The English Reformation In Image And Print: Cultural Continuity, Disruptions, And Communications In Tudor Art

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THE ENGLISH REFORMATION IN IMAGE AND PRINT: CULTURAL CONTINUITY,
DISRUPTIONS, AND COMMUNICATIONS IN TUDOR ART

by

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B.A. University of Central Florida, 2007

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
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ABSTRACT

In the sixteenth century, Martin Luther’s Protestant Reformation generated multiple reform movements and political transformations in Europe. Within this general period of reform, political and cultural changes from the Tudor era (1485-1603) created a separate English Reformation. The English Reformation evolved from the different agendas of the early Tudor monarchs and occurred in two distinct waves: an initial, more moderate Henrician Reformation and a later, more complete Edwardian Reformation. Henry VIII and Edward VI’s attempts to redefine monarchy through a new State and Church identity drove English church reform during this period, giving these religious shifts distinct political roots. Cultural artifacts were prominent indicators of these differing political goals, and Henry VIII and Edward VI adjusted and removed images and texts according to their propaganda methods. These royal manipulations of culture are well-documented, but historians have overlooked important components in the communication process. Lay responses to imagery changes ranging from compliance to rebellion demonstrate the complex relationship of images, monarchy, and reform. Examining images’ function as propaganda with questions of intent, reception, and comprehension in royal communication is imperative for assessing the impact of royal messages on Tudor culture. Analyzing Tudor art as a form of political communication that disseminated idealized political representation reveals a strong visual discourse between the King and the English people. Images held key powers within royal discourse to create and disseminate propaganda of a kingship.
This thesis is lovingly dedicated to my husband, Greg Hoeschen, and my parents, Jan and Dale Koger. Greg, your love and faith in me enabled this thesis to find its way and empowered me to become a better historian and person. Mom and Dad, your love and support are invaluable. This thesis is also dedicated in loving memory of my Grandma. Thanks to all of you because without love and family history would not be worth writing.
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I would like to thank my thesis advisor Dr. Peter Larson of the UCF History Department for his insightful contributions. I would also like to thank my additional thesis panel members Dr. Amelia Lyons and Dr. Spencer Downing. The aid of these professors allowed this thesis to mature and reach its full potential.
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING THE TUDOR DYNASTY AND THE ENGLISH REFORMATION

The sixteenth century was a period of social, political, and religious change for the English Crown and people. Of these shifts the English Reformation and the resulting modifications to Catholic traditions were especially significant. Material culture (including art forms such as portraiture, church art, and illustrated texts) was a prominent indicator of larger political and religious alterations. An examination of each monarch’s treatment of images reveals that the Tudors differed in the way they incorporated cultural media into political communication after the English Reformation. Despite an extensive Reformation historiography, royal manipulation of representation and alteration of Church art needs further explanation. A deeper examination that considers Henry VIII (1509-1547) and Edward VI’s (1547-1553) attempts to redefine royal authority and communicate this new identity via art and print is necessary to determine the full political functions of Tudor art. Shifts in church art throughout these monarchs’ reigns reveal that Henry and Edward relied on appropriation of some pre-existing motifs and removal of others to construct a new visual representation and enhance the role of text in a largely visual culture. Thus, elements of continuity and change coexisted throughout the Reformation based on royal preference and changing discourse. Considering such changes as a calculated retooling of Tudor culture requires an analysis that addresses the period beyond iconoclastic interpretations to examine the creation of new representation through removal of select Catholic images, construction of Protestant Church environments, and the introduction of
the Bible as a visual icon for religious devotion. Understanding this relationship between art, the Crown, and the people is critical to achieve a full historical understanding of Reformation culture in England.

Reformation Origins: Martin Luther, the Catholic Church, and England

Martin Luther and European Reform

The Protestant Reformation Martin Luther ignited with his 95 Thesis (1517) created the primary impetus for questioning the Church and led to a general period of reform. Although support for these ideals was not monolithic, general social and political unrest throughout Europe strengthened the movement and spread it to additional countries. ¹ Socioeconomically, Disparity of wealth and rejection of monetary salvation lent support to Luther’s arguments; politically, warfare generated instability that aided Luther’s ideology.² These ideas of reform influenced educated Englishmen, but the English Reformation was a separate, more national movement. Therefore, understanding the English Reformation and its full effects requires a broad approach that considers both upper class and lower class church attendees.

Within Tudor England influence from Luther’s reform varied by class, educational level, and personal beliefs. This diversity created multiple religious factions that included Lutherans,

Lollards, Calvinists, papists, liberal Catholics, humanist Protestants, and humanist Catholics. When addressing this divided religious environment, Henry VIII advocated moderate reform to both lessen radical reactions and achieve a form of English Catholicism. Edward VI utilized similar moderate methods, but he advocated more complete reform. Therefore, moderate reform is the main concern of this and other Crown studies. Still, this analysis includes discussions of religious debates in treatises and radical responses in rebellions to determine the effects of royal messages on lay culture. Henry VIII’s intent to represent the English Reformation in a moderate manner is evident in his claims to rioters that he conducted his religious transitions on a scale similar to those of previous Catholic monarchs. This attempt to communicate moderate reform and the concern over controlling negative responses reveals Henry’s desire for acceptance of his new royal identity and religion and also offers an example of how the Tudor people affected the way monarchs communicated Reformation changes.

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3 This list accentuates a small portion of the English Catholic and Protestant sects. For a more comprehensive guide, see: Mark Greengrass, *The Longman Companion to the European Reformation, c. 1500-1618* (New York: Longman Ltd., 1998).


Henry VIII and Rome: The beginning of English Reformation politics

Henry VIII was the first Tudor monarch to contend with the social and cultural effects of the English Reformation. However, his decision to break with the Catholic Church originated with pressure from his father’s reign. Henry VII’s (1485-1509) usurpation established a legacy of kingship through battle that fed Henry VIII’s compulsion to secure the Tudor dynasty.\(^8\) Henry VIII’s older brother Arthur succeeded in securing more power for the Tudor family through his marriage to Catherine of Aragon, but his death and Henry VIII’s subsequent ascension jeopardized this favorable Spanish alliance. To maintain this political relationship between Spain and England, the Pope gave Henry VIII special dispensation to marry Catherine despite Biblical passages forbidding the act. When this marriage was ineffective in producing a male heir, the issue of succession strained this arrangement. The Pope’s refusal to allow Henry VIII to gain a male heir by dissolving the union with Catherine and marrying his pregnant mistress Anne Boleyn created political need to disassociate with Rome.\(^9\)

The break with Rome reveals the English Reformation’s deep political roots, which are further evident in Henry’s recent support of Catholicism in the *Defense of the Seven Sacraments* (1518) and his title “Defender of the Faith.” This largely political Reformation followed a separate chronology from Luther’s Reformation. Therefore, Henry VIII’s divorce from Catherine of Aragon in 1529 is the optimal starting point for discussing the English Reformation.\(^10\)

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\(^8\) Carter and McRae, *The Routledge History of Literature in English*, 57-58, 549.

\(^9\) Ibid.

VIII further solidified this break in 1533 with his marriage to Anne Boleyn. The Catholic Church failed to recognize the legitimacy of this second marriage or any resulting children, furthering the separation. Shortly after the Catholic Church’s rejection of his new wife, Henry began legally defining his position as a secular and religious monarch through the Supremacy Act (1534), which proclaimed the king as the rightful head of the Church and State, and the Succession Act (1534), which named his children with Anne Boleyn as the official heirs to the throne.\(^{11}\)

These acts gave Henry VIII full power over the religious and secular realms of England, but he needed to define the full extent of his new authority. To establish the new boundaries of his rule, Henry VIII created the Reformation Parliament (1529-1536). This Parliament contained several prominent acts, including the Pardoning of the Clergy (1531), the Act in Restraint of Appeals (1532), the Act of Supremacy (1534), and the Succession Act (1534).\(^{12}\) The Pardoning of the Clergy exemplified Henry VIII’s predilection for moderate reform by increasing power over Church government while minimizing severe transition. This act also generated temporary monetary gain through confiscation of the land and resources belonging to previous religious houses.\(^{13}\) Equally significant, the Act in Restraint of Appeals elevated power by forbidding appeals in ecclesiastical law to Rome. This act represented the first direct Parliamentary action against the Pope and was additionally prominent for its declaration of Henry VIII as a secular

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\(^{11}\) The legitimacy of these political mandates continued to be a major factor in later English politics during the reign of Anne Boleyn’s daughter, Elizabeth I (1558-1603), who was viewed by Catholics as a bastard queen.


\(^{13}\) For more information on this act, see: J. Scarisbrick, “The Pardon of the Clergy, 1531,” *Cambridge Historical Journal* 12, no. 1 (1956), 22-39.
and spiritual ruler through “imperial” status. These laws concluded the initial phase of the English Reformation, but Tudor dynastic stability remained a concern.

While the desire to marry Anne Boleyn motivated Henry VIII to establish the English Church, this marriage failed to produce a son. In response, Henry VIII charged Anne Boleyn with adultery, for which she was beheaded, and took Jane Seymour as his third wife in 1536. This marriage represented both Henry VIII’s greatest personal triumph and worst disappointment. Jane Seymour gave birth to a son, but Edward VI’s sickly nature and Jane Seymour’s sudden death shortly after childbirth still left the fate of the Tudor throne uncertain.

Despite being nine years old when his father died in 1547, Edward VI (1547-1553) ascended to the throne. Left with Henry VIII’s mixed legacy, the Reformation, and a strong governing council, Edward faced severe religious challenges and political pressures. Personally, Edward and his council desired a more complete Reformation than Henry VIII and created new religious standards with the Book of Common Prayer (1549). These ardent measures and successive Tudors’ reactions to the changing state of religion further sealed Tudor England as a period of constant reform.15

**Tudor Culture and Society: The impact of the Reformation**

The extensive legislative changes of the English Reformation also impacted Tudor society and culture. Recent histories have started arguing a higher degree of continuity in Tudor culture, but anti-imagery ordinances and the dissolution of the monasteries (1536-39) still

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generated significant change. This change affected village structure as the laity depended on the Church for economic aid and community ties. Smaller, more remote communities especially felt the repercussions of ecclesiastical reform. Due to the interconnected nature of Tudor religion and culture, images were a common form of communication. This incorporation of visual communication into Tudor society is evident both within and outside the Church. Popular texts such as books of hours and calendars attempting to convey meaning through the interplay of text and pictures indicate that publishers of these books promoted this type of collaborative communication to hopefully increase possible comprehension. Calendars exemplify this understanding by using images to clarify or add content to the text, such as including anatomical diagrams and chapter icons to illustrate content changes. Common use of


19 Belief in these methods to enhance understanding is evident in histories and primary accounts. For histories, see: Eamon Duffy, Marking the Hours; Eamon Duffy, Stripping of the Altars; Tesa Watt, Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640 (New York: Cambridge University, 1991). For primary accounts, see: Bucer, A treatise declaring and showing that images are not to be suffered in churches (London, 1535), npg.; Thomas Talbot, Thomas Tymme, and Thomas Twyne, A Booke containing the true portraiture of the countenances and attires of the kings of England, from William Conqueror, unto our soueraigne Lady Queene Elizabeth (London, 1597.), cover page, in
devotional and nonreligious imagery in popular writing supports a society with large access to visual messages and a heightened possibility of some simplistic symbol understanding.20

Within the Church, art had been established as a communication tool since the Roman Empire and had also been a vital part of Gothic and medieval Church interiors.21 Masses and festivals relying on knowledge of basic symbolism further reflected the importance of visual communication in ceremonies.22 The inclusion of secular and religious imagery in both Henry VIII and Edward VI’s Reformations and their manipulation of imagery to disseminate an idealized ruling identity represented the monarchs’ understanding of images’ potency in traditional Catholic culture. The Tudors’ attempt to build on these powerful connotations and connect their representation to them even prior to the Reformation with the inclusion of angels in

20 For historians discussing the reception of these sources or availability for multiple classes, see: Watt, Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 8, 259, 273; Duffy, Marking the Hours. For accounts of usage, see: Bucer, A treatise declaring and showing that images are not to be suffered in churches, 1535, npg; Latimer, The sermon that the reverende father in Christ, Hugh Latimer, Byshop of Worcester, 1537. For direct evidence of usage across class and literacy boundaries, see written notations in books of hours and primers from letter practice to full notes, ex: Horae ad Sarum. Parisus: printed by P. ; 1501; Horae beate marie virginis ad vsum; St. John; 1502; Hore presents ad vsum Sarum; St. John; 1502; Horae ad usum Sarum; Julyan Notary; 1503; Horae ad usum Sarum; Rouen: P. Guerin, 1505; Horae beate marie virginis secundum; London: John Wayland, 1507… [et al., 99], in EEBO Database, search information: date range 1509-1547, terms “book of hours,” http://eebo.chadwyck.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu/search , (Accessed January-March 2009).
family crests. Therefore, even before the break with Rome images served important political functions as a type of power negotiation between the monarchy and the Catholic Church.

**Historiography**

**Tudor Society**

Due to the intricate web connecting community, worldview, and religion in Tudor England, the Church’s social functions and religious control were critical. Thus, the Church’s role as an institution is critical to determine how the English Reformation affected imagery and to understand the context for royal manipulation of culture. One key question of Reformation impact on the Church and society centers on the debate of whether the Reformation represented a radical departure or a moderate-paced transition. This debate created two factions: those historians supporting a sudden, singular eradication of Catholic culture and those who held that Catholicism existed in various forms past the Elizabethan age. Representative of this debate, A. G. Dickens’ *The English Reformation* claims that pre-Reformation Catholicism was already collapsing. In opposition, Eamon Duffy’s *Stripping of the Altars* and *Marking the Hours* both

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23 Depicting angels as either directly connected to the Tudor monarchy through holding up their crest or in a supportive, but more removed role through showing them floating above the crest was a common practice. For an example, see: J. Sargy, *These be the articles of the popes Bulle under leade translated from latyn into englishe* (London: Rychard Pynson, 1518), in (EEBO), [http://eebo.chompwycck.com.eproxy.lib.ucf.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99846830&FILE=.session/1268676952_20731&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=11822&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT_KEYWORDE, Accessed March 8, 2008.

24 For discussion of how this concept relates to visual power negotiation through ceremony and royal performance, see: Zaller, “Breaking the Vessels,” 757-778.
advocate a moderate shift. Margaret Aston’s *England’s Iconoclasts* navigates between these narratives and argues that image destruction alone caused dramatic shifts. In this regard, Aston’s work is important for elevating “avoidance of idolatry” as the main force driving religious change. This perspective offers insight into images’ potential power in Tudor religion and royal use of imagery to carry out desired reform.

While the pace of reform and the state of Tudor culture are important considerations, the growing historiographical trend to conduct community histories addressing local impact on singular churches are also significant. These micro histories focusing on individual village and city responses are invaluable for seeing specific, detailed effects of religious changes. Additionally, they offer critical findings on how royal decisions could impact the laity.

**Intent and Propaganda**

The main historiography discussing royal use of Tudor art focuses on aspects of intent and propaganda, with intent referring to the royal agenda in using art and propaganda referring to the creation of images displaying an ideal kingship. Currently, however, the term propaganda has expanded to include universal comprehension and support of royal messages. This meaning of propaganda will be explained and addressed further. By 1969 works such as Roy Strong’s *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits* were beginning to discuss art as possible propaganda. Strong’s discussion of the *Whitehall Mural* illustrates this development, claiming replication of this image

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27 Social micro histories of Reformation villages provide case studies detailing how the Reformation was realized in different regions, see: Duffy, *The Voices of Morebath* and Muriel C. McClendon, *The Quiet Reformation*. 

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proved Henry VIII’s intent to create “an official image of post-reformation monarchy.”

John King’s later cultural examination of mass-produced engravings further demonstrates the importance Tudor monarchs placed on imagery in their political discourse and their intent to use art as propaganda through references to Biblical kings. Visual culture discussions of the political importance evident in art duplication led to political studies of art as propaganda, such as J.P.D. Cooper’s *Propaganda and the Tudor State: political cultures in the Westcountry.* Cooper supported the interpretation of images as powerful components of communication and accused political historians of trivializing their impact on Reformation goals.

David Howarth’s *Images of Rule: Art and Politics in the English Renaissance* bridges the gaps between these political, economic, and cultural examinations by analyzing the role of patronage in making artists beholden to representational demands. This history supports an analysis of the Tudor rulers as purposefully active in the creation and dissemination of their image.

Despite this strong historiography, the monarchs’ manipulation of visual and literary culture to explain unprecedented authority needs further discussion in conjunction with changing royal positive and negative definitions of certain imagery. In addressing these topics, the historiography is limited by the trends to either view destruction of Catholic relics as part of an iconoclastic program or discuss Henry VIII’s prolific portraiture as a sign that imagery functioned as universally understood and accepted political propaganda. With this view, the term propaganda has become synonymous with both comprehension and acceptance. This

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32 Ibid, 1-12.
oversimplification misses the importance of the images’ context and society’s influence on royal selectivity of maintained and abandoned images. This leads to critical gaps in understanding how the monarchs used culture differently to create their desired types of reform and the political motivations behind a growing literary culture in Edward’s reign.

More analysis is also needed for some specific Tudor symbols. Tudor society largely incorporated signs and symbols (such as coats of arms and occupational signs) into daily dialogue to denote specific meaning, but some symbols contained multiple associations. The “sword and book” motif is one example. Although this is a shared term amongst historians for the combined depiction of a sword and book with the royal body, historical interpretations of these symbols vary from the dichotomy of war and peace to new spiritual leadership and growing humanism.  

Within this diverse association, historians have largely omitted secular implications of the sword. This oversight has diminished the secular importance of the sword as a masculine symbol of ruling right.

Similar issues occur with the representation of books. The main historiographical interpretation explains books as symbols of growing humanism. This is an important aspect of


34 John King’s “Henry VIII as David” (1994) explains the power of the sword to represent both secular and religious messages, but he still focuses on the sword more as a religious icon of leadership.


their meaning, but primary documents also suggest additional meanings based on rising Bible popularity. Text, like imagery, held powerful connotations that increased in the Reformation era. Stephen Greenblatt’s *Renaissance self-fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* examines the power print control would supply a king in this period. His examination of cultural production through Thomas More’s writings and Hans Holbein’s images shows how producers of cultural modes could engage in self-promotion and contrive a desired identity through a “self-fashioning” process.37 Therefore, the growing portrayal of books carried important political and religious implications of power as well as intellectual meaning.

