyn that acknowledged and built upon her previous narrative.

The result was that by the end of the seventeenth century, two different works, from separate genres and working off of different materials, had established Anne Boleyn as a key figure in the Reformation and an oppositional force in one way or another to Catholicism. Furthermore, they both used Anne in such a way that the descriptions of her gave support to Elizabeth whether in a legal sense or spiritual. In addition, by presenting Elizabeth as inheriting and continuing her mother's faith, the writers could depict Elizabeth's reaffirmation of Protestantism as an event they knew would occur, removing the early concerns that had in actuality existed.

Another development is the large recognition in this period of how her memory has been used by Catholics to unfairly slander her and consequently all the things connected to her, including the Henrician Reformation and her daughter. Burnet redeems even those elements of her life which do not directly engage the Protestant question, like her appearance, as her persona as a whole now has significance outside of her specific actions for the reform. In another example, an anonymous biography of Henry VIII describes the Catholic attempt to re-write her

history as “The Popish Party had gained a great conquest by the fall of this Queen, and endeavored all they could to asperse her memory.”²⁸⁶ Not only is memory recognized as an important battleground, but the besmirching of her name becomes another form of violent papist action against her, transforming her defense into another way to strike at Rome. Anne’s parting words to Elizabeth in Bank’s play identifies this by equating a strike at the Pope with the revival of Anne’s innocence in her memory.

In 1689 Parliament passed an Act confirming the throne upon William and Mary, stating that James II has abdicated his crown when he fled. In addition, with the country now restored to Protestant rule, the government took the steps to ensure that it would not again fall into the hands of popery without war. As a result, this Act, for the protection of the realm, called for the exclusion of any Catholic prince, or any king or queen who married a Catholic, from the royal succession; this motion was confirmed in the 1701 Act of Settlement and is still in effect today.²⁸⁷ The polemics on the evils of popery and on the intrinsic history of Protestantism in England over the past centuries had succeeded. Although Jacobite uprisings by supporters of James II and his male line would continue through the next century, reconfirming distrust of Catholicism, these acts legally confirmed England’s identity as a “Protestant Kingdome,” and arranged for a continual Protestant succession.²⁸⁸

²⁸⁶ Anon, *The History of the life, victorious reign, and death of K. Henry VIII*, 97

²⁸⁷ John Raithby (editor), “William and Mary, 1688: “An Act declareing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject and Setleing the Succession of the Crowne”. [Chapter II. Rot. Parl. pt. 3. nu. 1.],” *Statutes of the Realm: volume 6: 1685-94*, British History Online, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=46322>

²⁸⁸ Raithby, “An Act declareing the Rights and Liberties of the Subject and Setleing the Succession of the Crowne”

Anne, as well, at this time seemed to have her identity confirmed as a stock figure of the English narrative. Bank's *Vertue Betray'd* enjoyed significant popularity under Queen Anne I and the Hanoverian kings, and she was given substantial coverage in the histories, expanding off of Burnet and covering much of her life.²⁸⁹ In 1710 she appeared in a dual biography on herself and Jane Grey entitled *The unhappy princesses*.²⁹⁰ While Henry's later wives as well received slight expansions of their story, the amount of detailed given about Anne specifically still dwarfed them. At the same time, although the concepts of her virtue, her patronage of reformers, and her innocence remained firmly intact, her religious significance gave way to a more general significance and interest. The height of her time as a symbol in the Protestant discourse had passed, though it left her as an integral figure in any discussion of early modern England.

