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## Reframing the Role of Renaissance Women: Anne Boleyn as a Humanist

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*Reframing the Role of Renaissance Women: Anne Boleyn as a Humanist*

An Honors Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Honors in  
*History Department*

By  
*Kara Guthrie*

Under the Mentorship of *Dr. Robert Batchelor*

ABSTRACT

Recent work by historians like Sarah Ross (*The Birth of Feminism: Women as Intellectuals in Renaissance Italy and England*, 2008) reframes the role of gender in the Renaissance. Humanism, as well as reformist ideas about the church, spread widely across Europe during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries among learned women. In England, these changes are still usually associated with men like Sir Thomas More or Henry VIII himself. Research into Anne Boleyn's correspondence and library suggests that she directly participated in women's intellectual circles, playing an important and ignored role at the English court in that regard. This research poster emphasizes her networks among educated and politically powerful women in Europe including Marguerite de Navarre, Louise of Savoy, and Claude of France, who influenced Anne Boleyn during her time in French court under Francis I. Beyond networks, Anne Boleyn's library also suggests the kinds of reading and interests women pursued. Catalogues of the libraries of Henry VIII and Anne recently completed by the historian James Carley enable a deeper study of authors who influenced Anne--Bible translators like Lefèvre d'Étaples (French) and William Tyndale (English), evangelical writers associated with Anne's networks (Clément Marot), as well as other kinds of books and manuscripts (the anonymous psalter *Epistres et Evangiles*). By comparing these books with those in the library of Henry VIII as well as using Anne's correspondence and other manuscripts, a much clearer vision of how a Renaissance for women on the continent influenced England in this period emerges.

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## Chapter 1: Renaissance Humanism and the Education of Anne Boleyn

In 1513, Thomas Boleyn (1477-1539) sent his daughter Anne Boleyn (ca.1500-1536) to study abroad alongside the European elite at the court of Margaret of Austria at Mechelen in Brabant.<sup>1</sup> Thomas Boleyn was an English courtier and impressed other members of the court with his fluency in both French and Latin. Although he was only somewhat educated himself, Thomas Boleyn wanted the best education for his children.<sup>2</sup> In sending Anne to Margaret's court, it was Thomas's vision to eventually see Anne as an English courtier. At the age of thirteen, Anne would commence her studies in the French language, dance, music, manners and court etiquette, art, and books.<sup>3</sup> From the very beginning of Anne Boleyn's studies, French influence played an impactful role. Margaret of Austria, having been raised in France, developed an accustomed taste to French culture. Ives mentions "she [Margaret of Austria] learned to write French verse of considerable fluency, and French books would dominate her reading throughout life."<sup>4</sup> From Margaret's court, Anne was moved to France by her father Thomas Boleyn in 1514 to continue her education, and serve as the next handmaiden to Mary Tudor, Queen consort to Louis XII.<sup>5</sup> In French court, Anne would receive a humanistic education influenced by Marguerite de Navarre (1492-1549), Louise of Savoy (1476-1531), and Queen Claude of France (1499-1524). Given Anne Boleyn's historical fame, it is surprising that her humanist education and deep involvement with Protestant Reformers

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<sup>1</sup> Eric Ives, *Anne Boleyn* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), 22.

<sup>2</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 23-27.

<sup>4</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 28.

<sup>5</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 33.

has not been analyzed by other scholars to see that her time in French court indirectly influenced the commencement of the English Reformation.

Humanism in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries has been defined by many scholars as a time when society became more interested in human concerns.<sup>6</sup> Examples of these interests included; advances in social status, further development of morality and virtue, and the thought of equality among men and women of the mind according to some and not all. According to Joan Kelly in her 1977 essay “*Did Women have a Renaissance,*” she argues the idea of humanism and its effect on women in the Renaissance based on patriarchal influences.<sup>7</sup> This chapter will also be focusing on the idea of humanism in relation to women of these centuries while specifically concentrating on Anne Boleyn (1500-1536). Additionally, this chapter will give an explanation of how humanism was slowly introduced into women’s education within a patriarchal framework.

Sarah Ross, the author of *Birth of Feminism: Women as Intellect in Renaissance Italy and England*, argues that the education of women expanded during the Renaissance. Particularly, Ross introduces the concept of the “intellectual family,” and “household academy” in order to provide a better understanding of how women writers were allowed to publish.<sup>8</sup> Both the “intellectual family,” and “household academy” concepts will be

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<sup>6</sup> Jacob, Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, trans. Samuel George Chetwynd Middlemore (Project Gutenberg, last updated October 20, 2014), <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2074/2074-h/2074-h.htm>. Burckhardt argues that the Humanist movement in Italy began with the idea of individualism. It was important that one must achieve this well-rounded education and advance oneself as much as humanly possible.

<sup>7</sup> Joan Kelly, “*Did Women have a Renaissance,*” in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*. (London: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), 188.

<sup>8</sup> Sarah Ross, *Birth of Feminism: Women as Intellect in Renaissance Italy and England* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2009), 2.

explained as time goes by for women's education, and how it influenced Anne Boleyn in her time of education in French Court under Queen Claude of France. Finally, the notion of Anne Boleyn as an intellect will be discussed, and who could have been considered her equals during this time. Women's education would have been neglected during this time by scholars. If Anne Boleyn can be categorized as a humanist, how does this affect historical understandings of the Reformation in England? Could Anne Boleyn's characteristics of humanism play a role in Henry VIII's actions towards the forward movement of the Reformation?

The early Renaissance gave birth to a new definition of Humanism after a disappointing medieval period in Europe. According to Frederick Artz, "when medieval cultural traditions proved inadequate, the Italians had only to return to a more remote past to find a congenial civilization."<sup>9</sup> After the Italians recognized the need for a change, it was then that they decided that it was vital that they go back to "the achievements of the ancients [Greek and Roman antiquity] in literature and art...to satisfy some deep need."<sup>10</sup> As Bard Thompson states "in order to become an estimable human being, in order to achieve *humanitas* in that sense, one must embark upon a course of studies that carried the congenial name *studias humanitas*."<sup>11</sup> *Studias Humanitas* is directly translated as the study of the humanities. According to Thompson, the first original areas in which individuals, who sought further learning in the field of the humanities, concentrated on

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<sup>9</sup> Frederick B. Artz, *Renaissance Humanism 1300-1550* (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 1966), 12.

<sup>10</sup> Artz, *Renaissance Humanism 1300-1550*, 12.

<sup>11</sup> Bard Thompson, *Humanists and Reformers: A History of the Renaissance and Reformation* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 207.

Greek and Latin, rhetoric, and the doctrine of eloquence.<sup>12</sup> Many scholars such as Thompson and Ross agree that over time the concept of humanism grew out of concern for the Christian church, and one's own individual Christian morality and virtue beyond the institution of the church itself.<sup>13</sup> Thompson goes on to say that "North of the Alps, Humanism took on a slightly different cast, as it was devoted more particularly to Christian purposes namely, the reform of Christian society by intellectual and ethical means."<sup>14</sup> Here, Ross agrees with Thompson by saying that the aim of the Renaissance for humanistic education was to prepare one towards an ecclesiastical career.<sup>15</sup> Not surprisingly, the vast majority of those who were being educated during this time for the church were strictly male.

Prior to the fourteenth century, women were not being considered for education. Schools were exclusively available to male students only. The opportunity for women to become educated would not come to pass until well after the start of the fourteenth century. Joan Kelly debates the idea of the advancement of women through humanistic education.

But this very development, usually taken as an index of the equality of Renaissance (noble) women with men, spelled a further decline in the lady's influence over courtly society. It placed her as well as her brothers under male cultural authority. The girl of the medieval aristocracy, although unschooled, was brought up at the court of some great lady. Now her brothers' tutors shaped her outlook, male educators who, as humanists, suppressed romance and chivalry to further classical culture, with all its patriarchal and misogynous bias.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Thompson, *Humanists and Reformers*, 207.

<sup>13</sup> Thompson, *Humanists and Reformers*, 333; Ross, *Birth of Feminism*, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Thompson, *Humanists and Reformers*, 333.

<sup>15</sup> Ross, *Birth of Feminism*, 3.

<sup>16</sup> Joan Kelly, "Did Women have a Renaissance," 188.

A resurgence in patriarchal influence placed women further under male authority. Kelly points out that although women in the medieval period were uneducated, they still had a matriarchal figure to guide them. Kelly's argument is that seeing as women are now being educated by male figures, it is clear that these Renaissance noble women are being influenced day-to-day by (male) thoughts and opinions. Kelly emphasizes that humanist education for women, instead of increasing their chances for influence in the courts, debilitated them in such a way that actually lessened their influence instead.<sup>17</sup>

Ross mentions a case study with Christine de Pizan (ca. 1365-1435) as modeling what she refers to as the "intellectual family." In the "intellectual family," the father was still considered the head of household. If the father was an educated man, his responsibility was to educate his male children. However, some humanist fathers, such as Thomas de Pizan (ca. 1310- ca. 1387), Sir Thomas More (1478-1535), Pietro Bembo (1470-1547), Sir Anthony Cooke (1504-1576), and Henry Fitzalan (1512-1580), chose to educate their daughters. The "intellectual family" portrays the patriarchal system as a way for male humanists to introduce education to their daughters under their supervision.<sup>18</sup>

Women like Pizan were taught by their fathers to achieve the status of what Ross describes as the Italian model of the "virtuous learned woman."<sup>19</sup> The notion of educating women at the start of the fifteenth century allowed for humanists to voice their reasoning as to why it should be allowed. Humanists argued that "virtue" had been thought of for

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<sup>17</sup> Joan Kelly, "Did Women have a Renaissance," 188.