**Reception**

Similar to concerns of royal intent and propaganda, many scholars debate reception. Reception is a term used in Tudor cultural history and throughout this study to discuss Englishmen’s’ access to royal messages and the availability of these messages in society. Currently, historians tend to accept both wide reception and a far-reaching comprehension, or understanding of royal messages, in image and print. Recent histories, such as Sydney Anglo’s *Images of Tudor Kingship* have questioned these assumptions.38 In his work, Anglo claims an absence of general lay reception and comprehension of propaganda.39 While this critique and the ensuing debates add valuable questions to studies of medieval and early modern culture,

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accounts like Anglo’s still contribute to historiographical problems by refuting any effective communication. This negative possibility of reception and comprehension is just as problematic for understanding the varied nature of Tudor society and responses to royal culture as oversimplified, ungrounded accounts of total reception. This political cultural study addresses these historiographical issues by examining reception and comprehension in tandem with royal use of art to explain how visual Crown messages were important aspects of Tudor culture.

Reception debates are also significant in social and cultural histories of print dissemination, acquisition, and utilization. These concerns are evident in intellectual histories of Tudor educational structure. Lisa Jardine focuses on English universities’ humanist teachings in her article “The Place of Dialectic Teaching in Sixteenth-Century Cambridge” to explain the university curriculum’s shift from style to content, which she argued demonstrated a new focus on comprehension by exalting “argument” over literary “form.” ⁴⁰ Other histories like Ian Green’s catechism study *The Christian’s ABCs* analyze basic education. Green’s study discusses repetitious elements coupled with systemized forms of religious construction to argue for an educational system that facilitated communal understanding. ⁴¹ Thus, his work supports the claim that the government recognized the value in repetition to enhance general comprehension for both visual and literary sources. A. J. Fletcher’s article “The Expansion of Education in Berkshire and Oxfordshire, 1500-1670,” further notes a growing educational significance across

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social boundaries by stating that the effects of education were significant for farmers and gentlemen similarly.\footnote{Jardine, “The Place of Dialectic Teaching,” 31-62; A.J. Fletcher, “The Expansion of Education in Berkshire and Oxfordshire, 1500-1670,” \textit{Journal of Educational Studies}, 15, no. 1 (1967), 51.}

While most historians support a large comprehension and print influence, histories like David Cressy’s \textit{Literature and the Social Order: reading and writing in Tudor and Stuart England} criticize claims of high reception and literacy levels. According to Cressy, historians attribute an artificially high degree of literacy to Tudor laymen by examining society through an educated minority.\footnote{David Cressy, \textit{Literacy and the Social Order: reading and writing in Tudor and Stuart England} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 4-5.} His assertions generated criticism, including Tesa Watt’s cultural antithesis \textit{Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640}. Watt’s work claims that the large scale printing of popular, “cheap” text in the Tudor period joined with growing access to education to reinforce the existence of a popular literary audience.\footnote{Tesa Watt, \textit{Cheap Print and Popular Piety}, 8, 259, 273.} Support of high lay literacy, reception, and use of text by is also found in Bible histories. Some historians suggest access and use of Bibles was so prevalent that the resulting cultural unification ushered in early elements of English nationalism.\footnote{For Tudor Bible histories supporting Watt’s analysis, see: Collinson, “Biblical Rhetoric: the English nation and national sentiment in the prophetic mode,” 15-45 and Kastan, “‘The noyse of the new Bible,’” 46-68.} The wide availability of the Bible combined with historians’ theories that these sources were prominent aspects of lay culture makes religious texts significant sources of the English Reformation’s changing political and religious climate.\footnote{For Bible history supporting a wide range of Bible use and availability throughout England, see: Ryrie, \textit{The Gospel and Henry VIII}; Kastan, “‘The noyse of the new Bible,’” 46-68; Collinson, “Biblical Rhetoric: the English nation and national sentiment in the prophetic mode,” 15-45.} Connection of Bible use to a strong cultural unification demonstrates not only the wide incorporation of the Bible into society,
but also reveals how access and use could affect English understanding of Crown messages.47

For example, Kastan’s essay “‘The noyse of the new Bible’: reform and reaction in Henrician England” examines Bible use in this specific reformist context to show that the English Bible was not legitimized until a heretical version gained popularity. Thus, there was a direct link between authorized Bibles and reform messages. 48 This direct link between Tudor Bibles and the political atmosphere in the English Reformation supports an analysis of text and image as political items.

Christopher Haigh’s English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society under the Tudors further supports this important political element of reform. Haigh examines the effect of royal messages on the Tudor laity to claim that multiple sixteenth-century reformations occurred. Also, since these reformations did not succeed in turning the Church or people “emphatically Protestant,” Haigh argued it was probable “most of those who lived in Tudor England experienced Reformation as obedience rather than conversion.” 49 Haigh’s further claims that Tudor laymen engaged in reform by “obey[ing] a monarch’s new laws rather than swallowed a preacher’s new message,” attributes great power to political directives and argues a strong reception of royal messages.50

Another study that discusses reception and the political power behind royal messages is John King’s English reformation literature: the Tudor origins of the Protestant traditions. In this

47 Analyzing text from this angle of production is a post-modern trend largely influenced by Saussurian structuralist underpinnings and Geertz cultural anthropology. For more discussion of these theories and their connection to cultural history, see: Lynn Hunt, “Introduction,” in The New Cultural History, ed. Lynn Hunt (Berkley: University of California Press, 1989), 1-23.
48 Kastan, “‘The noyse of the new Bible,’” 50.
50 Ibid.
analysis, King examines literature as a central political concern and focuses on how Edward VI’s succession allowed Protestant ideas to flourish. He argues Edward VI’s ascension created Protestant cultural advantages both by bringing Protestants to power and by enhancing control of the print trade. Thus, politics and text coexisted in Edward’s reign to create a Protestant support system. This concern to enhance control of cultural media reveals the Tudor rulers’ reliance on both image and print to create propaganda.

Research Questions and Methodology

Terminology

To discuss the multifaceted atmosphere of early Tudor England, a clear terminology is needed. For religion, the common dichotomy of Catholic and Protestant England is a gross simplification. Therefore, this study uses these terms to discuss broad cultural changes but does not use them to denote a singular, fixed Catholic versus Protestant opposition.  

Culturally, current issues and the terminology needed to address them are more complex. In breaking visual and print communication of propaganda into royal and lay components, this analysis adds new insight to current histories either using propaganda to describe the entire aspect of visual communication or rejecting any effective laymen understanding. This focus breaks down the discourse between royalty and the laity to consider both the king’s attempts to

52 Limiting the scope of the study to moderate, Crown-generated reform leads to a lesser examination of lower class and radical reforms. While significant to this period, the monarchy did not sponsor this type of reform so it does not play as large a role in comprehension of royal intent to control the new religious system and the resulting cultural continuity and change.
use these images for positive representation and the possibility of these images to reach a representative portion of Tudor society. This approach is able to discuss the importance of monarchs’ cultural changes without claiming Tudor laymen read and received messages in a universal manner. To analyze the royal use of art and visual discourse, this study uses the terms intent and propaganda. Within this analysis, propaganda refers to messages in art constructing an ideal ruling identity and intent refers to the monarch’s goals or motivations when manipulating visual and print culture. This approach infers intent from sources demonstrating the monarchs had specific, differing goals in their use of image and print to construct a specific type of Reformation. In Henry VIII’s reign, the political need to secure an heir primarily drove reform. Henry VIII’s church injunctions illustrate this goal to use culture mainly to instill the changes necessary for display and explanation of a new political status versus Edward’s later intent to create a more Protestant environment. Overall Henry VIII’s injunctions illustrate a lack of concern with private, household imagery or creating an accurate Protestant Church when compared to the specific mention of household imagery eradication and specific, itemized instructions for establishing Protestant Church interiors found in Edward VI’s injunctions. This drastic difference in discourse of reform demonstrates varying intent to promoting political power versus to usher in a new religious program. While injunctions demonstrate royal intent by carrying out the direct orders of the monarch, other primary sources also offer ways to discern intent through the use of culture. Another main example is Henry and Edward’s attempts to control image and print production to disseminate delineated meanings. This attempted control

53 Edward VI, *injunctions given*... (London: R. Grafton, 1547), a.iii., in (EEBO),
represents intent to create and communicate a single message of propaganda. Henry VIII made this intent clear when he ordered the publication of texts to clarify “errors” and “abuses” in laymen interpretation of images and books. Edward’s similar concern to communicate a specific message is evident in publications of his anti-papal arguments.54

These concerns of intent and propaganda within royal discourse are the central focus of this study. However, a well rounded understanding of these messages and their place in society is needed to determine the historical value of propaganda. To discuss the other side of this communication process, this analysis uses the terms reception and comprehension. These terms focus on how the Tudor people experienced royal messages and directives through visual and print communication. Here, reception is discussed as the ability of the average Tudor subject to receive, or access, these messages and does not imply understanding or acceptance. The dissemination of these messages and their availability in society are important concepts to why royal discourse was a significant cultural force. This examination of reception is done indirectly through analyzing popular texts, such as books of hours and calendars, and laymen access to messages through church membership. Due to these limitations, reception only denotes general access to these sources and is only included to explore possible avenues of effective dissemination.

In correlation with reception, the term comprehension discusses these messages in society. Comprehension in this examination refers to the possibility that a fair portion of laymen possessed the needed skills, such as familiarity with visual messages and basic literacy, necessary to understand simplistic symbols in cultural communication. While source limitations for Tudor England make an exact quantification of literacy rates by class unattainable, historians’ examinations of popular texts and formal education “[have] put to rest the once popular view that the working classes were almost entirely illiterate before the introduction of compulsory schooling from 1870 onward.” Historians such as W. B. Stephens have noted the serious limitations of using quantification to discuss literacy rates, which includes the inability to prove subjects with reading access understood royal messages and the difficulty of calculating literacy for more remote classes without access to public institutions. Still, findings from literary histories support a fair rate of comprehension, especially considering the additional methods of access to written messages that cannot be quantified. Statistics acquired from recorded access to education and text have been helpful in understanding Tudor literacy, but some historians preferring signature analysis claim these methods create skewed results. Many historians consider signatures a more reliable source for determining basic literacy capabilities since the ability to sign represents a more complicated skill than reading. While these sources may attain more accurate literacy rates, they still limit the portion of the laity examined since signatures were usually only attainable for urban male subjects. This limitation is similar to those

56 These additional avenues to meaning for the more illiterate included public readings and group discussions. Ibid, 548-550.
57 Ibid, 554.
58 Ibid.
encountered here and this group, town-dwelling male subjects, forms the bulk of the people this study terms Tudor society or Tudor laymen. Even though historians using signatures as evidence are limited in the sources and methods available to discuss literacy, historians quantifying literacy rates support an average literacy rate of 20 to 30 percent for the Henrician and Edwardian laity.59 These rates are more conservative than some cultural analyses, but they are still high for the lower classes of this period and represent a society worth considering. However, as a whole these studies raise important questions on what sections of Tudor society royal messages could reach and, invariably, omit discussion of some groups.60 When analyzing reception and comprehension, this examination mostly addresses males from London and other urbanized towns in Midland and Southeast England and male members of rural parishes.61 According to most cultural historians the types of sources examined in this account most likely did reach a broader social group than the one defined here, but this is the representative portion of Tudor society for which the most evidence of possible visual and text comprehension exists.62 Thus, use of the term comprehension is not an attempt to claim a certain level of understanding or response to any one image, but instead is included to demonstrate a probability that there was some basic understanding for Tudor laymen when accessing visual and print messages. Like

59 These are only rough averages and rates varied drastically based on urbanization and regionality. Ibid, 558; Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order*, 4-10. Historians measuring literacy through text availability and growing access to formal education argue a more literate society, and new studies have criticized signature evidence for assessing too low of a literacy rate since the skill to read was more common than the skill to write. However, to ensure as much historical accuracy as possible, this analysis will hold with the lower rates. See: Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety*; Duffy, *Marking the Hours*; Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*.

60 Since this particular study is based on the argument that the Tudor laity accessed these images and texts through Church membership, the social group that Christopher Haigh terms the “Catholic peasants of upland England” are omitted due to their sporadic church attendance, geographical limitations, and debated literacy. See: Haigh, *The English Reformations*, 206.


62 Secondary: Ibid, 549; Duffy, *Marking the Hours*; Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety*. Primary: Bucer, A treatise declaring and showing that images are not to be suffered in churches, 1535, npg.
reception, this concept also relies largely on indirect primary evidence. One of the main arguments claiming probable comprehension hinges on the fact that a Catholic society had familiarity with visual forms of communication. Another argument indirectly showing comprehension is the widening of avenues to illustrated texts.\(^6\) Primary sources discussing this possible comprehension include treatises explaining lay attachment to Catholic images and the rituals surrounding them, church injunctions describing a visually rich Church environment, and illustrated works such as books of hours and calendars.\(^6\) Other sources commonly used to demonstrate general lay understanding of religious changes include sources depicting social response. Tudor lay responses indicating a general understanding of visual messages range from positive reactions of acceptance, such as an interest in descriptions of court ceremonies and lamentations celebrating Henry VIII as an idol eradicator, to negative responses of rejection, such as riot and rebellion.\(^6\)

Examining the way royal messages entered society adds valuable insight when analyzing political uses of art, but there are important gaps. Due to a lack of personalized accounts describing Tudor laymen’s interactions with images, this study discusses the state of these messages in Tudor society by inferring responses from upper class members’ descriptions of lay comprehension and records of response to religious change. Rebellions blaming the king for religious changes, royal orders to make specific images available, treatises discussing laity imagery attachment, and laws demonstrating a belief in general lay comprehension of simplistic

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fashion symbols indicate a fairly broad reception and comprehension of these messages across Tudor society. Still, these sources cannot provide a breakdown of literacy by region, class, or gender and the discussion of reception and comprehension in this account remains general. Therefore, discussion of comprehension in this account remains general.

Although limitations keep the discussion of reception and comprehension general, this examination of Tudor visual culture attempts to explore the full range of communication as much as is possible to determine the importance of royal discourse in forming the Tudor people’s experience with the Crown and Church. This focus and terminology will generate an analysis of royal use of culture that explains what transforms Tudor art into visual propaganda.

A Cultural Approach: Sources and methods

The cultural approach this analysis employs examines Tudor art and print to illustrate the religious, political, and social meanings behind Reformation changes. Therefore, pieces of art, church images, Bibles, and religious writing provide the basis for analyzing the methods with

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67 For discussion of groups most commonly omitted and reasons for this lack of historical discussion, see: Haigh, English Reformations.
which Henry VIII and Edward VI utilized religious texts and portraiture as propaganda. The purpose of this approach is to explain the power of images throughout the Reformation and the ways in which the monarchy manipulated images and religious texts to convey specific meaning to the populace.

While discussion of Tudor culture is typically compartmentalized into image and print studies, a full cultural approach is needed when addressing royal discourse. A holistic cultural analysis is especially critical for Edward VI’s reign. While the short duration of Edward VI’s rule elicits obvious constraints, this limitation alone does not offer a historical explanation for the decline in imagery and the simultaneous prolific production of published works. Edward VI’s resulting undermined role in historical discussion of Reformation propaganda is one example of why a combined examination of images and text is needed. When this use of print production is taken into consideration, it demonstrates important fluctuations in Tudor kings’ efforts to shape their image and respond to emerging political needs.

*Addressing Tudor Art and Print: Individual and collective examinations*

Discussing the specific political messages of the Tudors while still examining broader cultural shifts requires both an individual and collective analysis. A combined individual and collective examination reveals the importance of the king’s selectivity in which images were retained and which were removed to create the needed shift from a visual to text-based religion and to augment messages of power. With this approach, individual images receive a qualitative analysis that summarizes the picture plane, gives specific attention to selected symbols and their placement, and then determines symbols’ meanings with the use of previous art theories and
cultural histories as models. Conversely, collective analyses group the images together to discuss broad, simplistic, and repeated motifs.

With print culture a collective examination is critical to address issues of intent and reception. Uniform sources such as Parliament records, church injunctions, and books of hours are especially suited to a group examination. Parliament acts and church injunctions set the pace of the Reformation in England and introduced important political alterations that mandated change for all subjects. Thus, the wide effect of these sources across Tudor England makes them important sources for viewing the Reformation’s impact on more inaccessible portions of society. Examining these sources to see what royal concern over the meaning of religious images says about royal and lay understanding of imagery aids in gaining a broader understanding of monarchs’ different responses to cultural objects. A collective analysis of these directives illustrates a pattern of image replacement and removal, which allowed the monarchs to eliminate religious images interfering with their propaganda while maintaining some consistency.

Despite differing individual and collective approaches, the major image and print analysis

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68 Theorists used in this analysis mainly add to assessments about imagery and power and are not considered as actual Tudor models. Foucault is included as an influence for his insight into manipulation of power, especially discussions of physical form, spectacle, and surveillance, see: Michel Foucault, trans. Alan Sheridan, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975, 1977, 1978), 1-75. One of the main art theories this study draws from is Erwin Panofsky’s theory of iconography, which postulated that simple objects and colors in more complicated artworks could stand as symbols for meanings or virtues society associated with those objects. See: Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939). For visual culture histories used to discuss the foundations of a symbol’s meaning or use, see: Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*; King, *Tudor Royal Iconography*; Daniel Fischlin, “Political Allegory, Absolutist ideology, and ‘The Rainbow Portrait’ of Queen Elizabeth I,” *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 50, no. 1 (Spring 1997), 175-206.


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remains qualitative. However, this study does include some quantification of books of hours and primers throughout Henry VIII’s reign. This analysis examines 99 random books of hours and primers in the online database EEBO from 1509-1547 and categorized the results into two periods. These periods are labeled pre-Reformation Henrician England (1509-1528) and post-Reformation Henrician England (1529-1547). After these initial divisions, this study further divided these sources into two imagery categories: decorative and narrative. Here the term decorative imagery refers to images used in borders, letters, and paragraph icons that had little to no interaction with the main text. In contrast, narrative imagery refers to illustrations included to explain and reinforce written content. Only books of hours and primers exhibiting narrative illustrations are counted as containing imagery because they address the research goal of discovering how cultural messages were distributed and the general degree of laymen interaction. Decorative imagery would not add insight to these research goals or answer questions of the use of art as propaganda. After determining the number of books with narrative imagery, the next step involved calculating the percentage of books containing imagery for each period. When taken into account with additional primary evidence and historical discussions, these percentages add evidence supporting lay familiarity with devotional imagery and illustrations in general. These findings and the shift in percentages along with different stages of the Reformation also holds important information about how these monarchs addressed images through individual religious goals.\footnote{While these percentages are helpful in understanding the general availability of these sources, issues of preservation and selection for the EEBO website limits this study from being a comprehensive statistic. Therefore, this analysis was conducted alongside other histories discussing the social abundance and impact of these sources. See: Duffy, \textit{Marking the Hours} and Watt, \textit{Cheap Print and Popular Piety}.}
Since this visual history addresses Tudor England primarily through a royal standpoint, cultural sources act as mediators between the monarchy and laity to see how constructed propaganda communicated general ideas of reform and the Crown. Through this focus, art works become texts communicating royal propaganda and objects with imperative political ramifications versus forms of aesthetic expression.