²⁸⁹ See for instance, M. (Paul) Rapin de Thoyras, *The history of England, as well ecclesiastical as civil. Vol. Vii. Containing the reign of Henry VIII, Done into English from the French, with large and useful notes mark'd with an *, by N. Tindal*. London 1731, Eighteenth Century Collections Online (Though by a French historian, the work was dedicated to the British Monarchy, and George I in another form of the international discourse in which Anne was included);, David, Hume, *The History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution in 1688. Volume III* (1778 edition), ed. W.B. Todd (Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1983)

²⁹⁰ R. B. *The unhappy princesses. In two parts*. London 1710. Eighteenth Century Collections Online, 5-88

Conclusion

In England, from the reign of Elizabeth through the Exclusion Crisis and Glorious Revolution, Anne Boleyn's memory was crafted as a Protestant martyr in order to contribute to the discourse over the English religious identity for the support and promotion of Protestantism both legally and as the righteous faith. Employing the details from her life, writers were able to defend the legality of Elizabeth's reign and the morality of the England's schism from Rome. She provided an example of good Protestantism with her virtue and charity, and through highlighting the Catholic role in her death and her own innocence she became a type of martyr. Anne's role was extended even beyond this, as through her patronage of reformers and her proximity to Henry, she was often given credit for advancing the Reformation. Consequently, her contributions to strengthening of the English Protestant identity stimulated her growth as a stock figure of English history, her usefulness providing writers with a reason and interest to expand upon her life.

The depiction and advancement of Anne was a direct consequence of the general antithetical nature of the Protestant and Catholic doctrine, from which the resulting polemic created each side as either good or evil, protagonist or antagonist. John Miller argued that, "The Protestant version of history since the Reformation showed Papists as obedient slaves to the pope, whose greatest ambition was to root out Protestantism with the maximum of bloodshed and cruelty."²⁹¹ From this

²⁹¹ Miller, *Popery and Politics in England*, 67

perspective, once Elizabeth reinstated the schism, it became an imperative for Protestants both to defend its own good and honorable nature and to illustrate the evils of Catholicism to keep it from regaining control.

The realm of history became one of the forefronts for this discussion, deeply entrenched in the religious stakes even when vying for non-partisanship. It was through this recourse to the past that figures like Anne, who had great potential to contribute, were brought out and used. The repercussions of history could extend from far back to still impact the present. For instance, in the Restoration period the legality of Anne's marriage could still be used to impact the legitimacy of the Church of England's protestant doctrines. Once a figure was found to add value to a particular discourse, they were repetitiously turned to. Additionally, an increase in the significance of persons or events in any narrative correlated to their increased relevance and utility to current events.

This initial application of Anne, however, was not inevitable, but rather came out of the historical accident of not only Elizabeth's ascension to the throne, but also the incredible length of her reign. Looking first at her ascension, it was principally the circumstance of Anne's status as Elizabeth's mother that brought her into the religious debate rather than Anne's independent ability to serve as source for religious argument. After all, Edward VI had been zealously reformist, but during his reign, sentiment towards Anne in the histories was minimal and lukewarm. The service performed for Anne by Elizabeth's long reign meanwhile was twofold. First, the length made possible integration of Anne the Protestant martyr into the national narrative; if Elizabeth had died after a few years like her siblings or even been

overthrown, this rhetoric would most likely not have survived. Secondly, the resurrection of Elizabeth's memory under the Stuarts and her metamorphoses into the Protestant defender of the faith — which again would presumably not have occurred if she had not had time to implement her visual and rhetorical cult of personality — again raised Anne's value as her mother.

The development of this relationship between mother and daughter long after the former's death is fascinating in several ways. Many of the writers, along with Bank's drama, created a bond between the two that went beyond the need to establish Elizabeth as the king's legitimate offspring. There was a spiritual link between the two, a transmission of Anne's reformist actions towards her daughter who then carried out this inheritance to great ends, combined with her imperial birthright from her father. In reality, with her mother's death occurring when she was only two and a half, Elizabeth would have barely remembered her mother, if at all; furthermore, during her own reign, she strived to align herself with her father's image. This bond then between the two queens was a creation of the historians and dramatists. It provided a certainty to Elizabeth's religious choices and connected her back to the first moments of the schism, strengthening the idea of continuous reform that had only been interrupted by Mary I's reign rather than a back and forth inconsistent doctrine. This continuity was key for so many parts of the Protestant discourse; it was this connection that early Stuart ecclesiastical historians sought in connecting the church to early British Christianity.