<sup>18</sup> Ross, *Birth of Feminism*, 4.

<sup>19</sup> Ross, *Birth of Feminism*, 8.



centuries with a feminine connotation. Ross claims that virtue was being re-defined by the humanists by stating that true virtue is obtained with accomplishment and fortitude.

It went without question that both men and women should be “virtuous” in terms of Christian morality. The merged classical and Christian definition of virtue, however, prompted some humanists to follow a new logic: if men and women should be “virtuous,” and if education presented a principal means to that end, then women should be educated.<sup>20</sup>

These new learned women or “women humanists” could now show society the abilities of women writers. But the progression of these women writers under the “household academy” only allowed for learned women to write and publish with the permission of their fathers. It was up to what Ross calls the “patriarchal sanction” of their individual households to determine what got published and when. Ross elaborates on this by stating that the majority of Italian women writers during the early Renaissance were writing within genres such as poetry, dialogues, and theology.<sup>21</sup> In these new available contributions to literature by learned women, Ross refers to them as contributions done by the “other voice.” According to Ross, the “other voice” is explained as women writing on the topics arguing against “...Biblical and Aristotelian anti-women sentiment and to the patriarchal structure of Western society, a structure legitimized by the texts of these traditions.”<sup>22</sup>

According to Ross, Pizan did not have an education similar to an Italian woman humanist. Pizan was taught in poetry, language, history, and moral philosophy by her father who was a humanist. Ross does state that although Pizan was not a humanist in the mode of Italian humanism, she was still taught in the same form as them through

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<sup>20</sup> Ross, *Birth of Feminism*, 4.

<sup>21</sup> Ross, *Birth of Feminism*, 5.

<sup>22</sup> Ross, *Birth of Feminism*, 5.

patriarchal sanction. Pizan was the author of roughly thirty books and was the first woman to make money off of her writing. One of her most famous pieces is *Book of the City of Ladies* (1405).<sup>23</sup> In *Book of the City of Ladies*, Pizan writes of her dedicated time to her learning, and one occasion in which she read a piece by philosopher Matheolus (d. 1480). In reading this piece by Matheolus, Pizan states her frustration with the philosopher in that he, like so many others, disrespects women by writing “wicked insults about women and their behavior.”<sup>24</sup> Pizan begins to write about her self-doubt and how she can only help to see herself the way learned men see her. Pizan states “...for I detested myself and the entire feminine sex, as though we were monstrosities in nature...”<sup>25</sup> Later in *Book of the City of Ladies*, Pizan introduces Lady Reason. In an excerpt with Lady Reason and Pizan, they discuss women’s education and how nothing, but good things have come so far from women being educated. Pizan states that even though there are some women in this world who choose to be “evil” it does not outweigh the women who choose to be good. Pizan writes that it is quite possible that some men who are opposed to women’s education are unattracted to the idea because of their fear of women becoming superior to them in their learning. However, it is only the opinion of the wisest men who claim women should be educated as well as men.<sup>26</sup> Ross highlights the end of the conversation with Lady Reason and Pizan, where Lady Reason emphasizes that it is not all men who feel this way about women’s education. Lady Reason reminds

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<sup>23</sup> Ross, *Birth of Feminism*, 19.

<sup>24</sup> Christine de Pizan, *Book of the City of Ladies* (1405), trans. By Earl Richards (New York: Persea Books, 1982).

<sup>25</sup> Pizan, *Book of the City of Ladies*.

<sup>26</sup> Pizan, *Book of the City of Ladies*.

Pizan of the role of her father in her education, and that it was in fact her mother that was not too fond of her education progressing.<sup>27</sup>

By the fifteenth century, Humanism began to spread from the Italian cities into the Low Countries, England, France, and Germany. According to Frederick B. Artz, the English began to fancy themselves with ideas of the challenge of learning the classical languages of Greek, Latin, and Hebrew.<sup>28</sup> With some exceptions like Sir Thomas More, Humanism in England was largely about the church.<sup>29</sup> France was one of the primary countries where the achievements of Italian humanism were deeply admired.<sup>30</sup> Artz describes the French princes as “patrons of classical learning,” and that they were similar to the Italian Renaissance princes.<sup>31</sup> The French Renaissance took much longer than other countries in Europe. Artz states that monarchs from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had been trying to take parts of the Italian States and in doing so, many French troops were exposed to the Italian civilization. Many soldiers came back with the desire to pursue the Italian Renaissance culture. Beginning with Charles VIII, Artz claims that he hired many Italian craftsmen and artists at the Chateau of Amboise. Artz mentions that two of the most famous humanists in France were Budé (1467-1540) and Lefèvre d’Etaples (1455-1536). Budé is known for serving in the court of Francis I. According to Artz, Budé assisted Francis I in founding a library at Fontainebleau where every book in France that had ever been published would sit on the shelves.<sup>32</sup> Francis I had books also

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<sup>27</sup> Ross, *Birth of Feminism*, 21.

<sup>28</sup> Artz, *Renaissance Humanism 1300-1550*, 73.

<sup>29</sup> Artz, *Renaissance Humanism 1300-1550*, 73-75.

<sup>30</sup> Artz, *Renaissance Humanism 1300-1550*, 78.

<sup>31</sup> Artz, *Renaissance Humanism 1300-1550*, 80.

<sup>32</sup> Artz, *Renaissance Humanism 1300-1550*, 80-81.

sent in from Italy as well. Artz states, "...Francis I had French translations made of Xenophon, Thucydides, and other Greek historians."<sup>33</sup>

For most scholars of humanism, Anne Boleyn hardly deserves mention. She is only mentioned one time in Ross's important book, as the Queen of England married to Henry VIII requesting the gospels and epistles in French from Sir William Locke (ca. 1480-1550).<sup>34</sup> By the time women like Anne Boleyn came around, women had established themselves slightly within the education world. For example, women such as Marguerite de Navarre (1492-1549), Louise of Savoy (1476-1531), and Claude of France (1499-1524) were all apart of Francis I's (1494-1547) court during the time Anne Boleyn was in the service of Claude of France and as her handmaiden.

Marguerite de Navarre was the sister of Francis I of France and daughter of Charles d'Angoulême (1459-1496) and Louise of Savoy (1476-1531). Marguerite de Navarre's educational background goes as far back as to the woman who educated her mother Louise of Savoy. Anne de Beaujeu or Anne de France (1461-1522) was the daughter of Louis XI (1423-1483) and sister to Charles VIII of France (1470-1498). According to authors Patricia F. Cholakian and Rouben C. Cholakian, she was one of the most intelligent women of her time. Although, women during this age would not have been likely to be educated or considered intelligent, even her father, Louis XI refers to her as "the least foolish of women."<sup>35</sup> Louise of Savoy and her brother Philibert (1480-1504) were sent to live with Anne de Beaujeu after the death of their mother Marguerite

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<sup>33</sup> Artz, *Renaissance Humanism 1300-1550*, 81. Further detail on the library of Francis I can be found in the next chapter, in particular how it correlated with the library of Anne Boleyn.

<sup>34</sup> Ross, *Birth of Feminism*, 92.

<sup>35</sup> Patricia F. Cholakian and Rouben C. Cholakian, *Marguerite de Navarre: Mother of the Renaissance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 9.

de Bourbon (1438-1483). At the time of Louise and Philibert's arrival to Anne's court, she had been in the process of educating Marguerite of Austria (1480-1530) who would eventually become the Archduchess of Austria and Duchess of Savoy.<sup>36</sup>

Anne [de Beaujeu] prepared her young charges for their future responsibilities in what has been called a "court school. "She appointed as their tutor Madame de Segré, under whose guidance Louise acquired the love for books and reading that she would pass on to her daughter, but it was Anne herself who schooled the girls in the refined manners, complex etiquette, and involuted politics of court life."<sup>37</sup>

Not only was Anne a well-educated lady herself but, according to Cholakian and Cholakian "she knew that women had to appear submissive."<sup>38</sup> Anne's ability to have power without appearing to overshadow the king was passed over onto Louise of Savoy, and her influence on Louise would then transfer to her own daughter Marguerite de Navarre. Because of Anne de Beaujeu's quiet advocacy of women's power and virtue, she advocated maintaining a healthy library containing authors who believed the same thing. Anne had copies of Christine de Pizan's "...*Le Livre de la cité des dames* (1405; *The Book of the City of Ladies*) and *Le Livre des trois vertus* (1405; *The book of three virtues*), and *Le Livre à l'enseignement des dames* (1371?; *The book for the education of ladies*), by the Chevalier de la Tour-Landry."<sup>39</sup>

Marguerite and Francis I were raised in the image of their mother. Louise, like Anne de Beaujeu, possessed a healthy library with books from her husband Charles d'Angoulême's collection and her own personal collection. As Cholakian and Cholakian explain, "Marguerite and her brother grew up in constant contact with men of letters,

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<sup>36</sup> Cholakian and Cholakian, *Marguerite de Navarre*, 9-10.

