Anne of Bohemia, born in 1366, was queen of England for twelve years, from 1382 to 1394. For this period, there are some contemporary chronicle accounts of her and some traces in official records, as well as hints in literary texts either about her or addressed to her. Her death was mourned by Richard, whose affection for her was noted throughout their marriage, and marked by Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, who preached her eulogy, and, as Michael van Dussen has recently pointed out, by Czech travelers to England who sent or carried back their own records of her eulogies.

Caroline Barron, Chris Given-Wilson, Paul Strohm, Nigel Saul, David Wallace, Alfred Thomas, and, of course, Carolyn Collette have explored the few facts we have about Anne. Their studies, like the fourteenth-century chronicle accounts, are readings of Anne, attempts to locate her in relation to the ideals of late medieval queenship, particularly the queen's idealized role as figure for mercy or equity before the king, thus as mediator between the people and the king's justice.

Here, I would like to review what we know of Anne and add some new considerations relating to Anne herself and to what ideas were available to royal women about their own relationships to power. It is important to recognize that there is no clearly defined picture of Anne. I suggest that both medieval and modern readings of Anne fictionalize her to some extent and thus point up the fraught nature of Richard's own understanding of royal power and contemporary efforts to come to terms with and to educate the king. The chronicle accounts employ Anne as a sign for King Richard and for the nature of the royal power he exercised or sought to exercise. The poets Geoffrey Chaucer, John Clanvowe, and Richard Maidstone give her a
more complex and agential role as an advisor to the king. However, Chaucer, Clanvowe, and Maidstone write another sort of fiction in their attempts to educate the queen in the true scope of the role a royal woman might play, a role that Anne seems to have understood only partially. Anne was and is objectified by all who attempt to describe or understand her, but only the poets offer pictures of the ways in which the queen might become less the object of Richard’s kingship than a subject in her own right and with her own royal agenda.

**THE CONTEMPORARY RECORD**

Thomas Walsingham’s eulogy for Anne suggests something of the contemporary confusion about the queen. He praises her for her dedication to God, for her almsgiving, her support for the poor and the Church, for her devotion to “true” faith and justice, and for carrying out secret acts of penance, but then he remarks that by many Anne was defamed. He goes on to say that her funeral was famous because it cost more than “all others of our time.” Since Walsingham’s remarks about Anne follow his notices of the deaths of Constance, Duchess of Lancaster, and Mary, Countess of Derby, his accounts of slander and expense oddly punctuate what is otherwise a memorial to three of England’s great ladies. The remainder of his entry on Anne’s funeral recounts Richard’s rage and violence at the disrespect he perceived in the behavior of the Earl of Arundel for what Walsingham refers to as nothing. Walsingham’s account of a funeral that ended at night in a turbulence and confusion caused by Arundel’s rudeness and Richard’s lack of control locates Anne within a set of Ricardian political constrictions and tensions, just as he sets her piety and charity within the ambit of the derogatory remarks of the people.

Throughout Anne’s reign, Walsingham and other chroniclers do not so much criticize the queen as use her as a sign for their distrust of Richard’s understanding of his kingship. In these accounts, the marriage was unpopular before it was even celebrated. Anne not only came to Richard with no dowry, but Richard contracted to loan her impoverished brother, Wenzel, king of the Romans, £12,000 and went on to grant annuities and rewards to others in her train. Walsingham, the monk of Westminster, and Adam Usk (writing from hindsight) all refer to the marriage as a purchase and comment upon Richard’s excessive generosity to the Bohemians, whom Wals-
ingham refers to as greedy.\(^5\) The monk of Westminster reports that some of
Anne's chamber women were attractive to the English (as well as fashion-
able). His story of Robert de Vere's repudiation of his noble wife, Phillipa de
Coucy, granddaughter of Edward III, for the commoner Agnes Lancecron is
freighted with social outrage, communicating the political tension generated
by a dislike of Richard's favorite, Robert de Vere.\(^6\)

There is certainly evidence that Anne functioned as an intercessor.
Knighton reports that in 1382 a general pardon for the rebels was issued
at the request of Anne and other magnates, especially John of Gaunt.\(^7\) In
1384, the monk of Westminster describes her interceding successfully for
In 1388, she pled for the lives of six condemned judges and, unsuccessfully,
for the life of Sir Simon Burley.\(^8\) The monk of Westminster credits her during
the crisis in 1392 for pleading to the king for mercy for the city of Lon-
don, but Walsingham credits Gloucester and Gaunt, rather than Anne, for
bringing peace between Richard and London.\(^9\) Throughout her reign, Anne
asked for pardons not only for the rebels of 1381 but for male and female
felons (including murderers and "ravishers") and, in 1384, for protection for
the scholars of Queen's Hall at Oxford.\(^10\) Despite her intercessory activities,
the chroniclers do not use her role as merciful intercessor to characterize her
reign but subordinate her actions to their pictures of the king.