**Chapter Outline**

The second chapter, “Art and Politics in the Reign of Henry VIII,” examines how Henry VIII chose to alter religious images and churches. Discussing Henry’s reign up to his death in 1547, this section follows the Reformation and uses Henry’s different strategies of religious and secular reform to explain continuity and disruption in the Reformation environment. Henry VIII enhanced this continuity and disruption by building new representations of monarchial power on traditional Catholic imagery while simultaneously elevating new symbols of power.71

“Chapter Three: Religious Reform and Royal Representation of Edward VI,” discusses Edwardian visual and print culture. This discussion of cultural representation in Edward’s reign reveals the importance of varying goals when discussing Tudor culture. Through Edward’s consistent use of motifs similar to those in Henry VIII’s portraiture and through his personal decision to primarily use print to fashion propaganda, Edward’s reign is a key focal point for revealing how continuity with Henrician traditions and disruptions with the introduction of new

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71 While the exact ending date attributed to the English Reformation shifts, a concluding point of 1540 or 1550 is a common assessment, see: Ozment, *The Age of Reform* and Donna B. Hamilton and Richard Strier, eds., *Religion, Literature, and Politics in Post-Reformation England, 1540-1688* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
religious approaches altered the cultural identity of kingship. Thus, Edward VI’s reign needs to be addressed less as a bridging point between Henry VIII and Elizabeth I and more as an individual period significant in its own right.

Following concerns of creating an ideal representation in the face of religious change and political pressure, the final section “Crown Construction and Cultural Appropriation of Power Through Tudor Art” serves two primary functions. First, it describes Elizabethan (1558-1603) imagery conventions to show continued importance of manipulating imagery for propaganda. Second, this chapter concludes the themes discussed in earlier chapters by using Elizabeth’s alterations and expansion of Henry VIII and Edward VI’s strategies and cultural forms of manipulation to assess how the Protestant Tudors as a whole utilized images in a way that transformed Tudor politics and society.

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CHAPTER TWO: ART AND POLITICS IN THE REIGN OF HENRY VIII

Henry VIII used visual culture to convey his new position as head of the Church of England, disseminate his desired image, and control religious reform. This reliance on art is evident in the unprecedented funds he allocated for artistic production. Despite this visual discourse of a positive kingship, treatise authors breaking laws by supporting banned Catholic Church art and rebellions raised in protest of Henry VIII’s new Church position demonstrate that the laity often understood and rejected these messages. These conflicting representational goals and responses prove that visual communication was problematic, but Henry VIII’s propaganda and the changes it caused were significant. Tudor religion and culture changed drastically with the creation of a new monarchy. This new monarchy was forged in law, but it was explained and idealized for the masses primarily in image.

Images played a large role throughout Henry VIII’s reign by displaying a strong secular monarch before the Reformation and constructing a new representation of a strong religious monarch in the post Reformation environment. Although earlier Catholic monarchs used portraiture to display power, Henry VIII was the first English monarch to elevate his

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73 Foister and Howarth’s discussions of patronage explain the power Henry VIII would have gained through these extra funds and artist consistency. See: Foister, Holbein in England, 17.
75 Haigh, English Reformations, 21.
representation to propaganda responsible for constructing a new understanding of monarchy. Thomas Talbot’s memorial history attests to this creation of iconic royalty. According to Talbot, his main goal with this portrait history was to attain “true countenance” of the ruler. This association between accurately portraying a monarch’s image and portraying his reign speaks to the power of portraiture to construct a specific identity. The similarities between Henry VIII’s image in this later work and his other state portraiture demonstrates Henry VIII’s success in fashioning a concept of monarchy influential enough to become embedded in cultural memory. Henry VIII’s recognition of the importance of representation and an impressive physical presence is evident in the strides he took to hide perceived physical flaws through exaggerating his jousting armor.

Talbot’s work also reveals important concepts for dissemination. This source shows that general access to visual propaganda in portraiture was viable through publishers’ use of high-class art as models for more common engravings. Portraiture was a significant form of...
propaganda, but it was only one of several cultural avenues Henry VIII used to establish his new position. Henry VIII communicated with his officials and subjects through a diverse visual discourse. Publishers’ perpetuations of these messages, evident in their introductions crediting the king, and public response to religious changes shows a society familiar with some level of royal communication and a society for which images held powerful connotations. Therefore, to achieve his new identity, Henry VIII relied on adjusting Tudor culture by labeling some imagery as positive, attaching stigma to others, and filling cultural voids resulting from these changes with authorized Bibles. The resulting changes and continuities demonstrated that a large portion of cultural change was based on royal preference to convey and block certain visual messages. The intent to communicate by building on established, familiar cultural modes of communication is especially evident in the differing cultural construction of monarchy between Henry VIII and Edward VI’s reigns. The changing understanding of how best to represent an idealized king shows that propaganda changed with both individual monarchs’ intent and their perception of society.

Catholic England was a highly visual society and the transition to a Protestant state and a religious monarchy altered these images’ meanings, prevalence, and usage. The nature of these continuities and disruptions to traditional culture reflected Henry VIII’s decisions to support

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images solidifying his connection with church control and reject images counterproductive to his new political narratives. Within this system, Henry and his administration maintained a spectacle of secular power in the form of coronations, masques, and performances. Also, Henry VIII allowed some devotional images not interfering with the narrative of the monarchy’s role in the Church, such as books of hours and private imagery, to continue. This goal to use new images as propaganda while still preserving traditional devotional illustrations and elements of Tudor culture, transformed with Edward VI’s different personal and political goals. The role and use of culture and imagery in the pre-Reformation period of Henry VIII’s rule demonstrates these changes and what they signify.

Catholic Traditions: The early Henrician period, 1509-1529

Church and Society

The English Catholic Church was a social and political institution as well as a spiritual one. The church worked jointly with local government through the selection of parish leaders to serve as government representatives and with individual communities through economic management of charity.\(^1\) The common social plights of vagrancy and begging extended through the Tudor period and combined with the heightened role of Christian charity to further promote


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the Churches’ prominent economic connections. In addition to direct economy ties, the Church indirectly regulated societal status through attendance, which was an important prerequisite to community standing. The laity’s daily interactions with the Church and Catholicism’s visually lavish nature engendered a society largely familiar with, and connected to, imagery. Books of hours, calendars, primers, church injunctions, and treatises demonstrate this connection and show the extent to which visuals became a normal aspect of Tudor life.

**Early Henrician Imagery**

Catholicism created a population dependent on visual modes of devotion and moral education because it used a plethora of religious imagery, such as crosses, paintings, engravings,

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82 Elizabethan proclamations against begging reveal that poverty-related issues continued throughout the Tudor era. See: Orders appointed to be executed in the citie of London, for setting rogesand idle persons to worke, and for releefe of the poore... (London: Hugh Singleton, 1587); A proclamation agreed vpon by the iustices of peace of this countie of Bedford...for the restraint of wanderint roges and vacabonds... (S.I.: G. Robinson, 1585); Elizabeth I, An act for punishment of roges, vagabonds, and sturdie beggers... (1598); Elizabeth I, A proclamation for suppressing of the multitude of idle vagabonds... (London: Christopher Barker, 1594); Elizabeth I, The Queenes Most Excellent Maiestie, being credibly informed that many vagabonds, rogues, and masterless men having nothing to liue on... (London: Christopher Barker, 1596); Elizabeth I, Whereas advertiseiment is giuen vnto vs, that there is at this time dispersed within our city of London, and the suburbs thereof, a great multitude of base and loose people... (London: Robert Barker, 1601), all in (EEBO), [http://eebo.chadwyck.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu](http://eebo.chadwyck.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu). Accessed November 7, 2009.


84 For a study on the Church as a social institution and to see how the Reformation affected the way Tudor laymen experienced changes in doctrine and imagery, see: Duffy, *Voices of Morebath*. 

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rosaries, and altars. These understandings translated into daily life through ceremonies surrounding major life events including birth, marriage, and death. Thus, visual symbolism and communication was important for chronicling the very breath of Tudor society, the ebb and flow of life.

This dual religious and secular use of imagery in Catholic society is also evident in illustrated texts, such as books of hours and calendars. These popular texts introduced a high volume of narrative imagery and symbolism into Tudor society. Common access to these visual messages represents a stronger possibility of comprehension, as there were multiple avenues available to attain personal copies and access books publically. Since historians have determined that texts such as books of hours and primers were widely available, this study conducted quantification on a random sample of books of hours and primers collected for Henry VIII’s reign (1509-1547). Arranged chronologically into pre-Reformation (1509-1528) and Reformation (1529-1547) groups, the results supported both the continued existence of these sources throughout Henry VIII’s reign despite Reformation changes to Catholic imagery and a high number of narrative illustrations. The earliest, pre-Reformation category of these books displayed a high number of illustrations with 35 out of 50 books (approximately 70%) containing narrative imagery. This percentage remained consistent and was slightly enhanced for the

85 Henrician and Edwardian church injunctions and visitations include a wide definition of imagery. In addition to more traditional materials like paintings and statues, items such as bells and tapestries were also seen as religious images. For examples of the different church interiors removed, see: Sparrow, A collection of articles, injunctions, canons, orders, ordinances, and constitutions ecclesiastical, with other publick records ..., 1671.
87 For different religious masses and festivals in Catholic England, see: Duffy, Stripping of the Altars.
89 Books of Hours and Primers Quantification (1509-1547): Horae ad Sarum. Parisus: printed by P. ; 1501; Horae beate marie virginis ad vsum; St. John; 1502; Hore presentes ad vsum Sarum; St. John; 1502; Horae ad usum Sarum;
second, Reformation category, which yielded an illustrated percentage of approximately 79.59% (or 39 of 49 books). These random examples do not represent percentages for all books of hours and primers throughout Henry VIII’s reign, but these high percentages of illustrated books out of the samples collected and historians discussing these books’ wide availability reveal important findings relevant to Henry VIII’s use of images and Tudor laymen’s familiarity with visual messages. These percentages show that both the amount of illustrated texts and the number of samples available were consistent throughout Henry’s reign. This consistent availability combined with the absence of books of hours from Henry VIII’s church injunctions suggests that Henry VIII was not concerned with eradicating these devotional images. This lack of discussion for books of hours is significant since injunctions attacked a large number of Catholic objects and practices as anti-royal propaganda elevating the Pope’s authority. Henry specifically mentioned these images because treatises claimed they were more than physical art forms and that they allowed contradictory images of power to exist. Thus, Henry VIII feared these images would create a competitive visual discourse. Therefore, these statistics represent that the Reformation was not a royally-driven period of iconoclasm or a period with a visually inexperienced or illiterate society. Instead, Tudor laymen had regular text and image interaction and Henry VIII used this knowledge to and responded with a calculated royal reaction to imagery based on personal preference and political motivations.

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90 Ibid.

91 Church of England, Injunctions given by the auctoritie of the kinges highnes to clerge of his realme, 1538, npg.

92 Bucer, A treatise declaring and showing that images are not to be suffered in churches, 1535, npg.
Quantification of books of hours and primers reveals a strong devotional use of images, but the significance of visual messages in Tudor England extended beyond devotional contexts. Calendars were important daily guides and were also main sources of imagery that included maps of astrological cycles and occupations. Similar to books of hours, these texts illustrate that higher classes and text producers believed in lower class literacy and visual understanding. The *Kalendar of the Sheppards* is one example. The wide dissemination of these works, their use of images as structural guides, and historical theories of at least a 30% average literacy rate represents an existing market where image comprehension was probable. Parliament records indicating that books and their meanings were a topic of public discussion further support access to and use of texts and images. The *Kalendar of the Sheppards* exemplifies the use of imagery to convey specific messages in these works by including a woodcut to explain the caption “[a]nd hereafter followeth the saying of the Sheparde to the Plowman.” Thus, images in these works went beyond decoration and included instructional images for content clarification. These visual messages in early England suggest that Henry VIII could visually direct the laity in royal images by including basic symbols seen in these sources. Henry VIII attempted to communicate with the laity by including common items found in these sources in his image, such as mythological

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93 *Here begynneth the kalendar of sheppards*, 1518.
96 *Here begynneth the kalendar of sheppards*, 1518, iv.
symbols to denote power and books to denote religious power. Religiously, Henry VIII also tried to increase understanding of his messages by using familiar religious figures and subject matter, such as tying his representation to David.

Comprehension, Intent, and Propaganda: Tudor visual communication

Henry VIII employed techniques similar to these popular illustrated texts in his description of the new monarchy, in effort to maintain some cultural continuity and communicate messages more effectively. These tactics included repetition of motifs, inclusion of familiar subject matter, use of simplistic symbols, and isolation of central figures in the foreground. The Catholic Church in England expected Tudor subjects to understand such visual messages and used images as visual communication. Henry and his administration also held expectations of strong, basic literacy across society, which they displayed through public posting of laws, such as the Pope’s Bull. While these expectations represented mainly upper class perceptions, the laity did have some literacy capabilities, which is evident in the different notations made within

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97 Ibid.
99 The tradition of visual communication in the church atmosphere to try to reach the lower classes was a common theme for religious states, including earlier period of Gothic church art. For examples, see: Jean A. Givens, Observation and Image-making in Gothic Art, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005) and Michael Camille, The Gothic idol: ideology and image-making in medieval art (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
100 J. Sargy, These be the articles of the popes Bulle under leade translated from latyn into englishe, 1518.
books of hours. These writings offer a testament to varying literacy skills and included a mixture of full notations, limited pieces of writing, and letter practice.  

In addition to illustrated texts, other incorporations of signs and symbols in pre-Reformation culture created models for later, royal discourse. In this evolving cultural atmosphere, the use of signs to identify businesses and trades and the dependence on fashion symbols to denote status caused images to continue as a vital part of daily communication. Henry VIII’s reliance on common symbols of power (such as regal clothing and the sword) to denote wealth and leadership illustrates his intent to use simplistic symbols as a method to display and communicate ideal kingship. Visual communication was only part of the monarchy’s restructuring and occurred alongside important legislative and administrative adjustments. Art, however, played a vital role in the construction of the Crown by giving Henry VIII power to construct a strong kingly identity that masked royal insecurities about the future of the Tudor line, created spectacle able to compete with the French court, and visually justified the new position of the monarch. This opportunity to create and disseminate an alternate reality played a role in Henry VIII’s religious propaganda and his use of Biblical engravings to depict a king possessing a natural ruling connection to religion. This contrived narrative obscured the reality

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103 This natural connection to religion as a divine gift was accomplished through depicting the Lord giving the Bible to the king, see: The Great Bible [London, 1539], in Christopher Lloyd and Simon Thurley, Henry VIII.
of a king assuming power by removing the Pope. The full extent of Henry’s recognition and use of this visual power is evident in later Reformation era Bibles and their title pages.

Henry VIII’s visual narrative prior to the Reformation matched the secular state of the monarchy. His propaganda in this period depicted the monarchy as a station blessed by God but still relying on other religious officials. To construct this image, Henry VIII relied largely on appeals to religious concepts already seen as promoting an ideal secular ruler and kingship. This shift in pre-Reformation to Reformation monarchy and from the use of imagery to reinforce desirable traits versus the reliance on it to introduce new politics and religion indicates the importance of royal needs and preferences in discussing Tudor culture. Virtues offer an example of how Henry VIII built on existing religious concepts to create and disseminate propaganda. Goodly virtues were significant symbols of a righteous ruler and proper Christian. William Tyndale’s “The Obedience of a Christian Man” is one later example describing the renunciation of the Pope’s evilness as the true mark of goodly Christian character.104 This demonstrates how Christian virtues could be used as propaganda, creating a just king and an unjust Pope.105 This source demonstrates the continuity in Henry VIII’s moderate reform and his attempt to hold onto some traditional culture. Henry VIII’s early discussions of virtue and concern over his appearance and “estate” further demonstrate his knowledge of their significance and his attempts

to appeal to them.\footnote{106 The king our soueraygne lorde by his synguler wysdome hath prouydently consyderd... (1522), in (EEBO), \url{http://ebo.chadwyck.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99892552&FILE=../session/1268677421_22342&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=188935&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT_KEYWORD=}, Accessed in November 7, 2009.\footnote{107 Ibid.} One way Henry VIII appealed to public concern for virtue was by describing a dualistic image of monarchy with one image representing positive kingship, or a rule based on justice, and the other depicting a negative kingship, or a rule based on a lack of justice.\footnote{107 Ibid.} Henry VIII used this image to visually associate himself with the first category and construct his identity as a positive king. Henry VIII’s appeal to virtues in this representation of his reign speaks to the critical connection between reception, comprehension, and intent. Henry chose to describe his authority and reign through these types of virtues partially because these understandings of a rightful ruler’s characteristics were common in society, which supported a greater possibility of understanding and access to the connection he was attempting to create. In this manner, the Tudor people partially dictated the definition of a good king and affected royal representation. Henry VIII’s use of these comparisons that were already circulating in popular society reveals that the definition of propaganda as a solely top-down discourse pattern is insufficient to discuss the full range of Tudor communication.

Aside from virtues, other publications such as John Rycke’s \textit{Ymage of Love} offered a model for representing the monarchy. This source reinforces the importance of the dichotomous framework of good and bad symbols by dividing love into a positive category (Christian love) and a negative category (carnal love).\footnote{108 John Ryckes, \textit{The Ymage of love} (London, 1525), in (EEBO).} Rycke’s dichotomy and his discussion of “goodly images of our savior” supported the concept that negative and positive imagery could coexist. This was an imperative precedent for Henry VIII’s later political approach to removing and
maintaining Reformation images. This dualistic understanding of images in society allowed Henry VIII to convey an ideal understanding of royalty through association with positive imagery. Ryckes provides such a positive representation of the monarchy in his description of the image of love as a “lyvyng ymage portrayed lyke a quene and is the very quene of all virtues…”109 Occurring on the eve of reform, these dichotomies provided cultural frameworks and social precedents for the removal and replacement pattern Henry VIII employed to carry out necessary reform and mitigate cultural change.