<sup>37</sup> Cholakian and Cholakian, *Marguerite de Navarre*, 10.

<sup>38</sup> Cholakian and Cholakian, *Marguerite de Navarre*, 10.

<sup>39</sup> Cholakian and Cholakian, *Marguerite de Navarre*, 11.

overhearing their talk and later conversing with them.”<sup>40</sup> Both Marguerite and Francis I had relatively equal time during their youth devoted to education, but due to their gender, they were taught to spend their time doing different things. Francis would spend his time hunting and playing sports while Marguerite would learn manners and etiquette. She likely used the *Enseignement*, the book her mother was given by Anne.<sup>41</sup> It is important to note that Anne encouraged her students, such as Louise, that singing, dancing, and playing instruments were vital to maintaining a certain demeanour in court.<sup>42</sup>

When Anne Boleyn arrived at French court in 1514, she had already begun her education the previous summer at the court of Margaret of Austria at Mechelen. When Anne Boleyn was brought to the court of Louis XII (1462-1515), she was to serve as the handmaiden to Henry VIII’s sister Mary Tudor (1496-1533), who was to be the new bride to the elderly French king. However, when Louis XII died shortly after the marriage to Mary Tudor, Mary was sent back to England where she would then marry Charles Brandon (1484-1545). Once the king had passed, Francis I was next in line to take over the crown of France. Francis I and Claude of France invited Anne to stay in the queen’s service and remain in France for further tutelage.<sup>43</sup>

Queen Claude’s upbringing would have closely reflected a princess’s education in the Renaissance. She was the daughter of Louis XII and Anne of Brittany (1477-1514) and consort to King Francis I of France. One can only assume, due to the lack of research on Claude, that she would have received a similar education to Marguerite de Navarre. She would have learned Latin, and maybe been introduced to Greek and even Hebrew,

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<sup>40</sup> Cholakian and Cholakian, *Marguerite de Navarre*, 17.

<sup>41</sup> Cholakian and Cholakian, *Marguerite de Navarre*, 17-18.

<sup>42</sup> Cholakian and Cholakian, *Marguerite de Navarre*, 18.

<sup>43</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 33-36.

along with a woman's specified education in regard to manners and etiquette in court. She would have learned several other languages popular in court society of the time as well.

As for Queen Claude, she was renowned for her sweet, charitable and pious nature, and, if her looks fell short of the king's ideal, she gave him no cause for complaint on other grounds: over a period of nine years she bore him no fewer than three sons and four daughters. Such intensive childbearing naturally precluded her from any active share in public life, yet she was allowed one brief moment of glory: her coronation at Saint Denis on 10 May 1516 and her entry into Paris, two days later, were comparable in magnificence to the king's.<sup>44</sup>

With Claude having to spend ample time in her private quarters constantly recovering from childbirth, Anne Boleyn would not have learned a great deal under her tutelage. However, Anne most likely would have been in the company of Marguerite and Louise giving her the sophisticated French humanist education she took back to England.

Scholars James P. Carley and Maria Dowling agree on the notion of Anne Boleyn being comfortable with French life and French culture. Due to Anne's extensive background in the court of Francis I, it seems to be an understanding between Carley and Dowling that Anne may have been well acquainted with Marguerite de Navarre. It is mentioned by Carley that in 1535, Anne sent a message to Marguerite de Navarre stating her "greatest wish, next to having a son, was to see you [Marguerite] again."<sup>45</sup> Dowling touches on Marguerite and Anne's relationship in her journal article as Anne spending some time with Marguerite. According to Dowling, it was not until the seventeenth century that Sir Roger Twysden mentions Anne Boleyn getting her "reformist

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<sup>44</sup> R.J. Knecht, "Francis I," (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 88.

<sup>45</sup> Maria Dowling, "Anne Boleyn and Reform," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* Vol. 35 No. 1 (January 1984), 32.

tendencies” from Marguerite.<sup>46</sup> The relationship between Anne Boleyn and Marguerite is vital to the spread of the Reformation to England. Marguerite is described by Dowling as “Francis I’s evangelical sister.”<sup>47</sup>

Anne Boleyn’s library shows significant evidence of her clear passion for French culture and society, and it is clear from her networks that she learned to collect books and build a library while in France. As Chapter 2 will explain, Anne Boleyn had a plethora of French manuscripts found in both the religious and educational genres. It is possible that during Anne’s time in France, she became accustomed to French culture and society to such an extent that she began to collect and read French manuscripts as her life went on. As Queen Claude was mostly bedridden, Anne Boleyn’s interest in French humanism most likely came from the indirect or direct influence of Marguerite de Navarre and Louise of Savoy. During Anne Boleyn’s time in French court, she was influenced by French women humanists who also supported the budding Reformation. The implication is that during her time with Henry VIII as Queen consort, Henry would in turn be influenced indirectly in the commencement of the English Reformation by circles of reformist women in France, an event that dramatically changed the course of history.

## Chapter 2: Anne Boleyn’s Library

The basic story of Anne Boleyn’s life is well known. The missing element concerns Anne Boleyn as an intellectual and a religious reformer, dedicated to advancing the faith through patronage of religious works. Her piety and patronage make up an important element of the English Reformation at court, something revealed by her library. Where these books came from, who owned them prior to Anne, and how she acquired

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<sup>46</sup> Dowling, “Anne Boleyn and Reform,” 32.

<sup>47</sup> Dowling, “Anne Boleyn and Reform,” 32.



them, all reveal important stories. The language, dates of composition, and even the bindings demonstrate the material culture of the early Reformation. Anne Boleyn was intellectually invested in the reform of the Catholic Church and sought knowledge and understanding of her faith from a humanistic perspective. Anne's library shows that most, if not all of her books, reveal deep religious interest, while also alluding to her being bilingual in both English and French.

What has been debated by scholars in the past such as David Starkey, Maria Dowling, Eric Ives, James P. Carley, and several others, is that there could be more to her story than what has been mentioned before.<sup>48</sup> The historian Maria Dowling has argued that Anne Boleyn did not use her piety and reputation as a political weapon, but instead she devoutly practiced her studies and her faith.<sup>49</sup> One clue as to Anne's opinions on religion comes from how she dealt with prosecuted reformers. She had a major hand in protecting those who wanted reform and kept several from being punished. Such an example is mentioned by Dowling in her article "Anne Boleyn and Reform."<sup>50</sup> In 1530-31, a petition to Anne Boleyn by Thomas Alwaye thanked Anne for her friendship and kindness in keeping him from being punished for buying copies of the New Testament

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<sup>48</sup> *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, Libraries of King Henry VIII*, ed. James P. Carley, (London: British Library, 2000); Ives, *Anne Boleyn*; James P. Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, (London: The British Library, 2004); Maria Dowling, "Anne Boleyn as Patron," *Henry VIII: A European Court in England*, ed. David Starkey, (London: Collins and Brown Limited, 1991); Dowling, "Anne Boleyn and Reform."

<sup>49</sup> Dowling, "Anne Boleyn and Reform," 30.

<sup>50</sup> Dowling, "Anne Boleyn and Reform," 30.

translated into English.<sup>51</sup> Dowling believes that not only does this show her nature as a person but her drive for advancement of the reformist movement.<sup>52</sup>

Not only did Anne support the advancement for the Protestant Reformation, she acquired a network of men in France to aid her in becoming a humanist. Anne's library shows primarily to be religious works. If Anne was as pious as her library will show, then she would have had to have either received her manuscripts from others or by retrieving them herself. Anne had several men who would go out on missions to retrieve copies of religious French works for her, especially when it pertained to the Reformation. There are several books of Anne's that are recorded as having been either retrieved or donated to her by other men. These men she would have likely known and trusted to acquire her prized possessions, her books and manuscripts.<sup>53</sup> Men such as Clément Marot, George Boleyn, Loys de Brun and Sir William Locke are prime examples of people who either donated a manuscript to Anne, or someone she sent to retrieve one for her.

Anne was especially supportive of those around her in their studies of the scripture. Her ladies were encouraged to consult the translated Bible whenever they wished to do so. Dowling mentions a statement from William Latimer (c.1467- 1545) claiming that Anne had out a copy of Tyndale's English translation of the Bible on a desk in her chambers for her ladies. Anne's ladies were also given small devotional books to carry around with them for daily and on-the-go use.<sup>54</sup> The proof of this can be found today in the British Library. Maria Dowling has located a devotional book given to a

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<sup>51</sup> Dowling, "Anne Boleyn and Reform," 30; Thomas Alwaye, "Petition to Anne Boleyn," (1530-1531) BL., Sloane MS 1207.

<sup>52</sup> Dowling, "Anne Boleyn and Reform," 30.

<sup>53</sup> Dowling, "Anne Boleyn and Reform," 32-33. Refer to Chapter 1 for reference to Sir William Locke.