The few letters from Anne that are known to exist are equally ambigu-
ous about her readiness to assume an agential role.\(^11\) One, as both Eduard
Perroy and Kristen Geaman have noted, offers a glimpse of Anne's under-
standing of the demands of her public identity as a figure for mercy, as well
as a brief look into her household. Perroy dated the letter before 1389; Gea-
man suggests 1384–85, early in Anne's marriage. In the letter, Anne congrat-
ulates Wenzel on his successes in Hungary and Poland, reports that a Lord
Nicholas has been retained by Richard, says that two of her women have
died and hopes her brother will send three others, whom she designates
by initials, to her for her solace. She then reports that since the time of her
entry into the country there has been peace between people and magnates,
among the people, and among the magnates, using \textit{pax}, \textit{tranquillitas}, \textit{contenti},
and \textit{mutue caritatis} to describe the state of things in England. She closes by
saying that the one point of sorrow is that they are not rejoicing in childbirth
but have hopes for the future with good health, God permitting. She ends,
as she began, with the florid address Richard also used when writing Anne's
brother, Wenzel, and her mother, Elizabeth. This letter, like the gift of cloth
(two cloths of “worstede” and a piece of cloth of “Reynes”) that Anne sent her mother in 1389, suggests her sense of duty to her family, just as Richard’s letters to Bohemia underline his regard for their position.12

These letters, the one from Anne and the several from Richard from about the same time, though directed to individual family members, are formally written in—or translated into—the elaborately complimentary Latin of diplomacy, opening with “Magne celsitudinis . . .,” “Serenissima et excellentissima . . .,” “Excellentissimo et serenissimo . . ..” The letters themselves, while friendly and, in some cases, affectionate, also seem designed to cement the relationship between the English crown and the imperial court, or to arrange for business like the purchase of horses in Bohemia and thus for safe passage for English knights, or to describe the happiness between Richard and Anne and thus the happy state of the English court. In other words, the letters are fond, but officially fond, and do real work in that they serve as cameos of the stability and prosperity of Richard’s own status and Anne’s share in it. Anne’s statement that since her entrance (“a tempore nostri introitus”) there has been peace in England serves as a report that she is doing the job as queen she is supposed to do. The period 1384–85 was peaceful compared to 1381 or 1388/89, but it was not without tension between Richard and his magnates or Richard and the Commons concerning his fiscal irresponsibility or the war with France. The letters describe a complicated situation in the simple terms of domestic and political harmony and serve as official records of the success of the young king or possibly of the naïveté of his political understanding.13

Other records underline the ways in which Anne was linked or linked herself to concerns associated with the prestige of the English crown. One comes from the author of the Historia Vitae et Regni Ricardi Secundi, who notes that Anne’s funeral took place in Westminster the day following the feast of St. Anne, a feast celebrated in England because the queen had requested the pope to grant it.14 Other letters suggesting Anne’s involvement in matters of state that especially pertain to issues Richard considered important to his own royal status.15 In 1387, Anne seconded Richard’s presentation of John Stacy to the prebend of Masham with her own petition to the cardinal of Alençon, though the cardinal continued to obstruct the appointment. More significant (and far more irascible) is the letter Richard sent to an official at the Roman court in late summer 1387 when he sought to chasten the baronial opposition to his own power. In his salutation he joins the queen’s name to his own (“regine consortis nostre carissime”) in
his greeting, going on to offer his correspondent “information” about certain ministers who, against the justice of regality and liberty, malign “our” person, asking that Rome impose its own spiritual powers upon those who promulgate the scandal. Richard’s attempt to assert royal prerogative was, in a few months, to be checked by the Appellants and the subsequent parliament of 1388/89. Richard invokes Anne’s name (“dilectissime consortis nostre Regine”) in another letter to Rome, this one to Urban VI, written before May 1389, in which Richard praises John Trefnant, who was on May 5, 1389, named preferred bishop of Hereford. In 1393, Anne was drawn into a long-standing dispute between England and Aragon, which involved claims and hostages, when Violante of Aragon wrote to her. Also in 1393, a quarrel between John Waltham, bishop of Salisbury, and his chapter went to the Curia for settlement. Richard wrote a number of letters to Boniface IX asking that he silence the chapter and rule to preserve the bishop’s rights and that he take into account that the bishop is treasurer of England and a faithful servant of the king. The same manuscript containing this series of letters, which is Gilbert Stone’s Letterbook, Oxford, MS Bodley 859, has a letter to the pope from Anne, as well as a letter from Stone to Waltham sending him a copy of Anne’s letter. On June 12, 1393, an accord was made, with the entry in the papal register noting the intervention of King Richard.