Henry VIII’s use of virtues and negative and positive symbols to construct an idealized representation of his monarchy shows how Henry VIII validated his rule by manipulating existing religious iconography. David was Henry VIII’s prime icon for constructing a positive religious ruling identity, but in the later period of his reign the meanings and associations changed in correlation with new Reformation ideologies. David’s desired status as a pre-Reformation icon is evident in religious publications.110 John Fisher’s claim that David was a good king because God “elected” and “chose” him is one example.111 Fischer’s politically charged language and the discussion of divine approval factored into Henry’s later choice of David to represent the positive interpretation of deliverance from Catholic practices. In pre-Reformation accounts, however, David was king by divine right and did not have direct claims as God’s earthly representative. In these accounts, David maintained control through separate,

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109 Ibid.
110 Ibid.
religious officials such as “the bysshop and prophete [who] anoynte hym Kinge of Israhell.”

Henry VIII altered David’s persona and this connection in the Reformation period with his depiction of him in Bible engravings. Here, Henry VIII’s focus was to create new propaganda supporting God-given religious authority. He removed discussion of supporting religious institutions and displayed images of David taking control over his religious environment.

Images of David taking control of religion by banishing idols changed this particular concept of David’s power, and thus Henry VIII’s power. Due to this direct association with David, Henry VIII’s attempts to redefine David’s power and actions signify a deeper meaning than changes in Bible understanding or aesthetic design. These changes to redraw David’s rule in later sources represents a direct attempt by Henry VIII to redraw his own ruling boundaries. Henry VIII’s new treatment of David represented that he saw changes in the Reformation Church mandated a stronger and more direct religious authority. Additionally, it shows his intent to compare his narrative with David’s as a way of creating propaganda for his role as a religious cleanser. This is one example of how religious themes and ideas experienced both continuity and disruption in the construction of a different type of King and Church.

Although religious images supply prominent evidence for propaganda studies, especially with the shifting Reformation environment, the desire to enhance secular power was the main theme in pre-Reformation propaganda. Prior to the Reformation, images displaying secular wealth and power served a heightened importance since people identified the monarchy solely as

112 Ibid.
a secular entity. Of these symbols, fashion was a critical tool in communicating messages of kingship and constructing propaganda. Clothing was part of everyday life and its symbolism was clear. The ability of Tudor subjects to access these meanings and the necessity of some basic comprehension is evident in laws claiming color and quality misrepresentation in clothing sales was a punishable offense. This reveals not only that colors, material, and style carried defined meanings, but also that knowledge of style and material as important status symbols was required. The importance of this fashion symbolism is further witnessed in laws’ labeling clothing violations as deviant behavior. The need for these regulations implies that certain Tudor subjects attempted to profit by selling materials regardless of customer status, which supports a society with intimate understanding of fashion symbols and their power. The demand for these materials and forgeries also indicates broad comprehension since lower class subjects attempted to embody and display a higher status by violating clothing regulations. Thus, for higher classes and royalty, clothing represented power attained from belonging to a higher status and controlling greater socioeconomic wealth. When constructing secular propaganda, fashion suited Henry the VIII’s needs through its ability to successfully address all concerns of visual communication. For the laity, fashion meanings were readily accessible. For Henry VIII, fashion symbolism enhanced spectacle and created strong, easily controllable representations of wealth and power. One fashion item Henry VIII especially relied on to symbolize royal power was the ring. His reign produced a significant amount of portraiture emphasizing rings as status

114 Parliament records exemplified the importance of these messages through including numerous acts against certain income levels using heavier wool, certain colors such as gold, and certain “ornaments.” See: England and Wales, Statua (London: Rychard Pynson, 1515); Statuta the Kyngle our Souveraynge Lord Henry VIII,1520; England, Acts made in the session of this present parlamente (London: Thomae Bertheleti, 1533); England, Abridgement of parliament statues (1534) all in (EEBO), http://eebo.chadwyck.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu, Accessed November 7, 2009.

115 Ibid.
Henry VIII’s common use of jewelry to denote status and display secular power is also significant for viewing later, changing understandings of power. Although rings prominently featured in Henry VIII’s visual representation throughout his life, with the Reformation Henry started to shift from the use of rings to symbolize strong secular power to the illustration of text to represent control over religion. These changing symbols despite a standard figural representation, demonstrates Henry VIII’s intent to display a pre-Reformation and Reformation monarch differently. Propaganda shifted according to royal motivation and so did resulting Tudor religious and political discourse. This shift is most evident in the comparison of two portraits: the anonymous pre-Reformation Henry VIII (c. 1520) and Jan van Cleve’s Reformation Henry VIII (c. 1535). In these works a continuous understanding of strong royal traits is evident in the continuity of body angles and clothing styles, but changing understandings of power motifs are present. In the earlier portrait Henry VIII’s hands are holding and emphasizing a large ring. In Jan Van Cleve’s painting this same location depicts Henry VIII holding a scroll inscribed with Matthew 16:22: “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” This different focus demonstrates a significant change in what type of kingship Henry VIII desired to convey. Henry VIII chose to emphasize his secular, political power in pre-

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117 Joos Van Cleve, Henry VIII, c. 1535.
Reformation England since there was not the same need to establish religious ruling authority.\textsuperscript{119} The continuity between these images shows Henry VIII’s desire to still engage in secular propaganda, but the accentuated focus on religious text shows a different intent developing to strengthen communication of religious power. Thus, art shifts in the Reformation went beyond stylistic changes. Henry VIII, who controlled these alterations through patronage, used art to display his understanding that the new royal concern of the Henrician administration would be cementing reform and defining a new religious ruling identity.

\textbf{Henry VIII and English Reform, 1529 – 1547}

\textit{Political and Visual Language of Change: Cultural continuity and disruption}

While Henry VIII engaged in visual discourse and constructed strong messages of propaganda in the pre-Reformation period, the importance attached to imagery shifted and increased during the Reformation period. Continuous use of illustrated religious texts such as books of hours and \textit{The mystik sweet rosary} illustrate that the situation was more complex than comprehensive reform through image destruction or removal.\textsuperscript{120}

Records describing the maintenance of significant Catholic practices, such as Cranmer’s religious office, show Henry VIII’s preference for moderate reform. Yet, despite a goal of moderate reform, injunctions describing mandated changes to the Church environment indicate an extensive removal of Catholic objects. Items mentioned specifically in these injunctions varied from objects associated with Catholic Church services and rituals, such as statues and

\textsuperscript{119} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{120} \textit{The mystik sweet rosary... },1533.
altars, to more decorative items, such as tapestries and candlesticks.\textsuperscript{121} This displays two paradoxes: first, the overall goal of moderate reform juxtaposed with stringent image removal and, second, the systematic removal of Catholic ecclesiastical art during a period of increased commissions for both secular art (portraiture) and ecclesiastical art (Bible engravings).\textsuperscript{122} The answer to both contradictions lies in royal motivations. Royal preference and political pressures largely shaped the way the English people experienced reform. Henry VIII revealed in his treatment of Catholic customs, such as Thomas Cranmer’s archiepiscopate, that he still held Catholic beliefs but his goal of creating a new religious identity was more important. Throughout the Reformation, Henry VIII initiated few changes to Cranmer’s clerical position. This administrative continuity demonstrated Henry VIII’s desire for moderate reform. One change he did mandate, however, was the addition of commissions. These commissions changed the foundation of the position’s power. With these new commissions that the king was solely responsible for granting or revoking, a new precedent was established that “the bishop’s powers were henceforth made to rest explicitly on the king’s position as a supreme head.”\textsuperscript{123} Thus, Henry VIII revealed that he would abandon his desires of moderate reform to enact changes necessary to convey his new position and augment his power. Therefore, these select continuities and alterations exemplified that Henry VIII’s intent to augment his Church control supplied the primary motivation behind his reform and that, when contradictory goals surfaced, this motivation trumped concerns of maintaining continuity. This political drive and its strong impact on the world of Tudor laymen through religious and cultural alteration are most evident in shifts

\textsuperscript{121} Church of England, \textit{Injunctions given by the auctoritie of the kinges highnes to clerge of his realme}, 1538, npg.; Henry VIII, \textit{articles to be enquyred of in the kynges maiesties visitacion...}, 1547, A.i – B.i.

\textsuperscript{122} Foister, \textit{Holbein in England}, 13-20 and Duffy, \textit{Stripping of the Altars}.

of Catholic imagery. The imperative role this imagery played in the average Tudor church member’s understanding of the world is seen in treatises and sermons discussing their worship and inclusion of them in their homes.\footnote{Bucer, A treatise declaring and showing that images are not to be suffered in churches, npg; Latimer, The sermon that the reverende father in Christ, Hugh Latimer, Byishop of Worcester,1537, A.vi; More, A dyalogue of syr Thomas More knyghte...Wherein be treated dyvers maters, as of the veneration [and] worsyp of ymages [and] relyques... 1529.} This strong attachment even led the laity to make payments to images for miracles at a point when Parliament records report devastating economic conditions for a sizeable portion of Tudor society.\footnote{Parliament records indicating economic turmoil up to the end of the Tudor period: Orders appointed to be executed in the cittie of London, for setting rogesand idle persons to worke, and for releefe of the poore,1587; A proclamation agreed vpon by the justices of peace of this countie of Bedford...for the restraint of wandering roges and vacabonds... ,1585; Elizabeth I, An act for punishment of rogues, vagabonds, and sturdie beggers..., 1598; Elizabeth I, A proclamation for suppressing of the multitude of idle vagabonds ...1594; Elizabeth I, The Queenes Most Excellent Maiestie, being credibly informed that many vagabonds, rogues, and masterless men having nothing to liue on...1596, http://eebo.chadwyck.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu, Accessed November 7, 2009. Description of a typical Catholic ritual paying images for miracles from the Tudor period: Calvin Jean, The mynde of the godly and excellent lerned man M. Iohn Caluyne... (Ippyswiche: Iohn Oswen, 1548), X.v. – A.vi., in (EEBO), http://eebo.chadwyck.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99846416&FILE=.../session/1268736289_19511&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=11381&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT_KEYWORD= , Accessed November 4, 2009.} This strong lay attachment explains the inconsistencies between Henry VIII’s Reformation policies and his personal beliefs. Catholic images communicated too much papal superiority to be kept, but this did not alter Henry VIII’s Catholic background or his need to elevate imagery production for propaganda. Therefore, the contradictory nature of Henry VIII’s reform was part of a political strategy to be able to maintain and use images when there was a heightened need for them, when rewriting authority in the realm, while still removing those images conflicting with new messages of religious power. The continued, but adjusted, reliance on religious imagery is evident in the replacement of removed Catholic devotional materials with Bibles and Protestant engravings. This removal and replacement tactic reveals the extent to which Henry VIII’s reform was driven by his intent to maintain stability and his attempts to
 secure laymen access to his messages. In addition to using Protestant engravings, portraiture, and religious texts to promote new concepts of royalty, Henry VIII used these cultural sources to fill the religious voids Catholic image removal left. This direct association between new Bible images and Catholic Church art is evident not only in Henry’s connection between the act of removing previous imagery and establishing new engravings, but also in his discussion of the Bible. Past merely providing a copy of the Bible for reference, Henry VIII directed in Reformation injunctions that Bibles were to be placed in a position of prominence where previous Catholic images stood and that every church was required to display a copy. This attention to the Church’s use of the Bible demonstrates both Henry VIII’s desire to use the Bible as a political tool and his attempt to transfer the power behind earlier Catholic images. This mandated uniformity of Bible treatment and Henry’s orders to the clergy for display takes the Bible past a minor role in the Church environment and shows Henry VIII’s attempt to establish it as an official devotional item. Henry’s shift from Catholic images to Bibles and their engravings was mainly in effort to gain more support for his new station and to maintain stability and not out of a humanitarian concern for lay culture, but his attempts to mitigate change dictated such moderate reform and maintenance of visual culture. This was largely due to his desire to avoid radical response. Therefore, this approach indicates the importance of understanding Tudor laymen’s possible interactions with art and reception of messages since Henry VIII’s perception of possible laity reactions partially influenced his cultural politics. Henry VIII’s calculated orchestration of Tudor culture demonstrates that images were important political pieces to the overall management of England’s new political and religious trajectory.

126 Ex.: Henry VIII, articles to be enquyred of in the kynges maiesties visitacion (London, 1547), A.i – B.i., in (EEBO).
Threads of Cultural Continuity

Although the transition from a Catholic to a Protestant state necessitated religious and cultural change, the English Reformation was mainly a political revolution. Prior to the Reformation, Henry VIII played an active role in the country’s religious direction by writing religious works, refusing foreign powers’ attempts at altering England’s devotions, and earning the title “Defender of the Faith.”127 His Catholic support a few years prior to the decision to break with Rome further proves strong political roots of reform.128 Because of both this Catholic background and his family’s political history, Henry VIII believed that a period of reform still needed to incorporate some traditional elements to minimize radical response and challenges to Crown authority. Therefore, Henry VIII attempted to gain the ability to mitigate changes and generate greater stability by clinging to some precedent. The importance Henry VIII placed on secular precedent to carry messages of Reformation propaganda is evident in his comparison of his changes to previous Catholic Church alterations. This attachment to precedent is evident in his defense against the Yorkshire rebels (1536) that “in our owne churche of Englane, wherof we be the supreme heed in erthe, we have done nothynge so onerous and chargeable to [you], as many of our predecessours have doone uppon moche lesse groundes.”129 With this statement, Henry VIII both used the Catholic Church to demonstrate prior standing for religious changes and to draw a direct parallel between the reform of his new institution, the Church of England, and the previous Church. This comparison was desirable because it paired Henry’s reform with previous, more minor changes. Henry VIII used this comparison to ground his explanation of the

127 Henry VIII, A copy of the letters…[and] also the copy of ye foresayd Luthers letters, 1528.
128 Ibid.
129 Henry VIII, Answere made by the kynges hygnes to the petitions of the rebelles in Yorkshire, 1536.
new monarchy and Church in a previous cultural institution that he felt the laymen accepted and understood. Knowing that these rebellions typically included a diverse representation of Tudor classes, Henry’s choice to use Catholic alterations as a model is telling. First, this description demonstrated Henry’s perception that the continuity generated by explaining his reform in previous religious practices was the most effective way to mass discuss new directions. Second, Henry VIII’s use of this tactic to specifically address rioters demonstrated his intent to use this method of communication as a political strategy to mitigate radical response. This decision shows that whether or not Tudor laymen received and comprehended these messages, they still had an influence on Henry VIII’s concerns and perceptions. Thus, concerns of their reception still changed the nature of English culture and religion by indirectly controlling how the king chose to convey the Reformation to them.

Henry VIII’s political strategy of claiming precedent and maintaining some Catholic practices extended into his treatment of imagery. Books of hours represent one cultural tradition that Henry VIII absorbed into Reformation England. By allowing some Catholic illustrated texts to remain and by recycling popular religious motifs, such as the Annunciation, Henry VIII successfully maintained some elements of popular culture. While these continuities demonstrated a concern for political and cultural precedent, the strongest example of Henry’s use of precedent to increase comprehension is evident in his use of David as a ruling icon. Here,

130 For discussions on riots and rebellions as form of “popular propaganda” for both the gentry and lower classes, see: Shagan, Popular Politics and the English Reformation and Hoyle, The Pilgrimage of Grace.

continuity was maintained not only in the continuous use of David as an icon for an idealized king, but also in the use of regal fashion to denote status and class.

Religious and Social Fashion Appropriation

In the Reformation environment, as in pre-Reformation England, fashion remained a critical aspect because its meanings were easily controlled and it elicited high reception and comprehension levels. In Henry VIII’s attempts to use art as propaganda conveying total control and absolute kingship, clothing style remained an important element of both religious and secular representation.

Fashion factored into Henry VIII’s incorporation of religious iconography through representation of Biblical personages. The use of David as an icon for Henry VIII and his rule shifted with the Reformation and its resulting political needs. In this period, Henry VIII’s methods of association changed with his intent to use David as a direct visual parallel. In this respect, Henry VIII demonstrated a similar cultural and political self promoting strategy as his paralleling of his reform with earlier Catholic Church alterations. Henry VIII relied on fashion and representation to visually associate his rule with David’s and connect with his actions. Selectivity of topics also played a role as Bible engravings focusing on David’s right to rule through victory in battle and his role as God’s earthly representative through idol destruction

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132 For discussion of laws proving general comprehension of fashion symbolism, see: England and Wales, Statua, 1515; Statuta the Knyge our Souveraynge Lord Henry VIII, 1520; England, Acts made in the session of this present parlyamente, 1533); England, Abridgement of parliament statues, 1534.

133 While other historians have pointed to similar use of additional kings for Henry VIII, such as Solomon, the most prevalent was David and John King notes David offered the strongest model of “sacred kingship.” See: King, “Henry VIII as David,” 78-92, 79.
directly correlated his ruling narrative with Henry VIII’s reign. Focusing on these aspects assisted Henry VIII in both representing a connected secular and spiritual rule under one monarch and writing his ruling legacy into David’s account. Bible images created this parallel by depicting David in similar regal attire and with symbols often associated with Tudor society. Henry VIII’s use of a similar regal style to associate his reform with David’s legacy established Biblical precedent for Henry VIII’s challenge to the Pope and removal of Catholicism. Through assigning himself the persona of Biblical Kings and disseminating approved engravings in his Bibles, Henry VIII was able to justify the evolution of Tudor rule and support the Reformation as a God-sanctioned mission. These associations allowed Henry to create a propagandistic narrative of a religious warrior and king. Evidence that Henry VIII attained at least partial success in this matter is witnessed in the anonymous lamentation stating: “What blindness what error what superstition, [w]hat sturdy Idolles and what blasphemy, [w]hat sond dilygysynges and false religion, [w]hat divilysh doctrine, and Romishe papry Hath he extincted in this his country.” This veneration illustrated how Henry VIII’s efforts constructed a positive memory of his reign and Church control powerful enough to overcome the cultural disruptions his Reformation wrought.