<sup>54</sup> Dowling, "Anne Boleyn as Patron," 108.

female member of the Wyatt family in the British Library.<sup>55</sup> Further evidence can be found that not only is Anne concerned for religious advancement in her ladies, but she has also been known to have had a hand in the further development of universities such as Cambridge and Oxford. The primary goal was to provide money for scholars who may not have the proper finances to study. Dowling mentions that proof of this is confirmed by a letter to Anne giving thanks from Cambridge University.<sup>56</sup>

As part of a broader project to assess the library of King Henry VIII, James P. Carley has catalogued the locations of what remains of Anne's personal library.<sup>57</sup> The remaining books in Anne's library are; *La (sic) pasteur evangelique* (1533-36), *Traict des lettres missyves* (1529/30), *La Sainte Bible en Francoys* (1530, 1534), English Bible (?), French psalter (Dec. 1529-Sept.1532), *The Ecclesiaste* (ca. 1530), *Supplication for the Beggars* (1529), *The Pistellis and Gospelles for the LII Sondayes of the Yere* (?), and a Music book written for Anne Boleyn (1525?).<sup>58</sup> Each of these manuscripts hold key information that confirm Anne's interests in French language, deep admiration for religion and piety, and how she advocated for reform in the Catholic Church. The date of which these manuscripts were published, place of publication, language of the work, and who they were originally written by deems a great deal of importance as to how it relates

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<sup>55</sup> Dowling, "Anne Boleyn and Reform," 33; John Croke, *Book of Hours*, (London: ca. 1540) BL.,Stowe MS 956.

<sup>56</sup> Dowling, "Anne Boleyn and Reform," 34; Cambridge University to Anne Boleyn, n.d., BL., Cotton MSS Faustina. CIII, f. 456.

<sup>57</sup> *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, Libraries of King Henry VIII*; Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125-128.

<sup>58</sup> BL MS Royal 16 E XIII [No. 463]; BL MS Royal 20 B. XVII [No. 866]; BL C.18.c.9. 2 Vols; Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125; Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125 ; Collection of the Duke of Northumberland, Percy MS 465; ?; Harley MS 6561, London, Royal College of Music, MS 1070; Peter Holman, "Music at the Court of Henry VIII," *Henry VIII: A European Court in England*, ed. David Starkey (London: Collins and Brown Limited, 1991), 104, Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 295.

to Anne and later how it relates to the correlation between the English Reformation and French Protestant networks.

Anne owned a copy of the Bible translated into French titled, *La Sainte Bible en Francoys* [Carley, 1368: Henry, 1368]. This copy was created by Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (1455-1536) in 1530 and printed in Antwerp by Martin Lempereur (d.1536) in 1534.<sup>59</sup> However, prior to the existence of this version of the French Bible, a much older version had already been in circulation centuries. Bible Historiale Complétée or *Biblia in lingua in duobus scripta* was created in Paris By Guyart des Moulins (b.1251) in the early fourteenth century. It is presumed that this Bible would have been copied many times over and circulated in Europe. The copy of which is now located in the British Library seems to have never left England, and entered into the Old Royal Library either before or around 1542 as *Biblia in lingua in duobus scripta*.<sup>60</sup> If this earlier copy of a translated French Bible entered into the Old Royal Library at Westminster, an argument can be drawn that if the inventory was taken in 1542, the manuscript could have been in Henry's library years before that. It is possible that if this manuscript was in the King's library

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<sup>59</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125; BL MS Royal 19 D. IV [No. 97]; BL MS Royal 19 D. v (s. xiv<sup>in</sup>) [No. 1368 deleted]; BL C.18.c.9. 2 vols. BL, "Detailed record for Royal 19 D IV," British Library: Catalog of Illuminated Manuscripts, <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=5742&CollID=16&NStart=190404>. The original French Bible from which *La Sainte Bible en Francoys* derived from was titled *Biblia in lingua in duobus scripta*. The original French translation was created by Guyart des Moulins (b. 1251) and dates back to the early fourteenth century in two volumes.

<sup>60</sup> BL, "Detailed record for Royal 19 D IV," British Library: Catalog of Illuminated Manuscripts, <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=5742&CollID=16&NStart=190404>. By tracing the manuscript's journey, it was created in France, and ended up in the possession of an English family, Sir Matthew Gourney (d.1406) and Alice Beauchamp (d.1383) and later ended up in the Old Royal Library either before or around 1542 as *Biblia in lingua in duobus scripta*.

prior to 1542, that Anne Boleyn would have known about it, and used it fairly frequently before she received *La Sainte Bible en Francoys* in 1534.

The physical description of *La Sainte Bible en Francoys* is described by Carley as having been binded by King Henry's royal Binder with the HA cipher.<sup>61</sup> It is likely that the cipher would have been placed on the book at the request of King Henry and Anne once it was in their possession. This copy of the French translated Bible can be found today in the British Library. According to James P. Carley, this French translated copy of the Bible was owned by both Henry and Anne.<sup>62</sup>

*La (sic) Pasteur evangelique* [Carley, 286: Henry, 462], an interesting survival from Boleyn's library, is a good example of how French reformist books were making their way into the English court.<sup>63</sup> This manuscript copy is one of nine documents that still survive from Anne's library.<sup>64</sup> *La (sic) Pasteur evangelique* was originally called *Sermon du bon pasteur et du mauvais*. Dowling mentions that the version Anne owned would have been retitled *Le Pasteur évangélique* meaning she did not own the original copy titled *Sermon du bon pasteur et du mauvais* in order for it to be tailored specifically for her by Clément Marot (1496-1544).<sup>65</sup> Both Carley and Dowling claim that French

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<sup>61</sup> *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, Libraries of King Henry VIII*, 222. This binding would have been added once the book had been printed by Lempereur in 1534. Carley describes a page in this book as having, "...been lavishly executed by King Henry's Binder and has an HA monogram, pairing husband and wife together intellectually as well as romantically. In both cases front and back cover also have inscribed on them matched pairs of biblical quotations of a sort associated with the reformers." [ *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 127, fig. 114.]

<sup>62</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125.

<sup>63</sup> BL MS Royal 16 E. XIII.

<sup>64</sup> Eric Ives, "Anne Boleyn and the Entente Évangélique," in *François Ier et Henri VIII. Deux Princes de la Renaissance, 1515-1547*, ed. C. Giry-Deloison (Lille 1996), 83-102.

<sup>65</sup> Dowling, "Anne Boleyn as Patron," 108.

poet and evangelical Clément Marot is the author of this manuscript.<sup>66</sup> Dowling describes *Le Pasteur évangélique* “the frontispiece shows Anne’s arms as Queen, imperially crowned, wreathed and with her badge of the white falcon beneath and there are complimentary verses celebrating the uniting of the royal families of England and France, and in particular, the two great ladies, Marguerite of Navarre and Anne Boleyn, who were committed to reform.”<sup>67</sup> This quote by Dowling proves that Marot must have had an angle to preparing this piece specifically for Anne. Marot clearly knew the influence Marguerite had on Anne while she was at French court, and that together they shared the passion for reform. It was through Anne’s background in French court that directly influenced the commencement of the English Reformation, and *Le Pasteur évangélique* is evidence to support that.

According to the British Library “*Le Pasteur Euangelique*’ is a poem in 490 ten-syllable lines with compliments to both Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn at the end.<sup>68</sup> In giving both Henry and Anne compliments towards their efforts in the cause for the reform, Marot is clearly interested in gaining favor with the English crown. It is also highlighted at the end that Marot wishes Anne well with her future son to be by stating, “O lady Anne, O queen incomparable, may this good shepherd with whom you find favour give you a son, the image of his father the king, and may he live and flourish so that you may both see him come to manhood.”<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125; Dowling, “Anne Boleyn as Patron,” 109.

<sup>67</sup> Dowling, “Anne Boleyn as Patron,” 108; BL Royal MS 16 E XIII, fos. 1v-2.

<sup>68</sup> BL, “*Le Pasteur Euangelique*,” (London, British Library), [http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo\\_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?docId=IAMS040-002107183&fn=permalink&vid=IAMS\\_VU2](http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?docId=IAMS040-002107183&fn=permalink&vid=IAMS_VU2).

<sup>69</sup> Dowling, “Anne Boleyn as Patron,” 110; BL, Royal MS 16 E XIII.

*La (sic) Pasteur evangelique* was made with vellum and 7 ¾ x 5 ½in in size created sometime between 1533 and 1536.<sup>70</sup> The size of this manuscript is particularly significant due to how portable this would have been for Anne to carry. Vellum was used primarily in the sixteenth century for being inexpensive and a cheaper alternative to leather. Although it was the cheaper option, it does not negate the fact that it allowed for a beautiful display of illuminated texts or images.<sup>71</sup> The British Library also gives a brief physical description by stating “the shield is surmounted by a crown and encircled by an oak wreath with red and white roses, and below is Anne’s badge, a white falcon with gold crown and sceptre on a gold stump from which grow red and white roses.”<sup>72</sup>

This religious text, *Sermon du bon pasteur et du mauvais/La (sic) Pasteur evangelique* now located in the British Libraries royal collection, could be the earliest manuscript copy that has survived. There are major questions still to be answered regarding this text such as; when was it published, and how long did it circulate in manuscript before it was banned from use? So far what is known, is that Anne most certainly owned this manuscripted copy of this sermon.<sup>73</sup>

Another one of Anne’s books is a French psalter. Carley mentions “yet another of Anne’s books is a French psalter copied at Rouen and illuminated by an individual known as the Anglo Master between December 1529 and September 1532...”<sup>74</sup> Although

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<sup>70</sup> BL, “*Le Pasteur Euangelique*,” (London, British Library), [http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo\\_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?docId=IAMS040-002107183&fn=permalink&vid=IAMS\\_VU2](http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?docId=IAMS040-002107183&fn=permalink&vid=IAMS_VU2).