Each of these instances bears some relation to the prestige of the English crown—its right to name churchmen for offices or to privilege certain churchmen, its international status, or its own inherent regal power. While Anne certainly could not (and probably did not want to) prevent Richard from invoking her name, it is nonetheless interesting to consider those instances when he did invoke it. Walsingham reported that Richard rarely allowed Anne to leave his side, a remark that underlines just how companionate their marriage was. But their closeness also provided grist for complaints against Anne and her household since she then drew from the Wardrobe, as well as adding to expenses when Richard was on progress and staying at abbeys or estates where the cost of providing for two royal households would have been considerable. Cost is, however, not my point, but the shadowy record that Anne leaves, a record frequently not her own but Richard’s, and the contemporary use of it as commentary about the king rather than the queen. Thus, Walsingham follows up his complaint about the expenses of having to entertain both households, especially the “grasping” Bohemians, by quoting Ecclesiastes 10:16, “Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child.”
ANNE AND THE POETS

The poets’ Queen Anne is not simply more active; she is distinct from Richard. John Clanvowe’s The Boke of Cupid, Richard Maidstone’s Concordia, and the F Prologue to Chaucer’s Legend of Good Women, all of which relate to one another chronologically, thematically, and politically, present an Anne who is far more than a reflection of Richard’s sovereignty. Clanvowe’s poem is dated from 1386 (or after the F Prologue) to 1391 when Clanvowe died, Chaucer’s F Prologue from 1386 to 1388, and Maidstone’s Concordia in late 1392. Each poem contains a “portrait” of the queen. The portraits in the F Prologue and the Concordia link female merciful intercession to male judgmental power. Thus Alceste interposes her sense of Chaucer’s haplessness and hopes for his amendment in the face of Cupid’s anger at Chaucer’s translation of the “heretical” Roman de la Rose and unsympathetic rendering of Criseyde (LGW, F:329–34). Maidstone’s Concordia is one of several texts that describe the civic pageant celebrating the resolution of the quarrel between Richard II and London in August 1392; in some points it differs from accounts that are intended to be factual and should be seen as less a description of what happened than a reading and application of the event. In it, as Strohm has argued, Anne serves as the intercessor between Richard and London, his true wife, who has strayed from his side; she urges his acceptance of the city’s penance that has been demonstrated by the lavish pageant and tributes they have prepared for his return.

There are elements in all three texts that suggest for Anne a role whose intercessory function is focused by an understanding of female agency aligned to a concept of the common good, and hence of concord and equity. These texts portray Anne as capable of rational, ethical judgment that, when expressed, can bring harmony out of discord. The argument Clanvowe stages between the nightingale’s espousal of love language and servitude to Cupid and the cuckoo’s preference for plain talk and refusal to serve a blind god, which the narrator ends by throwing a stone at the mocking cuckoo, ends by having one bird call for a parliament presided over by the eagle and other peers at which they will make a judgment. Here, Clanvowe defers to the queen, not the peers, specifying that the parliament shall be held on St. Valentine’s Day at Woodstock under the maple that stands before the queen’s chamber. Like Chaucer in The Parliament of Fowls, he defers to female judgment at a future date, specifically to Anne’s judgment whether to privilege the double language of lovers who are motivated by
desire or the plain speech of those who avow a “trouthe” which seldom avails at “this courte” (204). The compliment to the queen, itself a piece of courtly speaking, nonetheless places the poem before her for more than her pleasure and suggests that the debate, in which judgment is inherent, is one she can follow and use to make a decision that can have an impact on the courtly community.

The greater concerns that Clanvowe casts in terms of love language—flattery and false speech—Chaucer casts as issues pertaining to discriminating kingship. In Alceste’s intervention into Cupid’s quarrel with the hapless poet/daisy worshiper, Chaucer (LGW, F Prologue, 342–441), she points out some crucial subjects for Cupid’s consideration: the number of flatterers and slanderers at court who drum (tabouren, 354) their false speech into his ear, Chaucer’s lack of malice, his possible ties to patrons who might have asked him to translate what “olde clerkes writen” (370), and his past record as a poet. She also raises a more pressing topic, the duties of the prince to “kepe his liges in justice,” to “kepe his lorde hire degree,” but also to “doon bothe ryght, to poore and rych,” and “han of poore folk compassyoun,” emphasizing that “yt is no maistrye for a lorde / To dampne a man without awnere of word,” especially if that man has asked for mercy (382–401). This advice, which she attributes to the “Philosophre,” is a synopsis of Aristotelian political theory, which undergirded the many books of princely advice that proliferated throughout the later Middle Ages, as well as Brunetto Latini’s manual of civic advice, the Tresor, and is predicated upon the concept of a common good.25 The advice Alceste gives Cupid is elaborated in the Melibee, where Prudence intercedes between her husband (and his anger) and his enemies and associates but does so by giving him explicit princely advice.