135 Ibid.
Henry VIII also amplified fashion messages as secular propaganda of a wealthy, thriving, and, therefore, divinely-approved, king. The use of simple fashion symbols such as badges and rich clothing to create a sense of authority were clearly established traditions of spectacle and were also evident in previous coronations and the Catholic French court.\textsuperscript{137} Henry VIII expanded on these traditions with the Reformation to both cement new power within England and compete with foreign Catholic dignitaries. Creating elaborate spectacle through fashion allowed Henry VIII to form a new identity of England’s royalty and justify controversial political changes, such as the introduction of Anne Boleyn. The overall lavishness of Anne’s coronation was used to both associate Anne with a queenly image and to reaffirm the authority and righteousness of Henry VIII’s political changes. This coronation mainly employed royal fashion to add queenly status, evident in descriptions of colors such as “golde and azure” and the use of “riche cloth.”\textsuperscript{138} Henry VIII employed this fashion scheme, which also incorporated heredity symbols of power, to visually connect Anne with divine virtue through a “noble, louving countenance.”\textsuperscript{139} Although court performances were often class-restricted events, publications describing these events confirm general interest.\textsuperscript{140} The demand for works describing these cultural productions signifies a receptive market, which represents that changes made by building on traditional culture could receive popular support. This receptive market contrasts with the protest of other changes, demonstrating the issue of public response when discussing the use of images for political

\textsuperscript{139} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.
communication. This mixed reaction is critical since public response changed the nature of communication by influencing how the monarchy was described, which was evident in Henry VIII’s use of virtues and his methods for explaining controversial changes.

Transitions: New power and new modes of representation

The incorporation of previous ceremonies, inclusion of mostly unchanged Episcopal roles, and continued Catholic devotional illustrations in books of hours, lends support to a government that was not attempting to erase previous cultural roots. However, Henry VIII also understood that new representation was needed to support Reformation ideals and that detrimental Catholic links required removal. Catholic Church images were especially concerning due to reports of their power, which generated both royal and papal understanding of their potency. Refusing to relinquish claims to England, the Catholic Church used the power of visual communication in Tudor religion to actively retaliate with its own set of icons, such as the use of St. Peter and his keys. This example was the main reminder of the Pope’s power and connection to the “true” Church and the Catholic Church used it similarly to the king’s use of portraiture on seals and letters patents. The importance of St. Peter as a symbol of Catholic authority is evident in Edward VI’s later written arguments to the Pope specifically refuting these claims. The Catholic Church’s use of this symbol to counteract new imagery in Bible title pages further demonstrates the complicated nature of propaganda. The Catholic Church continued to utilize its

142 Edward VI, *K. Edward VIth his own arguments against the pope’s supremacy…*, reprinted in 1682.
own religious propaganda through images and later, in Edwardian England, through print. Thus, Tudor propaganda was not only constructed to communicate with the English people, but with Rome as anti-Pope propaganda. This demonstrates royal concern about the power of Catholic Church images. Although the Supremacy Act of 1534 cemented Henry VIII’s new political identity as head of the Church, he needed to adjust cultural avenues to construct this new authority in a manner acceptable to his subjects and suitable to his personal beliefs. With the Reformation, Henry VIII faced an unprecedented task of assigning a new branch of power to the Crown, which would have been impossible to achieve rigidly adhering to previous culture.

Legislatively, the new level of political power Henry VIII attained is evident in laws making “the king, his universities, and his appointees” the official interpreters of God’s laws and those making Henry’s “General council” supreme over all bishops and religious councils. Henry VIII further achieved full government control as every mandate, even religious ones, had to be processed through “a bill signed by the kinges hande.” This new system was even reflected in financial concerns as Henry VIII justified his need for additional sums by citing expansion and new demands, claiming he needed additional allowances “for the more augmentation and mayntenaunce of the royall estate of the imperiall crowne and dignitie of supreme head.” Henry VIII’s creation of a new government precedent dominated both his

143 Henry VIII, A copy of the letters...[and] also the copy of ye foresayd Luthers letters, 1528.
144 England and Wales Privy Council, Articles devised by the holle consent of the kynges moste honourable counsayle, 1533.
Parliament and his court. Henry VIII’s simultaneous attempts to secure this new power politically through these mandates and culturally through an unusual quantity of art commissions signifies that he understood the need to define his new position. Thus, he started to work obsessively on creating a new monarchy.

Mandates making the King the main overseer of all matters secular and ecclesiastical were being illustrated through Bible engravings, which displayed the king as having power over publication of the Bible and the new religious system. These images added power to the king’s representation and constructed an identity he could not gain via law. Though legal changes secured a new position of power, these images were able to describe the king’s ruling identity as a natural religious authority and timeless divine gift versus a new power assumed through a secular government. Biblical engravings of God handing the Bible to the king, who is in turn responsible for it reaching the bishops below him, support these laws as a natural progression of power initiating with the Lord. While most historians claim Henry VIII succeeded in generating strong availability of Bibles, this method of distributing propaganda also lost elements of religious control. Increased Bible circulation placed religious interpretation further under the control of the individual layman. Therefore, these images and texts entered another

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147 For examples on how historians focusing on other European localities have discussed Bible engravings representing the book dissemination process as a divine gift from first God to the king then from the king to the people, see: Natalie Zemon Davis, The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000), 100-124.

148 The Great Bible Title Page: Henry VIII Presenting His Bible to the Archbishop Cranmer and Thomas Cromwell, 1539, in Lloyd and Thurley, Henry VIII.

149 The possibility of multiple-dimensions to Bible worship through different class levels and religious sects of the nation is evident in Dr. Richard Rex’s study of the meaning of the Bible from an intended vehicle of obedience in an atmosphere of English Catholicism, royal intent, to an attempt to try to connect it further to Lutheranism from more radical reformers. See: Richard Rex, “The Crisis of Obedience: God’s Word and Henry’s Reformation,” The Historical Journal 39, no. 4 (1996): 863-894.
dimension of political communication as members of Tudor society passed them amongst each other and publically discussed them. With this shift in audience, Bibles added an unintended and uncontrolled aspect of religious communication instead of solely supporting royal intent. The full effect of this discourse would become evident in Edward VI’s reign.

**Removal and Replacement**

In addition to introducing new devotional materials, Henry VIII also depended on the removal of Catholic liturgical items to create a new identity. This stage was needed to promote new messages of power through Protestant items. In this political approach to culture, the Bible remained a critical vehicle from both a literal and visual standpoint.

Within this removal and replacement program, the Bible both supplied Henry VIII with an avenue to construct and disseminate his new religious position and, eventually, became a Godly image of devotion to fill gaps from Catholic devotional objects. Reformation church injunctions represent this focus on the need to remove Catholic imagery as well as replace it with regulated cultural vehicles. In these fairly uniform sources a pattern was created that followed mandates to remove internal Catholic Church objects with discussion of the “Pater noster, the articles of our fayth, and the tenne commandments.”

In some injunctions whether or not the laity had “recanted” images was also immediately listed before the requirement that every church have at least one “book.” The layout in these directives demonstrated laity attachments to devotional objects. Substitution of text for Catholic images represented an appropriation of

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150 Church of England, *Injunctions given by the auctoritie of the kinges highnes to clerge of his realme*, 1538, npg.
151 Henry VIII, *articles to be enquyred of in the kynges maiesties visitacion*, 1547, A.i – B.i.
previous religious meanings into a Protestant textual system. The correlation between the rise in image removal mandates and the rise in references to Bibles and other religious texts represents a shift in the understanding of imagery that was fully realized in the print propaganda of Edward VI.

Due to its important position in the new church and monarchy, Henry VIII was concerned with access to the Bible and tried to ensure that every churchgoer received royal messages by mandating churches to publically display Bibles. While Henry VIII was mainly concerned with making Bibles accessible to promote his propaganda, access to Bibles caused their passages to enter Reformation debates from multiple angles.\textsuperscript{152} Bible influence was evident in sermons supporting government works, justifications for rebellion, and in intellectual religious debates arguing the meanings of imagery. This simultaneous use of the Bible by the laity and the king to support drastically divergent points demonstrates a higher possibility of comprehension of royal messages, as multiple classes had to understand basic Bible references to use them as support in their rejection of Henry VIII’s claims. While the issue of positive versus negative response is not a central focus of this study, the range of lay responses indicates both a fairly strong availability to receive royal messages and a fairly strong likelihood of comprehension. Therefore, negative and positive responses also offer important research for questions of intent. Treatises record important information about these multiple uses of the Bible, both those Henry VIII intended and authorized and those created by the Tudor laity, and the debates over royal alterations to Catholic traditions.\textsuperscript{153} These treatises discussed the “book” as a devotional icon to replace previous

\textsuperscript{152} Through these official authorized versions of the Bible, availability increased to the point that some historians associate the English Bible with the beginnings of English nationalism. See: Collinson, “Biblical Rhetoric,” 15-45.

\textsuperscript{153} Ex: Bucer, \textit{A treatise declaring and showing that images are not to be suffered in churches}, 1535, npg.; Nicholas Sander, \textit{A treatise of the images of Christ and his saints...} (1567), in (EEBO),
religious imagery, showing an understanding of Henry VIII’s goals. In his treatise, Bucer claimed:

“[l]et us therefore have ymages not of stone, not of wood, not graven, or cast in any moule…but let us rather consyder bestye the worde of god: let us occupye and busye ourselves in it bothe night and daye.”

Latimer’s language also suggested understanding of an attempted replacement program in his call to alleviate superstition by having the laity “fed with worde and sacraments.” These treatises not only mentioned a rising rate of Bibles in churches or lay religious rituals, but actively compared them to previous imagery and argued their effectiveness to fill this role. These sources expanded the monarch’s message further into society as treatises were often used in sermons, especially with noted preachers like Latimer. Also, Parliament records for Edwardian England claim these religious issues were often discussed in public gathering places in more developed towns.

Visual communication of religious power in the Church environment encountered many obstacles. The first was an existing religious structure based on imagery that spoke to Rome and the Pope’s place in the religious hierarchy. The second, perhaps less anticipated, problem was the loss of control of new cultural vehicles intended to promote monarchial superiority. Evidence that these sources were used to support contradictory messages is seen in treatises such as More’s, which used the Bible to support the imagery it was meant to replace, and in use of Bible


154 Bucer, *A treatise declaring and showing that images are not to be suffered in churches*, 1535, npg.
156 England and Wales, *All such proclamations as have been sette further by the kinges maiestie…* [1551], Aiii.
passages to support rebellions against the monarch’s new identity.\textsuperscript{157} Henry VIII realized the danger in letting the linchpin of his new definition of monarchy fall prey to multiple interpretations and attempted to rein in on this issue by ordering works explaining texts’ proper usage.\textsuperscript{158} This importance of the Bible is evident in publications Henry VIII ordered to explain proper interpretations of holy texts to remove religious abuses:

Your hyghnes commaunded us nowe of late, to assemble oure selves togyther, and upon the diligent serche and perusing of Holy Scripture, to sette forth a playne and sincere doctrine concerning the hole sum of all those thynges, which apperayne unto the profession of a Christen man, that by the same al errours, doutes, superstitions, and abuses might be suppressed, removed, and utterly taken away.\textsuperscript{159}

This need to control the Bible and create uniform meaning illustrates that Henry VIII meant for the Bible to be a political cultural vehicle and that he clearly intended it to convey a specific understanding. This concept is critical to both prove the official English Bible was a political tool and that the monarchy saw it as a significant point of Reformation propaganda. The order to disseminate these clarifications represents Henry VIII’s attempts to remove Catholic doctrine and maintain control over the Bible as a tool of political discourse. Therefore Henry VIII understood the need to control reception and comprehension of his messages as an important aspect of effectively displaying and communicating propaganda.

\textsuperscript{157} More, \textit{A dialoge of syr Thomas More knyghte...Wherein be treated dyvers maters, as of the veneration [and] worship of ymages [and] relyques...}, 1529.

\textsuperscript{158} The institution of a Christan man..., 1537, A.ii.

\textsuperscript{159} Ibid.
New Identities in Imagery: Bible engravings and portraiture

While Bibles were important for their propaganda in passages, the engravings were Henry VIII’s main focus. The choice of Holbein (often termed the main artist of the English Renaissance) for many of the Biblical engravings and the overall level of detail in these images proves their perceived importance in refashioning identity. ¹⁶⁰ Using engravings such as the Coverdale title page to depict Henry VIII as head of the Anglican Church and place him in a Bible distribution position, Henry VIII’s artists depicted royal dominance over England in a source that was an object of daily devotion.¹⁶¹ The concern over interpretation reveals these sources received popular use outside of the Church and made extra text to clarify messages critical. The political message of this control was further emphasized through depicting high church officials, represented by the bishops, submitting to Henry VIII.¹⁶² These illustrations create a hierarchal diagram of religious authority that equated the Bible with religion as a whole.

Although the increase in the importance of books has been discussed, more historical research is needed to understand the importance of the book as a symbol of religion and the rise in book depiction with Reformation ideology. This new focus on the book is evident in portraiture displaying the “sword and book” motif. While historians have explained the “sword and book” motif as a combination of religious and secular symbols of power in Henrician portraiture, the fact that this motif functioned as a step in Henry’s attempt to fill religious voids

¹⁶² Ex.: Coverdale, trans., Biblia the Bible...1535, cover illustration.
from image removal has yet to be discussed. Therefore, a broader understanding of both these symbols is needed to understand their importance in creating a new royal narrative and representation of social and religious authority. With the Act of Supremacy melding political and religious power for the first time, too much attention has been allotted to the spiritual aspect of the sword.\textsuperscript{163} Both the phallic sword and the dagger were employed in state portraiture as a sign of the joining of religious and secular authority and as a tool to show virility. A comparison of Holbein’s portrait \textit{The Whitehall Mural} (1537) to William Scrot’s \textit{Edward VI} (c. 1547) demonstrates both employed the same motif of a dagger with the hilt pointing toward a prominent codpiece.\textsuperscript{164} While the laity did not have the same access to state portraiture as other visual sources and the reception for these paintings was lower, these sources still carried significant messages of propaganda. Also, they played a critical role in Henry VIII’s cultural intent to construct a new idealized image of royal power to be digested and reconstructed. Court portraiture was a critical form of political propaganda for its communication with upperclassmen and nobility, who would be in a position of power to record and further perpetuate these messages and images. Jennifer Loach supports this importance of reaching the upper class in her

\textsuperscript{163} The “sword and book motif” has undergone numerous historiographical interpretations. The main accepted interpretations include: Susan Foister’s claim they symbolize “war and peace,” Louis Montrose’s claim the book represents growing humanism, and John N. King’s claim they were power symbols of religious and secular authority. Despite King’s interpretation, the sword as it relates to secular power and masculinity remains largely underrated and will therefore form the main part of this analysis. For further discussion, see: Foister, \textit{Holbein in England}, 162; Montrose, \textit{The Subject of Elizabeth}, 32-33; King, “Henry VIII as David,” 79.

research on coronations. Loach claims that even with more public forms of propaganda, like coronations, the main royal focus group in visual discourse was the upper class and nobility.\textsuperscript{165}

Possible meanings of the “book” in state portraiture also need deeper consideration. Religious text was the main vehicle of Protestantism and Henry VIII manipulated it through control of publishing. Visually, Henry VIII started incorporating this new power of text by promoting books in his portraiture as positive symbols of authority. Depicting a monarch with a book not only communicated a high intellectual level and humanist education (the standard historiographical interpretation) but more significantly allowed the monarch to connect with the major symbol of God’s authority and religious power.\textsuperscript{166} By placing his body close to books and showing his family interacting with text, Henry VIII absorbed the new power attributed to books as religious vessels into his body and identity. The fact that the book was a visual device to represent religious power is further evident in the quote on the \textit{Coverdale} title page: “I am not ashamed of the Gospell of Christ for it is the power of god.”\textsuperscript{167} Therefore, the power of Henry VIII’s connection to Bible dissemination gave him a position comparable to the Pope’s in previous imagery-based belief systems. \textit{The Great Bible} Title Page shared a similar motif and offered another dialogue of books’ power. In this engraving, the constant dissemination of identical volumes labeled “Verbum Dei,” or “Word of God” down the page originating with a heavenly deity and Henry VIII represented the monarch as the foremost earthly proprietor of religious truth.\textsuperscript{168} This depiction of the book filled several of Henry’s specific power and reform

\textsuperscript{167} Hans Holbein the Younger, \textit{Coverdale Title Page}, in \textit{Biblia, the Bible}, trans. and ed. Coverdale, 1535.
\textsuperscript{168} \textit{The Great Bible Title Page: Henry VIII Presenting His Bible to the Archbishop Cranmer and Thomas Cromwell}, in \textit{The Great Bible}, 1539, in Christopher Lloyd and Simon Thurley, \textit{Henry VIII}.
desires as it promoted the concept of a textually-based religion, supplied imagery for religious meditation, and placed Henry VIII in control of the Church.

In secular portraiture, the importance of the book as an icon of power is evident in works such as the aforementioned *Henry VIII* by Jan Van Cleve.\textsuperscript{169} This portraiture was critical for transforming religious text not only into propaganda of an empowered religious king, but also of a divinely-approved Reformation. In this portrait, the indirect claim that God had placed the Reformation mission specifically in Henry VIII’s hands constructed a scenario in which the Lord sanctioned the break with Rome. The prominence of text as a symbol of religious truth tied to the Tudor bloodline is further evident in William Scrot’s *Elizabeth I when Princess* (1547). The book in this portrait appears prominently in two locations.\textsuperscript{170} A larger, open book sitting on a background pedestal denotes truth already distributed, which accounted for Henry VIII’s reign. In the foreground, Elizabeth holds a smaller, closed book with a finger inserted in the pages. This book held over Elizabeth’s womb, a place of significant meaning according to Louis Montrose, represented Elizabeth as a future carrier of the Tudor bloodline and religious truth.\textsuperscript{171} Henry VIII’s transformation of art into political propaganda to control both his and his children’s identities demonstrated Henry VIII’s intent to promote the Tudor line.