<sup>71</sup> Julia Miller, *Books Will Speak Plain* (Michigan: The Legacy Press, 2010), 111.

<sup>72</sup> BL, ‘*Le Pasteur Euangelique*’ (London, British Library), [http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo\\_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?docId=IAMS040-002107183&fn=permalink&vid=IAMS\\_VU2](http://searcharchives.bl.uk/primo_library/libweb/action/dlDisplay.do?docId=IAMS040-002107183&fn=permalink&vid=IAMS_VU2).

<sup>73</sup> *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, Libraries of King Henry VIII*, 74.

<sup>74</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125.

the identity of the Master of the Ango Hours is not known, an inference can be drawn that he must have been an important artist and created beautiful illuminations in order to have commissioned something to this magnitude for Anne herself.<sup>75</sup> Ives argues that this book would have been commissioned by someone who knew Anne and her taste's well due to the personal touches of French style in the illuminations of the pages.<sup>76</sup> In addition to this, the translation of this book was by Louis de Berquin (1490-1529).<sup>77</sup> Berquin consistently sought to argue and challenge theologians on religious and controversial topics. Berquin also attempted to translate works by Erasmus (1466-1536) into French that could have caused trouble for both him and Erasmus. According to Erasmus, he had attempted to persuade Berquin to do otherwise. However, Berquin's stubbornness eventually led to Berquin's downfall.<sup>78</sup> Carley also states that Berquin was an active evangelical who reached out to printer and publisher Simon Du Bois for help with publishing his works. Du Bois was being supported by Marguerite de Navarre when Anne and her brother George Boleyn, Viscount of Rochford heard of him.<sup>79</sup> Du Bois was also known for assisting other reformists in their efforts to fight against heresy.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Master of the Ango Hours, "Book of Hours," The Morgan Library and Museum, <https://www.themorgan.org/manuscript/77056>; Master of the Ango Hours "Psalterium," The Wormsley Library, United Kingdom, From "The Wormsley Library: A Personal selection by Sir Paul Getty, K.B.E.," (New York: The Morgan Library and Museum, 1999), <https://www.themorgan.org/exhibitions/images/psalter-of-anne-boleyn>.

<sup>76</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 293-294.

<sup>77</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125. Berquin was apparently executed in Paris in 1529 for being a Lutheran.

<sup>78</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *The Correspondence of Erasmus Letters 1535-1657*, trans. Alexander Dalzell (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 243.

<sup>79</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125.

<sup>80</sup> Jonathan A. Reid, *King's Sister- Queen of Dissent: Marguerite of Navarre (1492-1549) and her Evangelical Network* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 271-272.



Although both Carley and Ives argue that Anne certainly had a copy of the French Psalter translated by Berquin, there is another historical argument that can be drawn. According to Waldo Selden Pratt, Clément Marot, the French poet and court favorite to Francis I and Marguerite de Navarre, began to write the Book of Psalms in French verse in 1533.<sup>81</sup> Due to Marot's popularity in French court, Pratt suggests that Marot's translation of the psalter would have circulated rather quickly throughout court.<sup>82</sup> It is entirely possible that Anne, having already established a relationship with Marot via *Le Pasteur évangélique*, would have obtained a copy of his French psalter around 1533. In addition to *Le Pasteur évangélique* having been gifted to Anne by Marot, Anne's copy of the French psalter could have also been gifted to her at the same time. The location of the French psalter is currently unknown, but with further research the location is hoped to be uncovered.

The next manuscript in Anne Boleyn's Library is *Epistres et evangiles des cinquante et deux semaines de l'an* (Epistles and Gospels for the Fifty-two Weeks of the Year)/ *The Pistellis and Gospelles for the LII Sondays of the Yere*.<sup>83</sup> According to Carley, this book was prepared for Anne Boleyn by a Flemish craftsman and one of two with the most decorative designs out of all of her books.<sup>84</sup> This book was given to her prior to her ascent to the English throne, sometime between her promotion to Marquess of Pembroke on September 1 of 1532 and March 1533.<sup>85</sup> The preface is inscribed with

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<sup>81</sup> Waldo Selden Pratt, "The Importance of the Early French Psalter," *The Musical Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (1935): 26, accessed 4/22/2020 at [www.jstor.org/stable/738962](http://www.jstor.org/stable/738962).

<sup>82</sup> Pratt, "The Importance of the Early French Psalter," 26.

<sup>83</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 126; *The Pistellis and Gospelles for the LII Sondays of the Yere*, (1525?) BL, Harley MS 303, f. Ir.

<sup>84</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125.

<sup>85</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125.

Henry's cipher "HENREXSL."<sup>86</sup> This book was put together by Lefèvre d'Étaples (1455-1536) and his followers in order to provide reformist preachers with material every day.<sup>87</sup> Anne Boleyn having this religious text, meant that she was reading, what people during this time, would have seen as a heretical work. According to Carley, the text suggests that the relationship with Christ was more important than the opinions of the church.<sup>88</sup> The history of texts like *Epistres et evangiles des cinquante et deux semaines de l'an* derives from the opinions of scholars like Martin Luther (1483-1546) and John Calvin (1509-1564) who both believe "...that we are justified by faith alone that is, forgiven, put right with God, and taken into God's care, only through faith in Christ..."<sup>89</sup> As stated by Carley, this book was published seven different times until 1551, twice by Simon Du Bois.<sup>90</sup> If Anne Boleyn was in possession of this text, this strengthens the claim that Anne practiced her faith like a reformer.

The French psalter and *Epistres et evangiles des cinquante et deux semaines de l'an* can be compared as two reformist devotional books that Anne would have taken the time to know and memorize. Although the French psalter is more likely to have been a book of praise and worship, the *Epistres et evangiles des cinquante et deux semaines de l'an* was a daily devotional book that not many people had. The French psalter at this time, if one follows Pratt, Carley and Ives's scholarship, would have likely been

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<sup>86</sup> Carley describes the inscription in the preface, "Marking the preface is a coroneted lozenge with Anne's arms situated in a square frame divided vertically argent, or, sable with a canton sinister. In the lower corners of the frame and to the left and right beneath the coronet the HENREXSL cipher occurs." [*The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125].

<sup>87</sup> Reid, *King's Sister- Queen of Dissent*, 271.

<sup>88</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 127.

<sup>89</sup> Thompson, *Humanists and Reformers*, 484-485.

<sup>90</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 126-127.

circulated through European courts in efforts to spread Protestant beliefs.<sup>91</sup> Meanwhile, *Epistres et evangiles des cinquante et deux sepmaines de l'an*, due to its assemblment by Jacques Lefèvre and his disciples would have been circulated carefully due to its contents.<sup>92</sup>

On the same note, Carley goes on to mention that *The Ecclesiaste*, the printed book from which *Epistres et evangiles des cinquante et deux sepmaines de l'an* derived, was placed in the royal library in 1536 after the downfall of Anne Boleyn.<sup>93</sup> Now, *The Ecclesiaste* belongs to the Duke of Northumberland in his archives and special collections in Alnwick Castle.<sup>94</sup> The original bindings show a brown cover, of which according to Carley used to be black velvet.<sup>95</sup> Carley's description of the book mentions "...the bosses illustrate the crowned lion rampant guardant, the dragon, the crowned falcon on roses and the greyhound; there are decorated brass clasps, and in the centre a shield in enamel. Henry's arms impaling Anne's, surmounted by a crown."<sup>96</sup>

The most complete example of Anne's heraldry comes from one of the books in her library. The images displayed on *The Ecclesiaste* represent symbols from Anne's badge. This particular example indicates that some of Anne's books were highly personal

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<sup>91</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 126-127; Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 293-294; Pratt, "The Importance of the Early French Psalter," 26.

<sup>92</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 126-127.

<sup>93</sup> Percy MS 465, Collection of the Duke of Northumberland, (Alnwick, Alnwick Castle).

<sup>94</sup> Carley, *The Books of Henry VIII and His Wives*, 127. Now, *The Ecclesiaste* belongs to the Duke of Northumberland in his archives and special collections in Alnwick Castle. This book was given to the sixth Duke of Northumberland in 1899 due to the family's "...early romantic association of Anne Boleyn and Henry, the sixth earl of Northumberland." I would like to thank Archive Assistant Gemma McGuirk from the Duke of Northumberland Library at Alnwick Castle who was able to provide photo images of the cover of *The Ecclesiaste*.

<sup>95</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 127.