In The Concordia, Maidstone uses Queen Anne’s speech to Richard to remind him of their mortality, saying that with great honor goes humility (467–92, esp. 473–76). In so doing she says, “We, too, like these, are mortal” (“Nos quoque mortales et, ut hii, velud umbra caduci . . .”). She thus reminds the king, not simply of his human nature, as unsteady as a shadow, but that he shares it with the citizens who come before him to beseech him for mercy. And from this recognition, she urges him to restore London’s ancient rights and give it back its liberties, “Et placeat veteri nunc urbem reddere iuri / Ac libertates restituisse suas” (491–92). Anne underlines the covenanted relationship between king and people—even as they restore, so shall the king. While Anne notes the rich gifts and the splendor of the day, her emphasis is not upon London’s tribute but upon Richard’s restoration of the city’s
liberties. It is her emphasis upon Richard’s need to recognize the humanity that links king to commoner, the death that waits for all, that establishes the terms of the covenant between king and people. Like the statements of the chroniclers, those of Chaucer, Clanvowe, and Maidstone are evidence for contemporary scrutiny of her in relation to particular ways of conceiving of a queen’s duties, but in depicting Anne the poets give her what the chroniclers do not—a voice that is the sign of her agency.

THE QUEEN’S AGENCY

The literature composed for French royal women provides evidence for the education of royal women and thus offers a means of gauging the potential scope of female agency within a hierarchical political culture. Near the end of the thirteenth century, Durand de Champagne wrote for Jeanne de Navarre, the wife of Philip IV of France, the *Speculum Dominarum*, which was translated a few years later as the *Miroir des Dames*, possibly for Jeanne d’Evreux, the second wife of Charles IV, the son of Philip IV. In 1969, Catherine L. Mastny studied the Latin treatise for her Columbia University dissertation, in which she established its addressee and suggested for whom the French translation was probably made. Anne Dubrulle edited the *Speculum* in 1988 for her doctorate at the Sorbonne. Her edition has received recent attention from Constant J. Mews and Karen Green, who have linked the text to the concerns and perspective of Christine de Pizan.26 For those used to thinking of Christine as the beginning of a tradition, a reading of the *Speculum Dominarum* in relation to *The Book of the Three Virtues* places her near the end of a tradition in which women were considered as subjects in their own right and thus as capable of moral instruction and hence of judgment linked to private devotion but operative in the public as well as the private realm. Recent work in French women’s reading circles demonstrates that noble and royal women collected and read books, including didactic works. Among those books traced to powerful women is the *Miroir des Dames*, a book whose influence extended to men. Philip IV had it adapted for his sons at the beginning of the fourteenth century as *Liber de informatione principum* and, at the request of Charles V, the *Liber* was translated into French by Jean Golein. The *Miroir* was also in the libraries of the Duke de Berry and of Charles V.27

Though the *Miroir* was not influential outside of elite court circles and was not translated into other European languages, for the hundred-plus
years of its popularity among those associated with sophisticated French culture it offers a model of queenship that is quietly radical. Writers like Philippe de Mézières in *Le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin*, dedicated to Charles VI, advise queens to lead simple, pious, humble lives like Queen Esther, to moderate anger with prayer and intercession, but not to be over-occupied with the many requests for privilege; instead, they should regulate their households, sustain the poor, devote themselves to works of mercy, and guard the king from anger, pride and avarice. While Durand includes such advice in the *Speculum*, he also includes a section on the wisdom of women and a long section on the types of justice (chapters 22–29), without which “a republic cannot stand,” under the heading of the Cardinal Virtues, each of which he analyzes; he also includes much advice on the pursuit of wisdom through reading because it heightens discrimination in both private and public matters. Seeming to look ahead to Christine de Pizan, Durand begins the first chapter with Proverbs 14:1, “Sapiens mulier edificat domum suam,” a trope that he embroiders throughout the book with descriptions of the interior and exterior house, the decorations of the house, the garden belonging to the house, and finally the inferior house, which is hell, and the superior one, or paradise. The *Speculum* exists in a unique copy made for the bishop of Nevers, who received it in 1450. The miniature on folio 1r depicts a queen supervising the construction of a castle, a picture that certainly links the treatise to the later author Christine de Pizan. This is by no means a feminist treatise, but it does, like Christine in the *Book of the City of Ladies* and *Book of the Three Virtues* (*Treasure of the City of Ladies*), assume that royal women are capable of moral argument and that queenship itself should be considered a moral office. Neither Durand nor Christine denies the importance of a woman’s spiritual life, but neither do they flinch from urging her to be an active participant in the moral life of the household and of the realm, and Christine’s Lady Reason gives women a mirror of self-knowledge, not of vanity (*Book of the City of Ladies* 1.3.2), probably in recognition of the *miroir* Durand holds out to royal women. The very metaphor of building a house or a city implies active engagement, or work, in subtle distinction to the Chevalier de Tour Landry and the Menagier de Paris, who describe how a wife should rule her husband’s house, not build her own.