\textsuperscript{169} Joos Van Cleve, *Henry VIII*, c. 1535.
\textsuperscript{171} Although Louis Montrose’s analysis of the womb is mainly limited to fashion symbolism, the placing of the book in this area could display similar connotations. See: Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*, 147.
Conclusions: The death of Henry VIII and the birth of Edwardian England

To fully understand the important historical impact of Reformation imagery, transitions in political character from Henry VIII to Edward VI need to be examined in correlation with imagery shifts. Often, historians analyze the Reformation as a singular, ongoing event lasting from Henry VIII’s break with Rome to the death of Edward VI. While this is technically not incorrect, as this entire period is one of reform, this approach misses key differences in reactions to imagery and text. Henry VIII’s reactions to images show his main concern was to create a new definition of the monarchy without eradicating English culture or furthering rebellion. Edward VI’s main issues shifted to concerns of how to demonstrate a government appropriately balanced between kingly and councilor rule while creating a stronger Reformation. Henry VIII’s adult kingship and ruling experience afforded him the option of slower reform that maintained several Catholic elements. Edward VI did not inherit a similar luxury as his youth and inexperience formed a desperate need to prove his ultimate authority, restore confidence, and remove papal competition. These variations between political pressures and the monarchs’ individual religious predilections generated significant alterations in the construction and presentation of royalty. The visual and printed construction of Edward VI’s identity reflects these changes and further attest to the importance of personal and political motivations when manipulating art and print as imperative political vehicles.
CHAPTER THREE: RELIGIOUS REFORM AND THE ROYAL REPRESENTATION OF EDWARD VI

Introduction: The new reform of Edward VI

Henry VIII set the ground for a new representation, but Edward VI’s reign offers an equally rich and complex approach to cultural questions of constructing kingly identity. Unfortunately, Edward’s youthful kingship and short reign obscures the full role of the “boy king” and his administration in reconstructing Crown identity. Historians have addressed the significant impact of Edward’s rule, including his strengthening of theological change, and its multiple limitations, including the king’s youth and balance of power, through differing interpretations. The first approach addressed Edward VI’s reign as a period overshadowed by the events of Henry VIII’s and Elizabeth I’s reigns; in this view historians relegate Edward to a mid-Tudor Protestant bridge. This analysis overlooks the changes that the Edwardian council made to alter the direction of religion and change the course of the English Reformation through mandates like the Book of Common Prayer (1549). The second approach discusses heavier royal responsibility in restructuring religion and a greater attention to enforcing unified Protestantism. This approach is more acknowledging of Edwardian contributions, but it still remains limited in studying Edward’s kingship. Overall, these historians still postulate that Edward VI was eclipsed

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172 For an example of an Edwardian analysis conducted through this approach, see: Jennifer Loach, ed. by George Bernard and Perry Williams, Edward VI (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).
by an experienced, power-hungry council, especially Lord Somerset. However, recent accounts are beginning to give Edward VI more autonomy. Stephen Alford’s *Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI* is one example arguing for a higher degree of royal autonomy and a more balanced interpretation of political goals. Alford claims that Edward maintained a balance of power with the council and was a capable king. Although Alford’s work represents the more current historiographical interpretation of royal power in Edwardian England, historians continue to debate Edward’s direct involvement. Diarmaid MacCulloch’s *The boy king: Edward VI and the Protestant Reformation* and Jennifer Loach’s *Edward VI* exemplify this debate, presenting opposite views of Edward VI despite a similar publication date. In his work, MacCulloch claims Edward VI established a different understanding of the king’s role due to his inability to grow up under and absorb his father’s governing style; also, he suggests that, though uneven, Edward VI was able to maintain influence in different ways at different stages. When Edward was younger he maintained control mainly through promising his favor to different people or factions to create his desired balance of religious power; later, when he turned 13 in 1550, “the first sure signs of independent initiative began.” Loach offers a totally different understanding of the balance of power by using Henry VIII’s 1536 Succession Act, which provided for a ruling council in the case of a minor, and a 1546 act establishing the same council’s aid in government duties, to describe a government in which “Edward was obviously too young to rule himself and the history of his reign must therefore be the history of those who ruled in his name.”

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As these works demonstrate, Crown control represents a major difference in historical interpretations of Edward’s reign. Despite this difference, however, historians often describe similar government and representational goals. In his account of Edward’s ruling autonomy, Alford discusses a monarch that is attempting to eradicate further ties to Catholicism and recognizes that print is the most appropriate form of communication.\footnote{Alford, \textit{Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI}, 1-10.} Although she analyzes the period as a more council-influenced government, Loach’s discussion of Somerset’s desire to further reform and promote printed material by dissolving the remaining chantries and erecting grammar schools in their stead is aligned with the personal goals Alford connects with Edward VI.\footnote{Loach, \textit{Edward VI}, 41.} Therefore, historians primarily agree on the character of the administration despite disagreeing on the figure propelling it. Since the primary concern of this analysis is how politics were communicated via visual and print media, the overall message and how it was culturally represented is a more central focus than the debate about its origins. The approach used here is more balanced and draws from both secondary studies attributing more autonomy to Edward VI and primary sources attributed to Edward to argue that he recognized the degree of Somerset’s power and believed in his ability to regain control if necessary. This represents a Crown administration with a heavy council influence but also a controlling Tudor king.\footnote{A proclamation set forth by the state and bodie of the kinges maiesties counysale...conteinyng the very trouth of the Duke of Somersets evil government, (London: R. Grafton, 1549), in (EEBO), http://eebo.chadwyck.com.ezproxy.lib.ucf.edu/search/full_rec?SOURCE=pgimages.cfg&ACTION=ByID&ID=99853305&FILE=../session/1268735745_17837&SEARCHSCREEN=CITATIONS&VID=18678&PAGENO=1&ZOOM=&VIEWPORT=&SEARCHCONFIG=var_spell.cfg&DISPLAY=AUTHOR&HIGHLIGHT_KEYWORD= , Accessed March 8, 2008.}
Edward VI: Questions surrounding representations of the young king and his court

Historians’ discussions of Edward’s ruling autonomy affect cultural arguments in two key ways. First, findings that “Edward was shaped and educated from the start for adult kingship, and [that] Edwardian politics evolved to accommodate a maturing and able young king” provide Edward VI with an agency critical to discuss his role in purposeful representation.¹⁷⁹ Second, acknowledgements that Edward’s reign overall represented a steady period with government balance reinforces the argument for royally-controlled visual discourse since the English Crown would have been stable enough to allow the king to address representational issues.¹⁸⁰ The argument that the figure of the king was restructured in literature and art to fit the specific demands of this period still considers the vital influence of the Lord Protector Somerset, but historical support of a king knowledgeable of his power and capable of employing it demonstrates a monarch who would add input regarding his public representation. Evidence that Edward VI and his administration considered cultural communication significant to represent power is seen in Edwardian church injunctions discussing appropriate imagery and in Edward VI’s writings battling papal propaganda.¹⁸¹

Historiography of this period continues to expand but studying Edwardian imagery still poses unique problems; the most significant is the availability of imagery. Overall, there are fewer extant representations of Edward and historians have questioned the validity of some

¹⁷⁹ Alford, Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI, 2.
¹⁸⁰ Ibid.
¹⁸¹ Anthony Sparrow, A collection of articles, injunctions, canons, orders, ordinances, and constitutions ecclesiastical, with other publick records…, 1671 and Edward VI, K. Edward the Vith his own arguments against the Pope’s supremacy…, reprinted 1682.
examples due to inaccurate dating, such as the Elizabethan portrait *Edward VI and the Pope.*

Although removing discussions of portraiture with Henrician and Elizabethan production dates limits the amount of visual sources, it attains a more accurate reading of Edward VI and his council’s representational goals by avoiding examining Edward through the political intent and perspective of other governing bodies.

An analysis of images from Edward’s reign combined with a closer look at text, which was becoming more important as a cultural vehicle, illustrates the important ways that Edward VI utilized power inherited from his father and invented a new identity to fit the context of his reign. This changing understanding of propaganda indicates the general lack of surviving portraiture needs more historical consideration. If the scant survival of imagery examples is not primarily the outcome of a short reign, a youthful king, or a tumultuous era, then it reflects a royal or council choice. Therefore, the smaller quantity of images reveals as much about how Edward intended to portray the position of the monarchy as the plethora of Henrician paintings and engravings did Henry VIII’s desires and motives. Edward’s reign experienced a decline in general illustrations within public sources such as books of hours, primers, and calendars as well as formal court portraiture. A general leveling off both in number and in illustrations of books of hours and primers does not represent a long term trend, however, as illustrated texts were still

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183 Due to the limits of the EEBO database and the short reign of Edward VI, there is a lack of sufficient books of hours to analyze statistically.
prominent in Elizabeth I’s reign. This chapter argues that the explanation for this change in image availability throughout Edward VI’s reign directly relates to Edward’s differing understanding of print and its importance in displaying his identity as well as personal desire for heavier religious reform.

While it is true that Edward VI’s reign represents more than a period of inept rule, corrupt influence, and general turmoil, it was not without its pressures. Edward and his council’s letters and Parliament records reveal these issues by indicating concern of the power attained by the Duke of Somerset and by discussing issues with unauthorized texts criticizing Somerset and the balance of power. The extent to which these criticisms were occurring, and the severity of their impact, is evident in Parliament announcements offering a reward of “100 Crounes” to any person who brought forth a publisher tried and found guilty of producing critical accounts of the government. The existence of these critiques and the punishment levied against them represent important messages of concern. First, they demonstrate that Edward VI and his council saw print as an influential cultural medium and desired to control it to perpetuate their own perception of an ideal Crown. Such a tight grip over the publishing trade and print increased the advantages of using text as a vehicle to construct and disseminate an approved identity. This element of control was extended through attempts to regulate foreign texts and enforce restrictions on the publishing and distribution of print not authorized by the

184 Duffy, Marking the Hours.
185 Alford, Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI, 1-5.
186 A proclamation set forth by the state and bodie of the kinges maiesties counysale...conteining the very trouth of the Duke of Somertons evil government, 1549.
Secondly, the administration’s attack against unauthorized texts represents that there was enough negative accounts to generate an administrative hardship and a negative ruling identity of Edward VI. These printed sources attempting to disseminate an unauthorized royal identity combined with popular rejection of Edward’s anti-imagery politics demonstrate the complexity of reception and comprehension in his cultural and political discourse.  

Similar to the riots and rebellions of Henrician England, print discussing government issues reveal that Tudor laymen did not blindly receive and accept the positive religious identity Edward VI tried to promote. A mixed response to Edward’s initiatives is imperative for understanding that this society was capable of comprehending the king’s representational goals and rejecting them; this is especially evident in Edward’s discussion of the laity’s “contention” over new imagery laws. Royal actions taken against these works also show intent to use print as propaganda to circulate desired identities of religious power. By removing cultural sources opposing their desired political messages and isolating their messages as the only source of representation, both kings hoped to create an ideal identity that would trickle down throughout the realm.

The strict legislation on publishing illustrates that text was a prominent avenue of cultural communication in Edward VI’s reign. Edward’s predilection to communicate his desired image through text allowed him to transmit desired political messages while still furthering attacks on idolatry. Although text in the form of the Bible was part of Henry VIII’s religious reform, he did not rely mainly on print propaganda. By Edward VI’s reign text was also the preferred

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188 England and Wales, *All such proclamacions as have been sette furthe by the kinges maiestie…*, 1551.
190 Ibid.
191 Ibid.
cultural medium for reasons of reception. While studies on popular literature, such as ballads and books of hours, support rising literacy rates across the Tudor era, Edward’s reign experienced elevated literary prowess.\textsuperscript{192} Parliament attested to the social element of print by discussing issues with dissenting texts, which made religion and theological doctrine a topic of general conversation: “There hath been news of late diverse leud and light tales told, whispered, and secretly spread abrode by uncertain authors in Markettes, faires, and Alehouses…of innovacions and chaunges in religion and ceremonies of the Churche.”\textsuperscript{193} Parliament’s concern that these lay theological debates could undermine the King’s reform demonstrates that a large portion of society regularly engaged in religious debates. Thus, themes in religious texts were not above the peoples’ basic comprehension skills. Furthermore, Edwardian England witnessed an increase in writers who mixed serious dogmatic debates into popular writing genres, such as the premiere popular writer William Baldwin. Inclusion of religious themes in Baldwin’s work helped ensure that there was a “popular-reading consciousness which fused literature, religion, and secular morality.”\textsuperscript{194}

While certain printed messages were attacked and removed, Edward’s reign saw an overall greater multitude of approved texts and sermons. In this respect, his use of print culture to create propaganda was similar to Henry VIII’s use of imagery. These connections are further evident in the use of similar royal symbolism, such as texts depicting Edward’s reign and religious reform by referencing the “sword and book” motif.\textsuperscript{195} This shift to portraying messages

\textsuperscript{192} Alford, Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI, 1-10.
\textsuperscript{193} England and Wales, All such proclamations as have been sette further by the kinges maiestie..., 1551, A.iii.
\textsuperscript{195} Hugh Latimer, The fyrste sermon of Mayster Hughe Latimer, whiche he preached before the Kinges Maiestie wythin his graces palayce at Westminster (March 8, 1549). A. vi. – A. vii., in (EEBO),
of power through print is significant not only for understanding the different monarchs’ attitudes toward imagery, but also for understanding transformations in identity and propaganda. Both the way Edward VI wanted to be represented and the changing religious direction of his reign were suited to a print archetype. Henry VIII’s reliance on maintaining imagery traditions rested with his concerns in creating a drastic new identity and redefining royal boundaries without full eradication of Catholic culture. Edward VI drastically altered this goal with his desire to create a new, more Protestant ideological base. In addition to these preferences there was an important, differing context for Edward’s reign since he took the throne when the seeds of transformation, in the shape of a political and religious revolution, had already been sown. Though still debated, in Edward’s reign the Crown had been identified as a secular and religious title and the break with Rome and Catholicism had been temporarily cemented. This had a great effect on Edward’s reform as the social and cultural ramifications of Henry VIII’s Reformation altered the avenues most advantageous for Edward VI’s communication with his subjects. Past his death, Henry VIII’s choice of propaganda continued to affect the English commonwealth and the general population, who now understood how to interpret the Bible. The metamorphosis of the Bible into a religious and cultural vehicle used to judge the king and hold him to the people’s standards reveals the unintended consequences of Henry VIII’s reform. The reverse flow of political communication from general society to the king demonstrates how much reception and response can influence the manner with which monarchs decided to represent themselves. While Edward’s position as the first monarch governing a society with deep Bible knowledge affected his


196 Alford, Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI, 2, 32-33.
political communication, Edward’s own desires also played a formative role.\textsuperscript{197} Edward VI’s religious goals differed from those of his father, which led to a differing reaction to imagery and a stricter stance toward removal of all Catholic items.\textsuperscript{198} These changes combined with differing religious goals further enhanced the role of text as the preferred cultural medium and formed a new England where public concerns of idolatry were now enhanced, making it not art but “print that put kingship in the public domain.”\textsuperscript{199}

\textit{Edward in Art: Continuity and change}

Print remained the preferred method of mass communication in Edward VI’s reign, but this did not translate into a rejection of all imagery. In some ways Edward VI and his council broke new ground in the use of imagery. Edward was not adverse to portraiture (unlike his Catholic sister Mary I) and some important examples exist from his reign, including his coronation.\textsuperscript{200} Edward understood that the coronation was not only a political tradition, but a performance in which the power of the monarchy was acquired. Edward chose to emphasize this ceremony more than any other English monarch by creating a new form of propaganda with the coronation medal. The break with precedent to commission this medal depicts the importance of royal intent and different political atmospheres in how monarchs addressed imagery and created propaganda. For Edward VI, the coronation was not only a necessary performance to emphasize power and readiness for a kingly status, but was also a performance that fit with his religious

\textsuperscript{199} Alford, \textit{Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI}, 33.
\textsuperscript{200} Howarth, \textit{Images of Rule}, 25, 100, 234.
desires. Even before the Reformation coronations were always in contention with Catholic Church authority for “[conveying] certain magical properties to the person of the ruler” and “[conferring] a sacred status to the king, his body, and the Crown.” 201 These ceremonies were used in earlier reigns to address the balance of kings’ secular and sacred power and monarchs constantly manipulated them to renegotiate their social bond with Rome. Therefore, the importance of these symbols was heightened in reigns of monarchs trying to break with established ties and assume unprecedented religious control. Edward VI’s use of the first coronation medal demonstrates the significance of this event as propaganda for his reign. Edward desired to preserve this event in social memory, so the start of his reign could be associated with an example of how he wanted the people to perceive him and his throne. The coronation medal allowed him to show and distribute propaganda of a healthy, empowered king in effort to construct that as his identity. 202 Image conventions such as armor and an unsheathed sword in the medal’s portrait created a strong statement of a spiritual warrior king. Also, the symbols offered a clear statement of power for both the social and religious realms; this is mostly evident in the distinct separate crowns joined with a rose to symbolize the Tudor kingship and its secular and ecclesiastical position of power. 203 Edward’s break with precedent to commission the first coronation medal confirms that he saw this item as having a significant function and that he understood the importance of maintaining some imagery to create a more valid statement of kingly power. This understanding of including at least some forms of imagery is also evident in his use of state portraiture.

201 Zaller, “Breaking the Vessels,” 758.
203 Ibid.
Building on Henrician conventions, most known representations of Edward VI feature the king’s body in a straight-on, forward-facing pose with voluminous clothing, and a sword or dagger in one hand held near the lower torso. Edward VI’s adoption of kingly representation from Henry VIII’s rule, in contrast with his other deviations of religious reform and his transition to a print-based culture, reveal the importance of royal intent behind altering, maintaining, and removing cultural traditions. Since Edward VI altered other aspects of Tudor authority, there was specific intent behind his maintenance of these standards. Building on these visual prototypes would have been beneficial because this visual language was established as a successful mode of communicating power and authority. Also, retaining Henry’s representation and symbols of power granted Edward a direct parallel to his father’s identity and reign, allowing him to culturally inherit his father’s power and keep a recognized visual representation. An example of Edward VI’s intent to maintain an established visual language is evident in William Scrot’s Edward VI (1550). Edward’s posture in this portrait still clearly displays an attempt to capture the volume and weight exhibited in Henry VIII’s representation. Also, this image relied on symbols of hereditary rule and power from Henry’s reign, such as a sword or dagger to display male masculine rule. This portrait, similar to Holbein’s The Whitehall Mural (c. 1536), included a sword with the hilt pointing toward the king’s codpiece. The continued attraction to the sword and this placement despite alternate goals, explains that the sword became a more

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205 Historians’ theories that the coronation has had a long history in the contention of power between the Crown and the Catholic Church explain why this ceremony seemed more accessible and promotable to Edward. See: Zaller, “Breaking the Vessels,” 757-759.

206 William Scrots, Edward VI, c. 1550.

207 Ibid.

208 Hans Holbein, Whitehall Mural, 1537; Hans Holbein the Younger, Henry VIII and the Barber-Surgeons, c. 1543; William Scrots, Edward VI, c. 1550.
powerful symbol of the Tudor dynasty than a symbol of specific religious change or leadership.\textsuperscript{209}

The similarities and differences in the way Edward VI addressed religious images also proves that he understood the negative impact certain basic symbolic representations, such as Catholic Church interiors, could represent. While Edward created some continuity with Henry VIII’s Reformation by advocating removal, his intent to launch a stronger attack on imagery is clear. Unlike Henry VIII, who tried to remove these images and set up both text and image in their place, Edward VI attempted a removal and replacement program that would allow him to take away the power from these dangerous items and imbue new, Protestant symbols with importance. Thus Henry VIII was more concerned with simply removing papal links and creating new avenues of identity, whereas constructing and enforcing a proper Protestant Church environment was more important to Edward VI.\textsuperscript{210} Edward’s reform beyond iconoclasm and promotion of the Bible to construct a new Church environment, demonstrated that he believed in lay comprehension and desired to transfer their devotions to texts and Protestant religion.