There is a strange consequence, however, in cases that stress the inheritance from Anne to Elizabeth, most powerfully done by Bank's and Hakewill, in that it

places the grand settlement of the Reformation in terms of a female succession. This occurred as well in the Catholic polemic, with Sander identifying Anne's body, particularly her womb, as the source of heresy. With Elizabeth as the grand defender, the feminine aspect would have been emphasized by relation to her mother, and would stress a maternal rather than paternal, especially given Henry's up and down reputation, source for Elizabeth's religious settlement of the Church of England as Protestant. The full significance of this gendered discussion in the religious discourse, especially during the seventeenth century's sequence of kings, poses a question for further research.

Like her development vis-à-vis that of Elizabeth, Anne's portrayal was affected by changes in the status of Henry's memory, in this case working as slight inversions of each other; the degree of Henry's culpability in Anne's death became a reflection of his sincerity towards reform. When he was at his worst and subsequently took action to bring about Anne's death, his behavior follows the same characteristics applied to Catholics, another sign of their involvement. Given that Henry was still the more powerful figure of the two in the English narrative, it is probable that Anne's portrayal reacted to Henry's rather than the other way around. If Henry was more distanced from the ideals of the Reformation, the Protestant discourse required people from that moment who still embodied these ideals, figures like Cranmer and Anne. The changes in Anne's use in the Protestant argument placed in the context of the major figures with whom she was connected demonstrate well the fact that a person's historical memory does not occur in isolation, but rather interacts with the representations of others.

However the fact that Henry's pro-reform rendering could be dropped does give greater import to the fact that Anne's was not, indicating an appeal in using her. Indeed, she was the only one of Henry's wives to undergo such a large revival and usage, including his last wife, Katherine Parr, who was also a reformist and had helped to raise Elizabeth.²⁹² There was something potent in maintaining a certain outline of her character. A huge element of this was caused by the debate that swirled around her representation, but even that debate recognized the significance that she had become endowed with, as it did not just occur in the Elizabethan period, but continued over the next century.

The existence of the Catholic counter-history of Anne, along with its fervor and persistence, is perhaps the most interesting feature of her 'afterlife' as a figure in the religious debate over England. It reveals not only just how central a tool history was, whether in scholarly or entertaining form, during this period, with each side strongly utilizing it to prove their respective points, but also how unacceptable the Protestant version was, both in general and in specific reference to Anne, to merit such a powerful response. Narrowing in on the main figures discussed from the schism, Anne was one of the few people to receive such a wicked and immoral characterization that was a direct mirror-image of her portrayal in the Protestant polemic. Conversely, Cardinal Wolsey and Catherine of Aragon received similar treatment in both narratives, with the former presented as the archetypal ambitious villain and the latter complimented for her piety and temperament. Though when

²⁹² There was some use of Katherine Parr, as in Rowley's play, *When You See Me, You Know Me*, however, she very rarely received significant attention.

Nicholas Sander's work first came out, his depiction of Henry was inimical to the Protestant view, the king's characterization in Protestant works fell under heavy fire as well, so that aside from the charges of incest, Camden's depiction of Henry is not that dissimilar from the Catholic rhetoric. The polarization of Anne, however, did not go away over the next century, with Sander-based opinions persisting at the end of the seventeenth century, and Protestant writers continuing to choose to defend Anne. The back and forth gave a greater degree of importance to her role, with dispute reinforcing a need to discuss her.

This makes two profound statements regarding the development of national narratives and the treatment of certain memories. First, that national narratives cannot be viewed only from the work coming out of the country, but rather must also be placed in conversation with works being produced from outside. The manner in which The Catholic English history countered the Protestant one point by point shows that the two were in dialogue. It becomes a series of actions and reactions which kept Anne relevant by pressuring writers respond, in this case, unwilling to give ground. The two portrayals of Anne stimulated debate and discussion, which while Anne was still perceived as valuable to the Protestant discourse inhibited much of the ability and desire to concede criticisms.

This leads to the other point concerning memory and the desire to maintain certain images of figures or events. When a historical figure's portrayal adds value to certain perspectives or discourses, as Anne's was during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there can be reluctance to. Particularly with national narratives, this persistence derived from tradition can be a difficult thing to overcome.

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