Though different, the prefaces for the *Speculum* and the *Miroir* address a royal woman reader whose education in wisdom is critical to her assumption of her office. The *Speculum* is addressed to Jeanne, queen of France and Navarre, for whose erudition the book has been compiled, a compilation
also useful to “all women,” in order that they learn how to ordain themselves before God, rule themselves prudently and usefully, and speak with all blamelessly. The preface to the *Miroir* links the book to Vegetius, stating that the study of the ancients enhances the study of chivalry; it cites the Romans who ruled “not simply by arms but by their ability to speak well and wisely.” The author then links ancient wisdom and power to France through Charlemagne, who loved both wisdom and study, noting that princes who govern need to be illuminated by wisdom. Though not heavily illuminated, manuscripts of the *Miroir* suggest their royal provenance in their careful workmanship. The initial miniature of Cambridge MS Corpus Christi 324, which was in the library of Charles V, depicts a queen and behind her a small white dog; she stands to receive the book from a kneeling Franciscan. The initial miniature of a copy owned by the Duke of Berry (London, British Library MS Additional 29986) is similarly royal but subtly different in that there is no dog by the queen but the king crowned and with a scepter standing behind the seated queen as the Franciscan presents the book. The present regime, represented by Philip IV and Jeanne of Navarre, thus participates in the histories of Rome and Carolingian France and, by extension, the France of Charles V or the Burgundy of John of Berry, whose stamps in the volumes verify the ongoing relevance of such wisdom—wisdom profitable to both rulers and subjects, reflecting glory on the honor of the present generation of rulers.

As the preface states, the book is a rule for the queen’s conscience, helping her to govern herself and her subjects. In other words, the education of the queen’s conscience is the first step in a process whose end is not a role but an office conceived of as having a public dimension sanctioned by the king himself. When the *Speculum* was retranslated into French in the sixteenth century by Ysambert de Saint-Léger for Marguerite de Navarre, it was a far less daring book, abridged, heavily weighted toward moral and spiritual advice, thus lacking the implicit recognition of the original work that a woman might be capable of thinking philosophically and historically—though it begins with praise for Marguerite’s own knowledge of the translation of learning to the kingdom of France. Durand’s book in its medieval translation had only a fairly brief period during which its assumptions about queenship might have been passed back and forth in court circles with ties to the French royalty. What does all this mean for the contemporary English perspective on Anne of Bohemia?
Anne of Bohemia and England’s Queens

The circulation of Durand’s book among royal European women suggests that they learned to see themselves as having active roles that necessitated their education in political ethics. With the exception of Anne of Bohemia, England’s queens during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were either French or brought with them the French cult of pious kingship embodied in St. Louis, which was tended by such powerful royal women as Blanche of Castile, Louis’s mother, and Margaret, his wife, and his sister Isabelle. Isabella, wife of Edward II, was the daughter of Philip IV, for whom the De Regimine Principium was composed by Giles of Rome, and Jeanne of Navarre, for whom the Speculum Dominarum was written. Isabella’s brother was Charles IV, her sister-in-law Jeanne d’Evreux, for whom the Miroir was probably translated. Philippa, wife of Edward III, from the cultured court of Hainault in Flanders, was connected to the Capetian dynasty through her mother, who was a granddaughter of Philip III. Joan of Kent, Richard’s mother, though never queen, grew up at the court of Edward III and Philippa. Richard II’s second wife, Isabella of Valois; Henry IV’s second wife, Joan of Navarre; and Henry V’s queen Katherine of Valois were all French, as was Henry VI’s very active queen, Margaret of Anjou.

The fourteenth-century queens Isabella and Philippa were noteworthy examples of foreign queens who understood the importance of their engagement with the political and cultural affairs of England. Isabella was extremely active, first as Edward II’s queen, then as regent after Edward’s death. After her disgrace and “banishment” to Castle Rising, she became a valuable diplomatic presence for her son Edward III when he needed an intermediary either for French prisoners like King Jean of France or visiting French noblemen. Michael Bennett’s recent work on Isabella underlines just how close she remained to Edward and to Queen Philippa, whose marriage she had arranged, as well as the degree of her cultural interests, both loaning French texts from her impressive library to Frenchmen in England and sponsoring musicians, minstrels, and entertainments for visitors.