Edward’s construction of religious change used the same removal and replacement ideology as Henry VIII’s reform, but his intent of furthering Protestant values changed the ultimate nature and outcome. This is most evident in Edward’s substitute of tables for altars. In these injunctions, Edward mentioned altars, compared altars to tables in effectiveness, and then concluded that tables were better suited to fill the original purpose of altars’ construction.\textsuperscript{211} This demonstrates Edward’s goal to remove Catholic connections in public worship areas. The removal of altars

\textsuperscript{209} Edward’s emphasis of the sword in his coronation portrait (coronation medal 1547), which is meant to commemorate the start of his rule as a Tudor monarch, further displays the secular connotations of this symbol.

\textsuperscript{210} Edward VI, \textit{injunctions geven...,} 1547, a.iii.

\textsuperscript{211} Ibid.
and the inclusion of tables was a significant action for moving the country further towards religious reform since the table was the necessary Protestant vehicle for communion and needed to be the centerpiece of both Protestant architecture and practice.\textsuperscript{212} The specific mention of a table in place of an altar demonstrates the different intent each monarch held in their relationship to imagery and reform. Henry VIII’s injunctions detail an attempt to remove these images in order to enhance the prominent placement of the Bible in the Church so that he could communicate with England through approved translations and engravings.\textsuperscript{213} Edward VI’s focus on including a table properly, however, depicts an enhanced understanding of the practices and meanings attached to old religious items and a desire to transfer devotion to a new religious program.

Edward VI’s different religious goals and this different use of imagery as an expression of identity is further evident in his recognition that these images held both personal and communal significance and his attempt to reduce dependence on them in both the public and private sector:

\begin{quote}
Also, that they shall take away, utterly extincte and destroye all shrines coveringe of Shrines…rolles of ware pictures, payntynges, and all other monumentes of fayned miracles, pilgrimages, idolatry, and supersticion: so that there remain no memory of the same, in walles, gallies, windows, or elsewhere, within their churches or houses.\textsuperscript{214}
\end{quote}

This specific discussion of images in both private and public spheres indicates Edward VI’s desire for a more sweeping reform and illuminates his belief that the laity’s connection to these images went beyond ritualistic church practices and formed a worldview. This reaction to imagery compared to earlier perceptions is evident in Henrician injunctions’ sole focus on

\textsuperscript{212} Elizabeth Watson, “Old King, New King, Eclipsed Sons and Abandoned Altars in ‘Hamlet,’” \textit{The SixteenthCentury Journal} 35, no. 2 (Summer 2004), 475-491.
\textsuperscript{213} Henry VIII, \textit{articles to be enquyred of in the kynges maiesties visitacion}, 1547, A.i – B.i.
\textsuperscript{214} Edward VI, \textit{injunctions geven…}, 1547, a.iii.
church interiors.\textsuperscript{215} Henry VIII wanted to remove only those images and meanings directly in conflict with his new political religious claims in order to cement his authority; for Edward VI, there was an additional goal of furthering Protestantism by removing all vestiges of Catholicism.

Copies of Edward’s personal communications with Church leaders further demonstrated a desire to supplant previous images. The purpose of this approach was twofold. First, it allowed the Church to create powerful meanings. Second, it revealed the images’ detrimental possibilities through the claim removing them “[fled] all old and erroneous supersticions.”\textsuperscript{216} Additional treatises discussed the continued power of images in Edwardian society and the rituals bestowed on them in religious practice, such as giving thanks for a miracle:

\begin{quote}
how many men and wome[n] have bene, when they have bene in daunger, some of drowninge, some of burninge, some of breakyng their neckes,…that yf god his goodnes preserved them and ralyed them up agayn, wold shortly after get them to one ydol or other (to whom thei had vowed their pilgrimage and offeringe) as some to the ladie of Walsyngham, some to the ladye of Grace, or unto some other foule idol. And whereas they shoulde have geven glorie and praise to the one everlasting god, which alone delyvered the’ they have kneeled downe in the sighof the whole multitude and thanked a dome ymage, worshypping and offering thieridolatrous sacrifyncing unto it…\textsuperscript{217}
\end{quote}

Continued worship and paid devotions to images demonstrated the “contention” in “the minds of the simple and ignorant” that Edward VI discussed in his letter to Nicholas Ridley Bishop.\textsuperscript{218}

This continued devotion and Edward’s complaints of “contention” shows that propaganda was not always supported or positively received. However, this rejection does indicate a fairly consistent level of both reception and comprehension of Edward’s goals and underlying motivations. Also, Edward’s description of the subjects holding these opposing views as being

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{215} Henry VIII, \textit{Injunctions given by the auctoritie of the kinges highnes to clerge of his realme}, 1538.
\textsuperscript{216} Edward VI, \textit{A Copie off a letter sent to preachers}, 1548, x.v.
\textsuperscript{217} Calvin Jean, \textit{The mynde of the godly and excellent lerned man M. John Calayne…}, 1548, X.v. –A.vi.
\textsuperscript{218} Edward VI, \textit{A Copy off a letter sent to preachers}, A.vi.
\end{flushright}
uneducated indicates that some rejection to his royal propaganda was possibly occurring from the lower classes, which represents that multiple classes rejected messages of royal propaganda and alterations of traditional culture.\textsuperscript{219} Thus, viewing the monarchs’ creation of a different political identity depending on how they tied themselves to differing levels of reform is critical to understand not only how their desired political and cultural representation affected the whole of English society, but also to understand how different concepts of monarchy were projected in reform. This record of “contention” suggests that the more severe reform methods Edward VI and his council undertook affected the laity’s response to changes. This explains the attempts Edward VI made to punish use of unwanted images and text, and his efforts in his own writings and arguments to refute Catholic propaganda to a greater extent than Henry VIII.\textsuperscript{220}

Also, the papal power and Catholic ties these images represented were of greater danger to Edward VI due to the vulnerability of his reign and the presence of his older Catholic sister, Mary I (1553-1558). Evidence that the Pope understood these weaknesses and tried to capitalize on them is present in the writings and letters of Edward VI not merely promoting Protestantism or denouncing Catholicism, but set up in direct opposition to the Pope’s claims of religious authority in England.\textsuperscript{221} Evidence that there was varying royal intent toward imagery and that Tudor society understood and had access to discussions of these religious messages is evident in primary commentary on the different nature of the Henrician and Edwardian Church and in Shakespeare’s later use of this confusion and multiple religious identities as character models.\textsuperscript{222}

Often credited with supplying cultural commentary on the main issues of English society, literary

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{219} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{220} Edward VI, \textit{K. Edward the VIth his own arguments against the Pope’s supremacy…}, reprinted 1682.
\item \textsuperscript{221} Ibid.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
experts have begun examining the Shakespearean character Hamlet to see how his identity crisis could be a metaphor for the generally tumultuous changes in religion and religious identity of Tudor England. In this play specifically, literary historian Elizabeth Watson claims: “What Shakespeare does is to provide altar replacements throughout the play, punning on their connections.” By initiating this structural change in the English religious climate, Edward VI was able to complete his desired stricter reform. He also attempted through these acts to remove images that held Catholic connotations and simultaneously increase the religious power of the English Crown and remove foreign influence, such as Rome. Therefore, this strategy was an attempt to create propaganda and rewrite the balance of religious power by constructing different church interiors. In addition to showing his desire for a stronger Protestant nation, however, Edward VI’s extra concern for private meanings and worship with these items in his letters also reveals his understanding of a lack of success. Despite the breakdown between the messages sent by the king and societal support, however, this process and its responses illustrate that Edward’s treatment of religious images and reworking of the Church environment created a visual dialogue suitable to display his intent.

Edwardian Texts: Writing the kingship

Edward VI decided to use text by connecting it to the religious and secular authority he wanted to appropriate. This was achieved through both Edward VI and his council’s personal writings and in the authorized messages submitted to the people via religious writings and

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sermons, such as those by Hugh Latimer. These media relied on similar power symbols such as the “sword and book” motif, but created and transmitted them primarily through print and oral delivery. As with this motif in Henry VIII’s portraits, interpretation of these symbols’ meaning is in flux due to each symbol’s multiple religious and secular connotations. In Edward and Henry’s reigns these symbols reflected both areas of power, as the new challenge of Tudor rule was not solely to become head of the Church but the one “supreme head” of a joined Church and State. In the printed version of Hugh Latimer’s sermon for Edward’s reign, which was approved by Edward VI, Latimer notes Edward’s dualistic attachment to the sword as both a secular and spiritual authority. First, Latimer discusses the power of Edward VI and his appointed ministers by connecting them to the sword. Thus Edward’s secular status as the king allowed him to decide and construct a new religious program for the Church including the authority to appoint bishops and a religious council. The sword as a symbol of Edward VI’s kingly right to construct, correct, and eradicate wrong religion is evident in Latimer’s statement connecting Edward to the power of the sword by stating: “The kynge correcteth transgressours wyth the temporall sword.” In this sermon, Latimer also covers the multiple secular and religious powers associated with the “book.” In his sermon, Latimer references the book’s power both specifically and metaphorically. Latimer discusses the power of this symbol specifically through discussing “Christes Book” and metaphorically through encasing the sermon in a discussion of the

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225 Latimer, The fyrste sermon of Mayster Hughe Latimer, whiche he preached before the Kinges Maiestie wythin his graces palayce at Westminster, March 8, 1549, A. vi. – A. vii.
226 Ibid.
intellectual power of books and the heightened importance of teachers. Here, the council and Edward VI are the teachers that this powerful wisdom and religious enlightenment is “borne from.” This created valuable propaganda for Edward VI because it placed his subjects as religiously and intellectually submissive to him and insinuated they should follow and accept his reform since he was “the teacher.” This statement also represents the complex nature and full power of propaganda as the ideal identity being disseminated with this sermon was not only that of the king, but also that of the people and the whole communication process. Thus, Edward VI attempted to use propaganda on a wider scale to try to represent and influence the communication process itself. Latimer’s printed sermons are important primary evidence for this period since print remained a significant religious vehicle and its messages were spread to a diverse audience through preaching at “court, Paul’s Cross, and in [specific] diocese.”

In addition to using figures such as Hugh Latimer to promote desired kingly power and control, Edward’s personal writings also featured religious messages. This topic of wrongful claims to English religion from the Pope shows a battle for justifying Tudor supreme governance. Edward and his council, whom Edward continuously credited in his introductions as having a major influence, strived to portray a strong ruling body capable of ensuring England’s religious welfare. These sources detailed the simultaneous need to constantly assert superiority and counter claims of papal supremacy. Throughout these works, Edward’s main argument against papal religion was that St. Peter and Rome were not the origins of the Church or Christ’s

227 Ibid.
228 Ibid.
230 Edward VI, *K. Edward the Vth his own arguments against the Pope’s supremacy…*, reprinted 1682.
Throughout his anti-papal letters, Edward quoted numerous Bible verses. This use of Bible verses to ground his arguments of royal superiority, served as a self-regulating promotion of a religious monarchy since he constantly stressed the severe truth and holiness of these texts in his church injunctions.

Edward’s careful attention to crafting religious power is further evident in his management of political issues such as riot and rebellion. Edward VI’s use of religious language as justification against rebel claims furthered his effort to blend authority in the religious and secular realms. Use of religious language as justification of his position allowed Edward VI to reemphasize his religious leadership. Edward’s response denouncing the Devonshire rebels of 1549 illustrates this use of religious language to address a secular incident and label all groups in a defined positive or negative position according to a religious hierarchy. This analogy described the rebels as social ills representative of the devil’s attempt “to encrease hys swarme” and assigned the king a role as God’s representative, which enhanced his righteous position and just religious majesty. This analogy also commented on the issue of class in rebellions, by depicting bishops and gentlemen who participated as aiding the devil in “[using] the name of God, and of the kyng…” Thus, the king is seen as a natural religious figure while previous religious figures, such as bishops, are seen as less important. This elevated, religiously-positive role of Edward and his administration also justified Edward’s severe punishment of people involved in riots. In a period of continued, increased revolution against an administration run by a seemingly young and inexperienced ruler, heavy enforcement was critical. Rebellions were

231 Ibid.
233 Ibid.
answered with a gradient of consequences including loss of property, loss of favor, arrest, and death. Edward and his administration accompanied these policies with discussions of the need to support God’s program, which became synonymous with royal goals as the “kinges maiestie moved of a Godly zeale and love.” Since this wording was used in a proclamation, this particular comparison of a heavenly and secular administration working in perfect harmony would have been disseminated through society via posting, print, and oral recitation.

Conclusion: Edward VI and creating identity through cultural communication

Edward VI and his council created a strong administration that possessed clear visual and non-visual representational goals. Edward VI continued in his father’s reforming footsteps but also created his own unique regal stride. His furthering of anti-Catholic values and propaganda would lead to one of the most violent periods in England under the reign of Mary I. Mary attempted to return England to the Catholic Church at all costs, including implementing a strict purging of Protestant support by killing several Protestant subjects. The bloodshed in her reign earned her the title of “bloody Mary” and affected English religion and subjects’ understanding of the Crown for many years.

The reigns of Edward VI, Henry VIII, and Mary I, left Edward’s youngest sister, and future queen, Elizabeth I with a plethora of material to draw from and with unique issues to address. In some ways Elizabeth had a distinct advantage following these previous examples of Tudor rule. The Tudor dynasty was established by the time Elizabeth came to power but she

234 Edward VI, A proclamacion set furth by the Kinges Maiestie, 1549.
faced a unique challenge on how she would display identity in connection with political and religious institutions. Her dependence on Edward and Henry as models of religious authority is exemplified in portraits of Edward VI created in her reign, such as *Edward VI and the Pope*.\(^{235}\) This demonstrates how truly important Edward’s short period of rule was and its lasting effects. Elizabeth’s choice of Edward for this portrait and her continued use of both Henry VIII and Edward VI’s Reformation strategies illustrate that Edward’s reign was short but not insignificant. Continued influence from Henry VIII and Edward VI’s reigns makes Elizabeth’s reign the perfect model for concluding Tudor rule.

\(^{235}\) *Edward VI and the Pope*, c. 1570.
CONCLUSION: POWER THROUGH TUDOR ART

Elizabeth I: The last Tudor

Elizabeth I’s reign (1558-1603) offers a strong conclusion to the study of cultural appropriation and Crown construction in the Tudor age. Although Elizabeth faced unique gender and heredity challenges, her identity construction offers a parallel to questions of intent, reception, and comprehension for Henry VIII and Edward VI. Following the short reign of her half-sister Mary I, Elizabeth had a dire need to fashion a new, positive ruling identity.  

The result of these political pressures was the Golden Age, which is a common historical term for the Elizabethan period to denote its heightened cultural productivity. Politics, heredity debates, and assassination plots in this period forced the representation of the Elizabethan Crown to be a primary concern and influenced Elizabeth’s decision to incorporate previous symbols of power into her propaganda. Thus, art and text in Elizabethan England offer an ideal reflection for the issues, pressures, and agendas surrounding Tudor artistic representation.

236 Many Tudor historians often offer only a brief overview of Marian rule when discussing Tudor cultural construction and it is more common to analyze the Protestant Tudors using this methodology. Ex: Howarth, Images of Rule; Lloyd and Thurley, Henry VIII; Cooper, Propaganda and the Tudor State.
238 As art criticism and art history continue to become more absorbed into historical approaches, multiple cultural historians have addressed material culture as another source to understanding communication between royalty and subjects, see: Davis, The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France.
Tudor Propaganda and Communication: Intent and reception

**Intent**

Intent played a key role in Tudor use of culture. The extent to which each monarch maintained and adjusted traditional culture depended largely on their understanding of the role of different media, the type of reform that was needed, and their individual political issues. Tudor attempts to construct a new type of monarchy through image and print are evident in the varying representations each monarch generated and the different reactions each had to traditional culture. For Henry VIII, images served a vital function as forms of communication, identity construction, and power negotiation. His use of imagery to represent messages both related to the Church (through promotion of the Bible) and to the monarchy (through state portraiture and coronations) shows his desire to reach the people in a post-Catholic society where images were acceptable, daily forms of communication.\(^{239}\) Henry’s political strategies of reform illustrate the power images held and the importance of his motivation in creating cultural continuity and disruption. Henry’s manipulation of popular culture such as using virtues to portray his rule as “just” and using publications discussing David’s “elected” status to add support to his rule by building on existing cultural norms, demonstrates attempts to depict the monarchy as a strong secular power.\(^{240}\) The shift that occurred in Henry’s focus from claiming secular power to

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\(^{239}\) Evidence that Catholicism in the Henrician period depended on an understanding of imagery devotion and dialogue with material objects is evident in the extensive list of items to be removed in Reformation church injunctions, including Candles and candle sticks, tapestries, rood screens, idols, crosses, and altars. Ex.: Henry VIII sovereign of England and Wales, *Injunctions gyuen...*, 1536.

\(^{240}\) *The king our soueraygne lorde by his synguler wysdome hath prouyedly consyndred...*, 1522; Fischer, *This treatysse concernyng the fruyffull saynges of Davyd the kynge [and] prophete in the seven penytencyall psalms...*, 1508, npg.
showcasing religious authority reveals the significance of individual royal goals on the type of propaganda generated.

While Henry VIII’s intent was not to gain religious power in the pre-Reformation era, his motivations and the terminology he used to define his monarchy shifted with the Reformation. The resulting change in the use of cultural vehicles such as David and in objects depicted in state portraiture to highlight religious control and authority reveals the important ties of political desires to cultural transitions. This shift is visually summarized in a comparison between the use of David as a pre and post Reformation icon and the comparison of the anonymous, pre-Reformation portrait *Henry VIII* (c. 1520) and the post-Reformation portrait *Henry VIII* (c. 1535).241 Early descriptions of David discussed him as a powerful ruler but still a secular figure that required religious officials and divine approval to sanction his rule. While Henry VIII adhered to these concepts in the pre-Reformation era, he altered this perception with Reformation Bible engravings. In these later depictions, David acquired his own religious power and right to total authority. Henry VIII portrayed him as taking reformative measures similar to Henry’s reformation strategies, such as idol removal.242 Portraits represent a similar shift from a secular to religious focus, demonstrating that Henry VIII had a different desire for how he wanted monarchy to be represented and understood. The similarity of Henry’s representation in these images illustrates the static understanding of secular concepts of power and the symbols needed to display royalty, but there was an overall shift in the type of power Henry VIII chose to

241 *King Henry VIII*, c. 1520 and Joos Van Cleve, *Henry VIII*, c. 1535
emphasize. This shift was created by changing the focus of the picture plane to a religious symbol (a Bible passage) over a secular symbol (a ring).243

Henry also had a similar, calculated understanding of the meanings of Catholic images and a set role for them in his reform to augment his messages of new power. The inclusion of the Bible as a central part of this system made the Bible a cultural bridge for the gap Henry created when removing Catholic imagery. Overall his reform methods generated a removal and replacement strategy of previous culture that used secular art and religious texts to hold onto approved concepts of visual communication while eradicating images questioning his new authority.