<sup>96</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 127, fig. 115.

highlighting her background with symbols that represent her family and identity.<sup>97</sup> The image of the white falcon sitting on the bed of red and white roses shows up in several of Anne's books aiming to represent her new status as Queen of England.<sup>98</sup> Another example of this shows up in *Le Pasteur évangélique* on one of the leaves within the manuscript.<sup>99</sup>

Additionally, Simon Du Bois printed *The Ecclesiaste* at Alençon in northwest France. Anne's brother George Boleyn may have been the author. According to Carley,

Although the name does not appear in the badly water-damaged dedication page of the Harley manuscript- the preface to *The Ecclesiaste* is now missing- the author did refer to 'the perpetuall bond' which linked him to his patron. In a passage which is only accessible by means of ultraviolet light, moreover, he declares himself to be Anne's 'moost lovyng and fryndely brother' and in spite of doubts by some scholars, the reference must be a literal one, to Anne's brother George.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 4; Eric Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 221; Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 279. Dating back to Anne's great-grandfather, Geoffrey Boleyn (1406-1463) began to build the wealth and status of the Boleyn family by securing the right marriages for his children. Geoffrey's oldest son William Boleyn (1451-1505) married Margaret Butler (1454-1539), daughter of the earl of Ormonde and their son, Anne's father Thomas Boleyn married Elizabeth Howard (1480-1538), daughter of the earl of Surrey. According to Ives, through succession in 1529, Thomas Boleyn was announced the next earl of Ormonde. Meanwhile, during the time of her father's advancement to earl, Anne was attempting to decide on her badge. In the end Anne decided that she would choose the Rochford lion rampant.

<sup>98</sup> Ives gives an incredible description of the symbol of the white falcon as well as the crown, "the crown on Anne's falcon also made a special point. It not only referred to her impending coronation but, as Udall's verses were careful to point out, it was specifically a 'close,' that is an 'imperial' crown, not a 'kingly' coronet." [ *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn*, 222]. It was not until her marriage to Henry that Anne would adopt the image of the white falcon upon a bed of roses. However, contrary to belief, Ives mentions that these flowers were not red and white petals, but their own separate red and white blossoms in reference to both the Lancastrian and Yorkist line. Additionally, the crown surmounted on the falcon's head is not to what it seems either.

<sup>99</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 125; BL, Royal MS 16. E. xiii, f. iv.

<sup>100</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 128.

Both the written text and the interpretation of the work was done by German reformer Johannes Brenz (1499-1570) in French. As Carley notes, "...Johannes Brenz, whose commentary emphasizes the pre-eminence of the Bible itself over the traditions and sacraments of the Church and ultimately derives from Luther's writings."<sup>101</sup> Although the original text of this book is in French, the manuscripted copy in Alnwick Castle translates the commentary portion into English while leaving the primary text in French.<sup>102</sup> If the commentary portion of the work was in English, this indicates that due to Anne's comfortable knowledge of both French and English, that instead of writing down her thoughts and opinions on the piece in French, she may have felt the need to write in English in case someone else wanted to glance at the work.<sup>103</sup>

Due to their obvious shared interest in reformist works, George Boleyn also gifted his sister Anne with another manuscript for her to read. *Supplication for the Beggars*, written by active reformist Simon Fish, was written and published in 1529.<sup>104</sup> According to Carley, "...he [George] may have even persuaded her [Anne] to show the truly revolutionary *Supplication for the Beggars* by the anticlerical lawyer Simon Fish- of which Anne apparently had a copy- to her theologically conservative husband."<sup>105</sup> The hope of showing this work to Henry aimed to gain limited power and/or the removal of

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<sup>101</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 128.

<sup>102</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 128.

<sup>103</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 129. Alternatively, Carley mentions that it was an extremely high accolade within the aristocratic circle to be able to translate one text into another. If George aimed to give this piece to Anne translated into both English and French, this achievement would have been more acclimated to George rather than Anne.

<sup>104</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 131.

<sup>105</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 131.

the clergy all together.<sup>106</sup> These two siblings proved to be an active reformist pair in English court.<sup>107</sup> As a team, their efforts to commence the English Reformation slowly began to become a reality.

Dowling writes that Anne was seen in two different lights by her contemporaries. She is either a woman out to reform the Catholic Church and promote the Reformation, or someone who “...If she [Anne Boleyn] thought of religion at all, perceived of it only as a weapon in politics.”<sup>108</sup> Due to many manuscripts found and of those that still survive, they demonstrate her active role in culture, religion, education, and the Reformation in England. According to Dowling, “the manuscript volumes she [Anne Boleyn] owned were exquisitely illuminated and elegantly bound.”<sup>109</sup> Carley also mentions, “Anne clearly loved jewels and beautiful objects, including elaborate bindings. In May 1531 the king’s Flemish goldsmith, Cornelius Hayes, submitted a bill for the past year, consisting primarily of items for Anne, which included: ‘mending a little book which was garnished in France’ and ‘garnishing a little book with crown gold for her.’”<sup>110</sup> Although this may suggest that Anne may have added embellishments to her things to make them look better, this does not negate the idea that Anne was interested in art and style. In *Books Will Speak Plain* by Julia Miller, she describes the details that go further into creating

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<sup>106</sup> Dunstan Roberts, "Introduction to Simon Fish, *A Supplicacyon for the Beggars* (Antwerp, J. Grapheus?, 1529)," EEBO, [https://media2.proquest.com/documents/eebo\\_intro\\_17.pdf](https://media2.proquest.com/documents/eebo_intro_17.pdf); Simon Fish, *A Supplicacyon for the Beggars* (Antwerp, J. Grapheus?, 1529), EEBO, <https://search.proquest.com/eebo/docview/2240873792/citation/D43A838262164EF1PQ/1?accountid=11225>.

<https://search.proquest.com/docview/2240873792?accountid=11225>.

<sup>107</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 133.

<sup>108</sup> Dowling, “Anne Boleyn as Patron,” 107.

<sup>109</sup> Dowling, “Anne Boleyn as Patron,” 107.

<sup>110</sup> Carley, *The Books of King Henry VIII and His Wives*, 124.

books and manuscripts in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In the fifteenth century, it was quite expensive to write or print onto vellum or paper. The act of actually having the book bound was also expensive. Paper was not traded into Europe after 1500 of which was one of the primary reasons why it was so expensive.<sup>111</sup> Most of the surviving copies from Anne's Library are manuscripts.

Due to her time in French court, Anne Boleyn became well-versed in French. Most of the surviving copies from her library today are found to be in the French language. This tells us that not only did she speak French well, but she was intrigued enough with the language that she read French texts, and continued to educate herself in the language.<sup>112</sup> Dowling also mentions a statement left by Loys de Brun, whom of which dedicated a treatise on letter-writing to Anne Boleyn at New Years in 1530,

When I consider your great affection and perfect desire for the French Tongue, I am not surprised that you are not to be found (when the occasion is fitting) without some French book in your hand which is useful and necessary for teaching and discovering the true and straight path of all virtue: such as approved translations from holy scripture, filled with all good doctrines; or equally, other good books by erudite men, giving salutary remedies for this mortal life and consolation to the mortal soul. And chiefly I have seen you this last Lent, when I was in this magnificent, excellent and triumphant Court, reading the salutary epistles of St Paul, in which are contained the whole manner and rule of a good life.<sup>113</sup>

In regards to Anne's comfortability with the French language, another one of the surviving manuscripts found in Anne's Library is *Traict des lettres missyves* [Carley: 549, Henry: 866].<sup>114</sup> This copy was meant for the educational purpose of teaching

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<sup>111</sup> Julia Miller, "Books Will Speak Plain," (Michigan: The Legacy Press, 2010), 89.

<sup>112</sup> Dowling, "Anne Boleyn as Patron," 107-108.

<sup>113</sup> Dowling, "Anne Boleyn as Patron," 108.

<sup>114</sup> No. 866, BL, '*Traict des lettres missyves*' (London), [BL MS Royal 20 B. XVII], ed. James P. Carley.

students how to write letters in French.<sup>115</sup> There is not much information on this manuscript copy, however the person of which she received this book from was Louis du Brun at New Year in 1530.<sup>116</sup> Presumably, given that Louis du Brun gave Anne a book on letter writing, he may have been a teacher or tutor that Anne would have known well. Evidence of this comes from a recorded statement by Du Brun in his preface to his treatise on letter-writing, “sans tenir quelque livre en francoys utile et necessaire pour enseigner et trouver le vray et droict chemin de toutes vertus.”<sup>117</sup> In addition to Du Brun applauding Anne for reading French books, he also mentions her readings of Epistles of St. Paul, indicating his approval and support as a fellow reformist.<sup>118</sup>

Lastly, Anne Boleyn was gifted with a music book in dedication to her coronation ceremony as the new Queen of England in 1533.<sup>119</sup> According to scholar Peter Holman, the music book written for Anne consisted of thirty-nine Latin motets and five French chansons (songs). This piece, owned by Anne, has many different features and illuminations that allude to her becoming the new queen. Holman gives a full description of one particular leaf stating “on page 4 an illuminated initial shows a falcon (Anne’s badge) furiously pecking a pomegranate (the badge of Catherine of Aragon, Anne’s displaced predecessor)...”<sup>120</sup> The image of Anne’s falcon pecking at the pomegranate infers that this was a symbol of Anne getting rid of Catherine, and fairly vigorously at

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<sup>115</sup> *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, Libraries of King Henry VIII*, 109.

<sup>116</sup> Dowling, “Anne Boleyn as Patron,” 108.

<sup>117</sup> preface to the *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues, Libraries of King Henry VIII*, lvii; BL MS Royal 20 B. xvii, fol. 1r.

<sup>118</sup> Dowling, “Anne Boleyn as Patron,” 108.