Both Isabella and Philippa have been linked to the production of manuscripts. At least three illuminated manuscripts may be linked to Philippa, the elaborate Taymouth Hours (London, British Library Yates Thompson MS 13), which Kathryn A. Smith has argued was commissioned by Philippa as a gift for Edward’s sister Eleanor of Woodstock on the occasion of her be-
troth, and two psalters. Smith’s reading of Philippa as “a canny manipulator of images and ceremonial” supports the work of Veronica Sekules and Caroline Shenton, as well as William Ormrod’s study of the queen and her close companions, like Marie de St. Pol, as producers of their own and others’ funeral art. The two other extant illuminated manuscripts associated with Philippa are Dr. Williams Library MS Ancient 6, which is dated c. 1328 and is smaller and less ornate than London, BL Harley 2899, dated between 1328 and 1340. The programs of both psalters are focused on the themes of kingship, with depictions of David, the supposed author of the Psalms, dressed as a contemporary king playing various musical instruments, killing Goliath, or imploring God. Harley 2899 has a more pronounced emphasis upon regality, containing on the Beatus page the arms of England, the arms of England and France, a series of kings, and a picture of a king in council, as well as many crowned figures, and on fol. 34v a picture of a king being anointed and crowned. There are also small women’s heads with fashionable hair styles decorating some initials. Given the very fashionable pictures of Philippa and her daughters that were painted on the walls of the St. Stephen’s Chapel in Westminster, it is no surprise to find well-coifed heads decorating a psalter that might well have been commissioned by Philippa for her husband.

Later royal women were similarly engaged with cultural and political activities. There is much evidence for Margaret of Anjou’s vigorous championship of the Lancastrian cause in the field, but also on the page, as Rosemarie McGerr has recently argued. Henry IV’s first wife, Mary de Bohun, was the daughter of Humphrey and Joan, both deeply involved with the production of manuscripts whose political imagery at once magnified their own status as advisors with special access to the crown and their concern for the realm. Joan of Kent presided over Edward’s court in Aquitaine during their nine years there and, after the Black Prince returned to England incapacitated, performed public functions in his name. Before her death in 1385 she had great influence with her son, Richard II, both in the granting of pardons and as a peacemaker between Richard and John of Gaunt, who was a close associate of Joan’s. Her court was a center for the group of “Lollard knights,” many of whom were also affiliates of Chaucer.

Though it is clear from Anne’s early letter to her brother that she was cognizant of a queen’s intercessory function, it is less clear how she understood either the nature of royal authority or a queen’s relation to it. Her father, Charles IV (1316–78), was the son of John of Luxembourg, who sent
Charles at an early age to the French court where he came of age, learning a good deal from the intrigues of French courtly culture and much about the ideals, ceremonies, and symbols of kingship as practiced in France, particularly the official piety linked to the cult of St. Louis. Charles’s piety was manifest in his devotion to saints and relics: he wrote a life of St. Wenceslas and was known to venerate relics wherever he was, to gather relics from all over Europe and deposit them in Prague’s churches and monasteries, giving the city a reputation for relics surpassed only by Rome. Charles’s determination to stamp his country with the iconography of pious kingship in the tradition of St. Louis can be seen in the St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague with its program of decorative and jewel-encrusted wall paintings, but most especially in Karlstein Castle, which he constructed to link his own genealogy to both Charlemagne (through his father) and to the national saint St. Wenceslas (through his mother, Elizabeth). With its relics (including a thorn from the Crown of Thorns from the Sainte Chapelle given to him by Charles V), Karlstein Castle rises in stages. The movement from the Great Hall with its genealogies, through the painted stairwells, to the Chapel of Our Lady and St. Catherine, where Charles V is depicted presenting the holy thorn to Charles IV, and finally to the high and secluded Chapel of the Holy Cross, its walls and ceiling covered in gold and gems and meant to suggest Paradise, offers a physical experience that proclaims the progressively refined and elite plan of the castle, whose end is the exclusive and dazzling chapel at its very top.

Though Anne and Richard corresponded with Anne’s half-brother Wenzel and with her mother Elizabeth of Pomerania, it is unclear how she saw her position in England in relation to the ideology of the realm she had left. For example, Clemence of Hungary (d. 1328) owned a *Miroir des Dames*, but she was the daughter of the Angevin Charles Martel, who was the titular king of Hungary, and was raised in Naples and married to Louis X, the first son of Philip IV of France. She was deeply involved in French politics and belonged to the cultural world of royal women whose reading habits and libraries provided Christine de Pizan with her audience, perhaps with books. Though Anne’s father was a product of French courtly culture, Anne’s mother was Pomeranian, with maternal ties to Poland and Lithuania. Wenzel, whose mother was Charles’ third wife, seems to have taken little away from his father’s program of kingship. Wenzel was less interested in Western Europe and England than Charles, disliked and avoided Karlstein Castle, and was not interested in saints or relics. His piety took a
more heterodox turn; he defended Jan Hus, patronized translations of scripture into German, which were forbidden by his father, and opposed the ban on Wyclif’s works in Bohemia. (Possibly the statement that Anne had the Gospels in English that was interpolated in Arundel’s funeral sermon for her reflects an awareness of her brother’s views.) Given Richard’s interest in iconic rule displayed in such objects as the portable altar, the Wilton Diptych, or the Westminster portrait, in the regalia of kingship, and in visits to holy places, it is hard to argue for Anne’s disdain for the cult of saints and relics. Moreover, the existing correspondence that invokes her name when the subject of regal status is at issue suggests her position in a court whose king was very much aware of his own regality and, in fact, sought out the symbols and ceremonies of monarchy.\(^{45}\)