<sup>119</sup> Holman, “Music at the Court of Henry VIII,” 104, fig. VII.7; MS 1070, Royal College of Music.

<sup>120</sup> Holman, “Music at the Court of Henry VIII,” 104, fig. VII.7; MS 1070, Royal College of Music.



that. The idea of a falcon eating away at a pomegranate is a strong statement against Catherine. It is Ives' belief that this image exposes the demotion of Catherine as queen to dowager princess of Wales.<sup>121</sup> Although Holman mentions that the book may have been compiled by musician Mark Smeaton, he admits that there are current scholarly debates against this.<sup>122</sup> Ives gives a more descriptive analysis “it is less than top-class production, on paper rather than vellum, unfinished, frequently corrected, and with the forty folios which do carry completed illuminations offering a decidedly old-fashioned collection of fruit, foliage, grotesques and monsters.”<sup>123</sup> Due to this work using a much cheaper material and being frequently edited, some things in the music book may have been changed due to unforeseen circumstances such as Anne’s downfall.<sup>124</sup>

In Chapter 1, the research done looked at women as intellectuals while specifically focusing on Anne Boleyn as a humanist and her courtly networks in France. However, when looking at Anne Boleyn’s library, a new network emerges, made up of mostly male Protestants in France. This notion argues that Anne not only had a network of women in France, but a network of men as well. These men aided in taking part of Anne’s humanism.

### Chapter 3: Anne Boleyn’s Letters and Correspondence

Like men, some elite women learned the art of letter writing in the Renaissance. Literacy itself came from wealth and privilege in this period. Many women and men

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<sup>121</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 296.

<sup>122</sup> Holman, “Music at the Court of Henry VIII,” 104, fig. VII.7; MS 1070, Royal College of Music.

<sup>123</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 295.

<sup>124</sup> Holman, “Music at the Court of Henry VIII,” 104, fig. VII.7; MS 1070, Royal College of Music. Holman suggests to look at pg. 157 of the musical book for evidence of music dedicated to Anne’s execution.

relied on a secretary or an amanuensis, someone who specialized in writing letters.<sup>125</sup> But for women, letter writing would have been a rare skill. James Daybell categorizes letters from this period as either holograph, meaning women wrote the letter in their own hand, or autograph, meaning that a woman merely put her signature to it.<sup>126</sup> The evidence suggests that Anne Boleyn learned to write letters in French and perhaps Latin at the age of thirteen at Mechelen under the tutelage of Margaret of Austria, which also shaped the way she wrote letters in English.<sup>127</sup> Anne's family background at court had generated the expectation that Anne could impress English society with literacy in French and Latin, and the letters served as material proof of her immersion in Continental Humanism

Historians know of thirty letters that have survived from Anne's library; one French, one Latin, twenty-four English, and four in both English and French. Some of these letters are holograph and some autograph. Some surviving letters that have recently been located in the Vatican. The rest are scattered among various archives, including the British Library. Some have survived only as copies. Anne Crawford collected and edited nine of Anne's letters, in *Letters of the Queens of England*, while sixteen letters can be found in *The Calendar of State Papers of Henry VIII*.<sup>128</sup> In her letters, Anne attempts to showcase years of European education, and her deep interest in religion, even alluding to

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<sup>125</sup> James, Daybell, "Women's letters and letter writing in England, 1540-1603: An Introduction to the Issues of Authorship and Construction." *Shakespeare Studies* (0582-9399) 27, (1999): 162, <https://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=f160dd0a-ea52-47f1-8f37-669e0a404b5c%40sdc-v-sessmgr03>.

<sup>126</sup> Daybell, "Women's letters and letter writing in England, 1540-1603: An Introduction to the Issues of Authorship and Construction," 162.

<sup>127</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 24.

<sup>128</sup> *Letters of the Queens of England 1100-1547*, ed. Anne Crawford (Phoenix Mill: Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1994); *Letters of Henry VIII, 1526-1529: Extracts from the Calendar of State Papers of Henry VIII*, (London: The Stationery Office, 2001).

her passion for reform. Written with sophistication, and intention, especially when it came to writing to Henry VIII, they stand out in relation to her contemporaries like Katherine of Aragon (1485-1536), as evidence of her immersion in Continental Humanism.

Chronologically, the first letter recorded by Anne Boleyn dates to the period 1513-1514 when she studied at the court of Margaret of Austria. Unfortunately, this letter is undated, but it clearly comes from her time at Margaret's court. This letter survives currently at the Corpus Christi College, at Cambridge in the Parker Library.<sup>129</sup> The letter had "...many misspelled words, most of them penned phonetically."<sup>130</sup> The misspellings and errors come from Anne at the beginning stages of her progress in learning French.

Scholars such as Eric Ives and Retha Warnicke, have debated the overall reason for Anne learning the French language based on this letter. Ives argued that it was to impress the Queen of England, Katherine of Aragon, while Warnicke states it would be used more directly to gain patronage from Mary Tudor, Henry VIII's sister.<sup>131</sup> Ives thinks that Katherine, who also learned French from Margaret of Austria, would have been particularly impressed.<sup>132</sup> However, Warnicke describes that the original reasoning for Anne studying under Margaret was to eventually serve Mary Tudor who was originally betrothed to Charles of Burgundy (1500-1558), Margaret's nephew and the future Holy

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<sup>129</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 24; Philip W. Sergeant, *The Life of Anne Boleyn* (London: Hutchinson, 1923), Appendix D, 308, <https://archive.org/details/lifeofanneboleyn00serguoft/page/308/mode/2up>; "Letters Principally of Foreign Reformers," Parker Manuscript, (Cambridge: Corpus Christi College), MS 119, 21-22.

<sup>130</sup> Retha Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 15.

<sup>131</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 23; Retha Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn*, 15.

<sup>132</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 23.

Roman Emperor.<sup>133</sup> Warnicke argues that this letter by Anne was in response to her father after hearing word of Anne's invitation to France to translate for Mary Tudor who was now to marry Louis XII of France. It is Warnicke's belief that Thomas Boleyn sent a letter to both Anne and Margaret regarding her removal, in which encourages Anne to want to learn French all the more to serve the new queen.<sup>134</sup> There is general agreement, however, about Anne's initial excitement to learn the French language and her active pursuit of her education occurring under her father's paternalistic guidance.

During Anne's time in either Margaret's court or French court under Claude, she would have likely also learned some Latin. The same Corpus Christi College volume also has a translated copy of a letter from Anne to her father in Latin, although in a different hand than the French letter. The handwriting on the leaf does not look the same as the French letter that is most certainly in Anne's own handwriting.<sup>135</sup> Nevertheless, the Latin letter directly translates the French letter she sent to her father around 1513-1514. However, at the bottom of the letter an English inscription in the same hand indicates it is a copy. This letter was likely written by Anne in Latin and copied by someone at the time or soon thereafter, as the script itself is sixteenth century.

At the beginning of the courtship between Henry and Anne, it is likely that Henry would have been attracted to the idea of Anne's French upbringing. Through Anne's unique European education, her sophistication seemed to have caught the eye of the King upon her entry into court. In several of Henry's letters, he uses French phrases likely to appeal to Anne's French background. In one of his letters from 1527, Henry offers Anne

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<sup>133</sup> Retha Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn*, 11.

<sup>134</sup> Retha Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn*, 15.

<sup>135</sup> "Letters Principally of Foreign Reformers," Parker Manuscript, (Corpus Christi College), MS 119, 25-26.

the official title of the King's Mistress. This letter not only indicates that he offers her the title of the King's mistress, but it also mentions that he had been courting her for over a year at this point.

I have been in great agony about the contents of your letters, not knowing whether to construe them to my disadvantage *comme en des aucunes autres*, or to my advantage. I beg to know expressly your intention touching the love between us. Necessity compels me to obtain this answer, having been more than a year wounded by the dart of love, and not yet sure whether I shall fail or find a place in your affection. This has prevented me naming you my mistress; for if you love me with no more than ordinary love, the name is not appropriate to you, for it denotes a singularity far from the common...I promise you not only the name, but that I shall make you my soul mistress, remove all others from my affection and serve you only.<sup>136</sup>

This letter from Henry to Anne is unique. It would have been unlikely that a king would make it a habit to send letters to his love interests offering the position of the King's mistress let alone refer to his feelings and emotions so strongly. Interestingly, he asks for her intentions. Here, Henry is alluding to where her mind may be, or if she has thought about their relationship growing beyond normal "ordinary love." However, if her love proves to be more than ordinary, and her intentions are in accord with real love, then he wishes for her to become his mistress.

According to Anne Crawford, seventeen love-letters from Henry VIII to Anne survive in the Vatican archives. Only one of Anne's letters to Henry survives.<sup>137</sup>

Although undated, she probably wrote it in 1526, around the beginning of her relationship with Henry. Writing in English, Anne talks of her relationship with the king and how lucky she feels to have been chosen by him. In the first line of the letter Anne

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<sup>136</sup> Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn, in *Letters of Henry VIII, 1526-1529: Extracts from the Calendar of State Papers of Henry VIII*, 32.

<sup>137</sup> *Letters of the Queens of England 1100-1547*, 189.

immediately gives the impression that she was flattered by the king's letter to her. Anne writes, "It belongs only to the august mind of a great king, to whom Nature has given a heart full of generosity towards the sex, to repay by favours so extraordinary an artless and short conversation with a girl."<sup>138</sup> There are three factors Anne highlights in this sentence that she feels will compliment Henry. Firstly, for Anne to use the phrase "august mind," it refers to the king having a worthy mind or respectable mind, which she can herself recognize. This aims towards his intelligence, while the term "Nature" is referring to his emotion. The latter portion reflects on Anne's interpretation that he is a gentleman when it comes to women, meaning he pays close attention to their interests by means of "artless and short" conversation. Strategically, once Anne has entertained the king's ego, she uses her training from when she attended European court to suggest that she be made maid of honor to the queen. She justifies this by stating, "the warrant of maid of honour to the queen induces me to think that your majesty has some regard for me, since it gives me means of seeing you oftener, and of assuring you by my own lips (which I shall do on the first opportunity) that I am, Your majesty's very obliged and very obedient servant, without reserve..."<sup>139</sup> By requesting the position of maid of honor to his wife, and assuring the king that it will be to his advantage, she would be gaining a position at court tied to Katherine as well as Henry.

Throughout Henry's efforts to court Anne, he refers to himself as a gentleman. In what appears to be a response letter written around 1527 to Anne's request to becoming maid of honour to Queen Katherine, Henry replies "Though it is not for a gentleman to

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<sup>138</sup> Anne Boleyn to Henry VIII, 1526, in *Letters of the Queens of England 1100-1547*, 190; Wood, vol. ii, letter vii.

<sup>139</sup> Anne to Henry, 190; Wood, vol. ii, letter vii.

take his lady in place of a servant, nevertheless, according to your desire, I shall willingly grant it if thereby I may find you less ungrateful in the place chosen by yourself than you have been in the place given you by me...”<sup>140</sup> In this letter, it is apparent that Henry appealed to Anne’s offer in that making her his wife’s maid of honor, he would then get to see her more often. If this letter is a response to Anne’s request to become maid of honor to Katherine, then Anne’s original letter dated to approximately 1526 must have been written between 1526-1527. These surviving letters offer a glimpse of the courtly gender politics at play in the exchanges between Henry and Anne.

Anne’s letters also indicate her seriousness in advocating for the Reformation, and her efforts in assisting those willing to support the movement.<sup>141</sup> According to Crawford, Anne wrote an English letter in c. 1535 to Dr. Edward Crome (d. 1562) when he had not taken as quickly to his new position of benefice of St. Mary’s Aldermary as she would have preferred.<sup>142</sup> In the letter, it seems at first that Anne is simply checking on Crome, while assuring him of why she chose him for the position of benefice. However, it is apparent that towards the end, Anne speaks more as his queen telling him that she wants no more delays in beginning the reforming procedures.<sup>143</sup>

In regard to Anne and her willingness to support those willing to support the Reformation, there are two accounts, written in English, that have been recorded that prove Anne’s sympathy for pro-reformers. The first account is the petition from Thomas Alway to Anne Boleyn in 1530-31, while the second is a letter from Anne to Thomas

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<sup>140</sup> Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn, in *Letters of Henry VIII, 1526-1529: Extracts from the Calendar of State Papers of Henry VIII*, 33.

<sup>141</sup> *Letters of the Queens of England 1100-1547*, 190.

<sup>142</sup> *Letters of the Queens of England 1100-1547*, 190.

<sup>143</sup> Anne Boleyn to Dr. Edward Crome, c. 1535, in *Letters of the Queens of England 1100-1547*, 191; BL Lansdowne MS 1045, art. 64, fol. 79b. Wood, vol. ii, letter lxxvii.

Cromwell requesting the release for another evangelical, Richard Herman.<sup>144</sup> According to Crawford, Richard Herman was an Antwerp merchant who had been removed from the English merchants society for trading English translated Bibles.<sup>145</sup> As an advocate of reform, empathizing with its challenges, Anne Boleyn reached out to Thomas Cromwell, who Crawford mentions as a sympathizer to Anne's aims for reform, requesting the release of Richard Herman and knowing he would grant her request.<sup>146</sup>

Throughout her marriage to Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn maintained a relationship with one of her main Protestant mentors, Marguerite de Navarre. Communications between the two have been lost over time, but records indicate that Anne did reach out to Marguerite on two separate occasions: once in 1534 and the other in 1535<sup>147</sup> Anne wrote to Marguerite in 1534, referring back to the women's meeting in Calais in 1532, that "everything proceeding between both kings to the queen's grace's singular comfort, there was no one thing which her grace so much desired... as the want of the said queen of Navarre's company, with whom to have conference, for more causes than were meet to be expressed, her grace is most desirous."<sup>148</sup> According to Ives, this message was an attempt to gain Marguerite as a friend rather than someone she simply knew at French court. Ives also quotes a second message from Anne to Marguerite inferring a more personal relationship between the two women "that her [Anne] greatest wish, next to having a son, was to see you [Marguerite] again."<sup>149</sup> If Anne Boleyn did not have a

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<sup>144</sup> Anne Boleyn to Thomas *Letters of the Queens of England 1100-1547*, 192; BL Cotton MS Cleop. E V, fol. 330b. Mention of Thomas Alwaye's petition is in Chapter 2: Anne's Library.

<sup>145</sup> *Letters of the Queens of England 1100-1547*, 191.

<sup>146</sup> *Letters of the Queens of England 1100-1547*, 191.

<sup>147</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 41.

<sup>148</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 41; St. Pap., vii. 566 [LP, vii.958].

<sup>149</sup> Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 41; LP, ix. 378.



relationship with Marguerite, then why send such a personal letter to her? Anne's actions in sending these messages to Marguerite indicate that they knew one another, and that they must have got along well together while she was at French court.

Anne's last recorded letter was written in May of 1536. According to Crawford, there is some question about the provenance of this letter as, "tradition says that a copy of it was found among the papers of Thomas Cromwell, and many people, including Ives, regard it as a forgery intended to discredit her, putting the view that no political prisoner of her time would have addressed the king in those terms."<sup>150</sup> Although this letter may have been a forgery, the letter still suggests that someone believed she was capable of thinking this way about Henry. In this letter to Henry, she is clearly upset and confused as to how she ended up in this situation. She accuses the king of already making his decision to have her executed regardless of a fair trial.

...But if you have already determined of me, and that not only my death, but an infamous slander must bring you the joying of your desired happiness, then I desire of God that he will pardon your great sin herein, and likewise my enemies, the instruments thereof; and that he will not call you to a strait account for your unprincely and cruel usage of me at his general judgement-seat, where both you and myself must shortly appear; and in whose just judgement, I doubt not (whatsoever the world may think of me), mine innocency shall be openly known and sufficiently cleared.<sup>151</sup>

In these final words, Anne is not setting herself up for success in gaining the king's favor. It is unlikely that Anne would have written a letter like this while addressing the king in such a manner. Through Anne's upbringing in the court of Claude in France, Anne would have kept a similar mindset to that of Louise of Savoy and Anne de Beaujeu in that "...women had to appear submissive. Only by giving the impression of knowing their

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<sup>150</sup> *Letters of the Queens of England 1100-1547*, 193.

<sup>151</sup> Anne Boleyn to Henry VIII, May 1536, in *Letters of the Queens of England 1100-1547*, 193; BL *Otho C x 228*.

place could they exercise power without calling down opprobrium.”<sup>152</sup> By concealing Anne’s power and remaining smart about her next moves, Anne would have felt one step closer to freedom.

What survives of Anne’s correspondence has been kept and recorded over the centuries due to her infamous marriage to Henry VIII. Through these letters scholars can peel back the layers to gain a deeper understanding of Anne’s complex persona and a sense of her as a ‘Renaissance individual.’ Anne Boleyn’s intentionality with her actions and use of writing came from her unique training, her library, and the influence of women at European courts. Anne learned from the most elite women in Europe how to navigate courtly situations and what was expected of women at court. But she also learned how to be a woman humanist and religious reformer. Through this European education, Anne Boleyn could portray a respectable and intriguing image that took her much further than her father’s paternalistic vision.

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<sup>152</sup> Cholakian and Cholakian, *Marguerite de Navarre*, 10.

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Appendix III: Anne Boleyn Portrait



Figure 1. Unknown English Artist, 'Anne Boleyn'

National Portrait Gallery, London, 668.

Appendix IV: Henry VIII Portrait



Figure 2. Hans Holbein the Younger, 'Henry VIII,' National Portrait Gallery, London, 157.

Appendix V: Marguerite de Navarre Portrait



Figure 3. 'Portrait of Marguerite d'Angoulême Queen of Navarre,' H. E. Bolles Fund  
Museum of Fine Arts Boston, [www.mfa.org](http://www.mfa.org).

Appendix VI: Margaret of Austria Portrait



Figure 4. Bernard Van Orley, 'Margaret of Austria (1480-1530),'

Royal Collection Trust Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020.

Appendix VII: Claude of France Portrait



Figure 5. Jacob Binck, 'Claude, Queen of France,' Royal Collection Trust Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2020.

Appendix VIII: 'The Ecclesiaste,' Image of Binding



Figure 6. Assembled by Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples, 'The Ecclesiaste,' Collection of the Duke of Northumberland, Percy MS 465, Printed by Simon Du Bois at Alençon.