CONCLUSION

Even as royal women passed on the manuscripts integral to French sacral kingship, they passed on those that detailed their own roles as advisors to princes. I suggest that the English texts that present Anne as more than an intercessor, in fact as a teacher, are meant to urge Anne toward a recognition of her own desired role in England’s political culture, a role inhabited with real skill by earlier English royal women educated in those traditions adumbrated in the *Speculum* and *Miroir*. These English texts are not snapshots of what happened; they are pictures of what should happen within a political community whose leaders recognize that there can be no concept of ethics without a concept of the common good. Such texts were designed to offer Anne a role as the ethical advisor she had yet to realize.

As to how those ideas passed into England and to writers like Chaucer and Maidstone we should look, first, to Edward III’s mother, Isabelle, and her circle of friends. Bennett examines Isabelle’s cultural significance as a collector and lender of books, as a diplomatic bridge between the English crown and French captives or emissaries in England, even as a possible link and neighbor to the mysterious John Mandeville, author of the *Travels*.\(^ {46}\) Marie de St. Pol and Elizabeth de Burgh, Isabelle’s closest friends, are equally significant power women and cultural patrons. Both had impressive libraries; both founded Franciscan convents (Denny and the London Minoresses, which Martha Carlin has reconstructed and about which I have written in relation to *Pearl*), under the Longchamps Rule. Elizabeth de Burgh, Count-
ess of Clare, was grandmother (and close to) Elizabeth de Burgh, Duchess of Clarence and Chaucer’s first employer, as well as close to Henry of Lancaster, father-in-law of John of Gaunt. These three women, alone, are the centers of the many interwoven threads of late medieval English culture.

Despite such examples of women who understood and availed themselves of the terms of a cultural politics of female agency, the most important evidence for Anne’s willingness to offer the sort of prudent and ethical advice advocated by Durand comes from Chaucer and Maidstone. Alceste reminds Cupid of the consequences of autocratic rule. Anne’s argument in Maidstone’s *Concordia* presents mercy as a manifestation of humility and humility as a response to the acknowledgment of humanity. In giving Anne a speech that affirms her love, that reminds the king of the honor done him by the citizens and of his shared humanity with those citizens, Maidstone provides a path from wrath and abjection to mercy and gratitude. Maidstone thus invites Richard to forego his almighty anger in favor of something more suitable to a king who is also a man. Maidstone thereby offers Richard through the speech he writes for Anne a picture of sacral kingship that is not woven together from royal trappings, but is an expression of penitence and thus emanates from the spirit of the true king by the grace of God. Durand de Champagne, as Christine de Pizan would later, sees the queen as the voice of the common good by means of her ethical, historical, rhetorical, and spiritual training and discipline.

However, to whom did the poets speak? Anne could read German, Czech, and Latin but may not have been able to appreciate English poetry, unlike her early fourteenth-century predecessor who patronized English buskers. Joan, who did see herself as having a diplomatic function, died in 1385. John of Gaunt would certainly have understood the ways in which a queen might employ her agency. Both might well have encouraged or patronized Clanvowe, Chaucer, and Maidstone, who was Gaunt’s confessor during the 1390s until his death in 1396. The pictures of Anne as a forceful and moderating presence embedded within these poems are not those we find in the chronicles, which present her far more tamely as a supplicant before Richard, just as the eulogies for Anne offer praise in fairly conventional terms. My speculations raise important questions about the degree to which poets “produce” history or embellish what we think of as the historical record in ways that channel our own readings of chronicle accounts. But, in a sense, poets do make history because they see themselves as agents having voices. Thus Christine de Pizan offered Isabeau of Bavaria a role as
adjudicator, mediator, and canny advisor in a language she could certainly understand; that role was, in turn, very like the self-portraits both Christine and Chaucer provide of themselves as advisors to princes. Chaucer and his fellow poets perhaps invented an agency for Anne in order to make a new history for England and in so doing shaped our readings of historical documents.

Notes


7. G. H. Martin, ed. and trans., Knighton’s Chronicle, 1337–1396 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 242; Calendar of Close Rolls, 1381–1385, 104–5, 109; Foedera 3:3, 134. As Strohm also notes (Hochon’s Arrow, 106), even before her arrival at the par-
liament of November and December 1381, most of the rebels were pardoned in her name. See *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, Chris Given-Wilson, General Editor (Scholarly Digital Editions and The National Archives, Leicester, 2005), 3:103, art. 32.


12. The letter was copied into British Library Additional MS 6159, the estate book of Christ Church Cathedral Priory, Canterbury, during the fifteenth century. For Richard’s letters, see Perroy, *Diplomatic Correspondence of Richard II*, #35–39, 46, and 139, which Perroy dates to 1391, recommending Robert de Vere, in exile from England, to Wenzel.

13. Perhaps the most personal letter is the one Richard wrote to Anne’s mother, the Empress Elizabeth on the death of his own mother, Joan in 1385. Perroy, *Diplomatic Correspondence of Richard II*, #57. Compare the official announcement, *Federe* 3:3, 184.


15. See Perroy, *Diplomatic Correspondence of Richard II*, # 74 (early 1387), #80 (c. 1387), #97 (1389), #173 (1393), and #182 (1391–93). See Perroy’s notes to each letter.

16. Here, see the complicated series of notes Perroy provides for letters #141, #149, #160, #173, #200.
17. See Perroy, *Diplomatic Correspondence of Richard II*, #182A-D.


21. This is Susan Crane’s remark cited by Strohm in *Hochon’s Arrow*, 104, n. 9.

22. The only copy of the poem survives in a fragment of a manuscript that was probably a collection of Maidstone’s works; as Carlson suggests (*Concordia*, 31–32), the version we have of the *Concordia* is at some remove from what may have been a presentation copy. The manuscript is Oxford, Bodleian Library MS e Musaeo 94. There is no evidence Richard ever saw it.

23. On the subject of equity as it relates to Anne, see Collette, *Performing Polity*, 112–14.


26. The manuscript is Paris, Bibliothèque nationale ms. lat. 6784 and has been digitized. See Anne Debrulle, “‘Le Speculum dominarum’ de Durand de Champagne,” 2 vols., France, National Archives 1987–88; Catherine Louise Mastny, “Durand of Champagne and the ‘Mirror of the Queen’: A Study in Medieval Didactic Literature,” PhD diss., Columbia University, 1969; I thank DuBrulle for giving me permission to read her thesis in the French Archives; I thank also those in the Archives at Pierrefitte-sur-Seine who made this possible. For recent discussions, see Karen Green and C. J. Mews, *Virtue Ethics for Women: 1250–1500* (London: Spring-

27. There are eighteen extant manuscripts of the Miroir. The adaptation for young men was incorrectly assigned to Giles of Rome and printed in 1517 as Le Mirouer exemplaire et tres fructueuse instruction selon la compilation de Gilles de Rome. See Mastny, “Durand of Champagne,” 122. I thank the library of Sainte-Genevieve for its hospitality while I read it. For studies of the books royal women owned and passed on as gifts or in their wills, see Mastny, “Durand of Champagne,” 131–33; Joan Holladay, “Fourteenth-Century French Queens as Collectors and Readers of Books: Jeanne d’Evreux and Her Contemporaries,” Journal of Medieval History 32 (2006): 69–100; Green, “Christine de Pizan: Isolated Individual or Member of a Feminist Community of Learning?”


29. Citation from Dubrulle, Speculum Dominarum, 282.

30. For the provenance of the manuscript, see Mastny, “Durand of Champagne,” 40–47.


34. See Kathryn A. Smith, *The Taymouth Hours* (London: British Library, 2012), 16–18, including the notes for those pages, for a discussion of both Isabella and Philippa and manuscripts.


37. See Staley, *Island Garden*, 164–69, for discussion and further citations regarding the St. Stephen’s Chapel.


39. Sandler, “Political Imagery in the Bohun Manuscripts.”


43. These are my observations gained from a visit Theresa Coletti and I made in May of 2012. For discussion of the castle, see V. Dvorakova et al., *Gothic Mural Painting in Bohemia and Moravia 1300–1378* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 41–65; Milada Studnickova, “Karlstein Castle as a Theological Metaphor,” in


49. For Anne’s command of languages, see Saul, *Richard II*, 455.
50. Crawford, ed., *Letters of the Queens of England*, 102, suggests that Joan may have prompted Anne to ask for a general pardon for those involved in the rising.
51. For my speculations about John of Gaunt as literary patron, see *Languages of Power*, 165–96.

**Works Cited**

**Manuscripts**

Cambridge. MS Corpus Christi 324.
London. Dr. Williams Library MS Ancient 6.

**Primary Sources**


Secondary Sources


Carlin, Martha. “Holy Trinity Minories: Abbey of St. Clare, 1293/94–1539.” Un-
published manuscript, Centre for Metropolitan History, Institute of Historical Research, University of London, 1987.