Despite his use of the Bible as a cultural tool of political communication, Henry VIII’s intent for moderate reform drastically shaped his reign. His reform compared to that of Edward’s reign demonstrated how differing royal intent could drastically affect propaganda and traditional culture. Henry VIII and Edward VI shared similar propagandistic goals of enhancing a new religious status, but their individual motivations drastically differed. The most major break was the difference between their religious visions.244 The influence of Henry VIII’s Catholic background is evident in an overview of the consistent cultural characteristics of English society throughout Henry VIII’s reign, such as an increase in portraiture, the use of engravings in Bibles, a steady percentage of books of hours, and relatively unmodified religious offices.245

Although he did incorporate portraiture into his representation, Edward VI changed how monarchy was culturally represented to the people. Edward chose to create and disseminate his

243 King Henry VIII, c. 1520 and Joos Van Cleve, Henry VIII, c. 1535.
245 Ayris, “Continuity and Change in Diocese and Providence,” 294, 295.
new religious and secular identity primarily through print. In conjunction with this shift, Edward VI chose to represent the king as a just spiritual ruling force by distributing written arguments against the Pope and by using public sermons. Therefore, the lack of grand state portraiture in Edward VI’s reign reveals much about the impact of individual intent by demonstrating how communication was negotiated according to changing beliefs.

The changing emphasis from image to text as the prime medium to portray royalty does not mean that art became insignificant, however. Imagery still factored in Edward VI’s representation and surviving examples show that Edward promoted the representation Henry VIII generated for him in his youth portraits, such as Hans Holbein’s *Edward VI as a Child* (1539). By perpetuating earlier depictions as the appropriate image for royalty, the visual dialogue Edward and his council created was able to connect the king with previous ruling stability to skirt concerns of his youth and inexperience. Print also addressed Edward’s strength, as well as the delicate but effective balance of power, as seen in introductions mentioning a debt owed to the Council. Attempts to overcome perceived deficiencies represent the Tudors adjustment of cultural media based on personal and political intent and Edward and his council's awareness of the need to represent a strong, balanced government. The different understanding of culture related to each monarch’s needs and beliefs and the resulting continuity and disruptions each society experienced illustrate that reform was a fluid concept, with Henry VIII and Edward VI representing separate periods. Similarly, Elizabeth I also reinvented regal

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246 In this early portrait, the young king holds a toy very similar to the manner in which he is later depicted holding the scepter or sword. Also, the lavish, regal gold and red cloth, the ornate rattle, and the jewels indicate how Edward’s later incorporation of these clothes to display wealth and power was established from birth. See: Hans Holbein the Younger, *Edward VI as a Child*, c. 1538-1539, in [http://www.nga.gov/fcgi-bin/tinfo_f?object=71](http://www.nga.gov/fcgi-bin/tinfo_f?object=71) Accessed June 9, 2009.

247 Ex.: Edward VI, *A copie of a lettre sent to preachers*, 1548 and Privy Council, *A proclamacion, set furth by the body and state, of the Kynges Maieists priuey Counsayle…*, 1549.
identity. With a lack of authoritative feminine models to illustrate her dynastic claim, Elizabeth I relied largely on symbols from Henry and Edward’s reigns to portray power. Thus, certain continuous symbols such as the sword, book, and family crest were a central aspect of communication for all Tudors.

Fashion also remained a constant concern for all Tudors, despite individual representational goals.\(^{248}\) Henry VIII attested to the use of fashion as a symbol of power by using style in portraiture and performance to create a sense of spectacle. His association with regal, elaborate garb and ornate decoration created a glorified kingly image. Elizabeth similarly employed messages through elaborate jewelry, but they were generally conveyed more through necklaces and the use of pearls.\(^{249}\) Fashion was pivotal in Henry VIII’s reign for the power of spectacle and performance. Henry VIII relied on this spectacle by using lavish clothing to convey royalty in events such as coronations. This display was especially enhanced in the extremely lavish coronation of Anne Boleyn, which emphasized the important political function of visual culture. Thus, Henry VIII understood the issue of reception and intended to use the spectacle of this event to address tensions over his changes.

Fashion was also critical for Edward VI’s visual representation in portraiture and performance. His coronation medal illustrates that he, or his council, understood the important

\(^{248}\) See discussions of fashion and clothes as status symbols in chapter two.: Henry VIII, *A proclamation concernynge apparayle…*, 1536; Privy Council, *The brieve content of certayne actes of Parliament, agaynst thinordinate vse of apparel*, 1562; Privy Council, *Articles for the due execution of the statutes of apparel…*, 1564.

messages of regal traditions. His choice to be depicted in armor in this portrait also attests to the connection of his image to Henry VIII’s and the continued understanding that armor generated propaganda of a powerful king. In addition to the motif of the sword, Edward and Henry acknowledged the power of armor in other ways; Edward represented this understanding by choosing to be clothed in armor in his coronation portrait and Henry VIII displayed his comprehension of armor’s importance through his creation of unrealistic proportions in his ceremonial jousting armor. It was Elizabeth I, however, who raised both the meanings behind royal fashion and fashion regulation to a new level, as seen in sumptuary laws. These mandates set strict clothing guidelines for lay and religious subjects. In her state portraiture, Elizabeth I similarly imbued her personal style with meaning through jewelry, especially utilization and placement of pearls and the overall clothing form. Elizabeth’s continued use of the same fit and depiction of a tight bodice with a voluminous, accentuated skirt recalled the fit of Henry and Edward’s form-fitted bodices and voluminous sleeves. By borrowing from previous regal

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250 Edward VI coronation medal, 1547, in the British Museum, viewed online at http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/cm/e/edward_vi_coronation_medal.aspx
251 Lloyd and Thurley, 69.
253 According to Elizabethan studies, pearls were popular feminine symbols of purity that represented the queen’s virginity and possible fertility. These pearls performed an additional function, however, by serving as visual propaganda connecting Elizabeth I with the rest of the Tudor ruling line. Montrose discusses this specific meaning in her comparison of Elizabeth’s Armada Portrait to the Henrician Whitehall Mural, which reveals Elizabeth’s use of a pearl as a visual metaphor for Henry VIII’s codpiece. For further discussion on this symbol, see: Montrose, The Subject of Elizabeth, 28-29, 147 and Andrew Belsey and Catherine Belsey, “Icons of Divinity: Portraits of Elizabeth I,” 11-36, in Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, 1540-1660, edited by Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, Ltd., 1990).
254 Ex.: Crispijn de Passe, Elizabeth I, engraving, 1596.
styles, Elizabeth was able to manipulate issues of her gender and display a queen visually connected to the strong masculine rule established by her father and half-brother.

Reception

While this study has shown there is a strong propagandistic tie between royalty and art, most studies discussing this point fail to consider the equally significant aspect of dissemination. Due to this omission, the English people play a passive role in historical discussion and their agency is limited to universal absorption and support of royal messages. However, Englishmen’s’ responses represented several levels of acceptance and rejection. Aside from discussion of access and use of these sources, these responses also held significant points to discuss royal propaganda. An example of this significant tie is Henry VIII’s use of popular virtue discussions to explain a just ruler and Edward VI’s use of print as his main propaganda. This shows that collectively the English people had the ability to influence culture, communication of the monarchy, and religious shifts.

The first effect of reception is also one of the most evident. The broad construction and dissemination of political identity through cultural media would have been pointless if the upperclassmen and royalty did not perceive there was an audience capable of accessing and understanding these messages. When looking at Tudor methods of dissemination, many of the communication modes remained the same, including using similar images in engraved and painted portraiture to allow broader distribution. Examining popular sources like these and their impact in Tudor lay culture further shows the importance of reception in its ability to influence monarchs’ appeal to the people’s perceived understanding and their representation. An example
of this effect is the shift from a visual to print construction of the monarchy. Books of hours, primers, and calendars are critical sources demonstrating society’s familiarity with a mixture of communication methods through a large amount of illustrated texts that were widely distributed. When analyzing books of hours and primers in early Tudor England the overall trend is a consistently high percentage of images in books of hours from Henry's reign but a sharp decline in both source samples and imagery for Edward’s reign. While part of this change is due to preservation and access issues, it also reflects the importance of reception and comprehension in reform.

Characteristics and demands from Tudor laymen of Henrician, Edwardian, and Elizabethan societies compared to how these monarchs constructed their political and cultural methods of reform provide evidence that reception had direct power in the communication process. When the societies’ characteristics were similar, Tudor monarchs often shared similar cultural approaches. In contrasting societies, the royal approaches varied. These findings do not only illustrate a direct link between concerns of intent and reception, but they also demonstrate how societal issues in Elizabeth’s reign and her response can be used as a model to conclude the Tudor era and discuss the overall similarities and differences between Henry VIII and Edward VI. Despite her unique challenges, Elizabeth I faced issues that characterized Tudor society as a whole with her battle over religious identity and issues of “idolatry.” To address issues of reform in her society, which reflected Henry’s in the need to shift from Catholicism to

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255 For historical support that books of hours would be widely available at this time to multiple social levels, see: Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety* and Duffy, *Marking the Hours.*

256 EEBO did not have sufficient data for Edward VI’s reign. For discussion of these works in his reign, see: Duffy, *Marking the Hours.*

257 This debate and the evolving historical views of Catholic strength in Protestant Tudor periods is evident in Dickens and Duffy’s argument over the meaning of language in Protestant wills: Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 315; Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 504-523.
Protestantism, Elizabeth employed a two-pronged approach similar to Henry VIII’s earlier reform strategies. First, she used the laity’s connection with imagery to shift strong, apotropaic functions attributed to religious images to her identity, thus turning herself into an icon.258 The second of Henry’s strategies that she incorporated was the replacement of offending images with holy texts, which she associated with herself in portraiture. Like her predecessors, Elizabethan church records confirm that she followed discussions of the need to combat images with mandates for proper scripture use. With this tactic, Elizabeth created a new image of Godly actions as embodied in scripture, which became an icon representing good virtues:

They persons [having committed idolatry]…shall purelye and sincerely declare the woorde of God: and in the same exhort theyr hearers to the woorkes of faith as mercye and charitie, specially preferryd and commanded in scripture and that woorkes devised by mans phantasies byseides scripture: is wandrying of Pylgrymages, settyng by of candles, praying upon bedes, or such lyke superstition, have not only no promyse of rewarde in scripture for doyng of them: but contrayre wyse great threatenyngs and maledictions of God.259

This removal and replacement strategy as a way to promote new cultural items that Elizabeth could regulate mirrored Henry VIII’s earlier strategies.

Items mentioned in visitations and injunctions across Tudor England support the claim presented in this thesis that selected removal of religious images led to a royal appropriation of their previous meanings to both new physical images, such as the tables in Edward’s reign, and new symbolic texts through understanding of “the book:”

258 This constant, iconic representational style was often termed as the “Cult of Gloriana.” For historians discussing this aspect, see: Robert Content, “Fair is Fowle: Interpreting Anti-Elizabethan Composite Portraiture,” 229-251, in Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture, 1540-1660, edited by Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, Ltd., 1990).
23. Also that they shall take awaye, utterly extyncte and dystroy all thynges, coverynge of Shrynes, all tables, candlestykes, tryndalles, and rolles of ware, pictures, payntinges, and other monuments of fayned miracles, Pilgremagies, Idolatry and Superstitions, so that ther remaine no memorye of the fame in walles, glasses, wyndowe or elleswhere within their churches and houses….

24. And that the churchwardens, at the common charge of the paryshyoners in everye church, shall provide a comely and honeste pulpet to be set in a convenient place within the…

Although Elizabethan society and this reform approach offers a summarization of Henry VIII’s Reformation, Elizabethan society differed in some key ways and so did church alterations. Similar to Edward, who partially initiated stronger reform due to fear of Catholic uprising, Elizabeth also feared Catholic supporters. In this situation, Elizabeth used harsher methods and, like Edward, focused on removing private and communal imagery. To address the more privatized aspects of idolatry, Elizabeth gave mandates specifically related to domestic environments, stating “that no persons keep in their houses any abused images, table, pictures, paintings, and other monuments of sayed miracles.” Thus, Elizabeth borrowed from traditions of religious reform and identity construction established by both Henry and Edward. In this manner, Elizabethan reform became a reflection of the different ways in which Henry and Edward’s intent and the context of their reigns led to their reform styles. Thus, Elizabeth’s methods offer not only proof of the importance of reception, but also a concluding representation of the Tudor monarchy and English Reformation.

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260 Ibid.
261 Ibid.
Treatises are the public sources that best show this similar religious environment and treatment of reform. In Henry VIII’s reign, Martin Bucer’s account of the religious reaction to images exemplified a significant divide in the belief of the positive and negative aspects of imagery. In this period, both Bucer and Latimer supported Henry VIII’s new religious directions, but Thomas More’s treatise extolling the religious benefit of images displayed not only laymen comprehension of Henry’s alterations, but contention over them. This contention and the use of treatises as popular sources to debate political directions in religion extended into the Elizabethan period. Publications like Nicholas Sander’s *A treatise of the images of Christ and his saints* demonstrated that images were still highly debated.  

In these similar environments with continuing Catholic support, both Henry VIII and Elizabeth I needed to include images in their communication of royalty and the new Church. Edward VI’s reign indicated a different reform style, as a Protestant background to the Church and the availability of the Bible made print the main form of communication. Thus, although the differences and similarities of reform throughout Henry, Edward, and Elizabeth’s reigns were largely due to intent and personal preference, the Tudor laymen’s access and reception of these debates caused significant changes.


264 More, *A dyalogue of syr Thomas More knyghte…Wherein be treated dyvers maters, as of the veneration [and] worship of ymages [and] relyques…*, 1529 and Sander, *A treatise of the images of Christ and his saints: and that it is unlaufull to breake them…*, 1567.
The Tudors and Art: Painting the monarchy

Art patronage played a large role in the construction of medieval and early modern kingship. Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Elizabeth I exemplified that it was vital to the English Crown. Henry VIII portrayed the importance placed on cultural communication through his unorthodox spending to increase cultural productivity and the notably elaborate coronation of Anne Boleyn.265 For Elizabeth, the importance of patronage is evident in the restriction of art to Gothic styles maintaining the queen’s strong and youthful appearance.266 Collectively, the Tudors used their power and wealth as patrons more than most other contemporary ruling families to construct an iconic image of kingship and communicate a specific idea of royalty.267

Although an analysis of objects’ placement within the picture plane, such as the sword’s connection to Tudor kings or the pearls connection to Elizabeth’s womb, is important to see how the monarchs wanted the audience to understand these symbols, an overview of the Tudor period clearly demonstrates that aesthetic shifts and preferences need to be addressed for political reasons. Issues of uncertain heredity, a legacy of a throne claimed through usurpation, and foreign competition created a dynamic and complex atmosphere. Through art the early Tudors, specifically Henry and Edward, gained the ability to mask these issues and promote ideas of stability and a secure government. In Henry VIII’s reign, this intended political function is most evident in his dissemination of Bible engravings. Whether they were engravings within the Bible illustrating specifically chosen personages and stories (such as David’s taking of the throne

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265 *The Coronation of Queen Anne*, 1553, a.i.
through victory in battle and his fight against idols) or title pages depicting Henry VIII at the top of a Bible dissemination chain, these images were included to relay specific political and religious authority. The political power the Bible afforded Henry VIII as a cultural tool to enhance the image of monarchy is evident in his choice to enforce these books’ place in the Church as substitutes for previous Catholic imagery. The importance of this use of the Bible is evident in Henry VIII’s support and push to increase its circulation despite drawbacks, such as radical laity response and the increase of laymen religious power.

Elizabeth also understood the power engravings contained as a medium to enhance the monarchy and she similarly took full advantage of this art form. Elizabeth demonstrated her understanding of the additional communication possibilities engravings produced by using them to further convey messages in state portraiture. An example is the use of mythological references. Mythological references were a significant part of visual communication in Tudor England and factored significantly in both royal portraiture and popular texts. Calendars from Henry VIII’s rule exemplify this trend in their use of Greek gods and goddesses to represent astrology and the characteristics of the seasons. By incorporating imagery types that were circulating through popular works into their portraits, the Tudor rulers increased the possibility of understanding.

269 This is evident in the large number of Tudor visual cultural histories including engravings. Ex.: King, *Tudor Royal Iconography*; Lloyd and Thurley, *Henry VIII*; Howarth, *Images of Rule*.
271 For an example of the use of astrology in Henrician calendars, see: *Here begynneth the kalendar of sheppards*, 1518, iv.
Monarchs perceived simplistic symbols in portraiture could be used as propaganda for a larger audience and they incorporated recognizable symbols such as coats of arms and crests into their portraits. Henry VIII’s use of these images to display messages was evident in imagery constantly promoting his right to rule by evoking the Tudor rose. In some cases, Henry VIII displayed this connection between the rose, the Tudor family, and just rule directly by depicting a crowned rose. An example of the rose used to represent this connection is available in the portrait Edward VI (1542) from the late part of Henry's reign. As was typical, this portrait was cropped at the chest level with the hands becoming the most emphasized and critical part of the picture plane; here, in the spot that Henry VIII had previously depicted rings and texts to display power, Edward VI holds a rose. This symbol and its prominent placement show Edward VI’s position as the new hope of the Tudor dynasty. Elizabeth I also utilized these simplistic messages of heredity and power through incorporating devices such as a rose border. These artistic depictions of the rose held strong political underlying motivations for Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Elizabeth I. For Henry VIII, heredity symbols in portraiture, especially ones that were crowned, demonstrated that the Tudor line was directly connected to the throne. 

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272 The use of crests to communicate meaning is debated in Tudor historiography, but even historians critical of visual comprehension hypothesize these images held the highest possibility of establishing visual communication. For example, see: Sydney Anglo, Images of Tudor Kingship (London: Seaby, 1992).


276 Ibid.

was especially sensitive to this issue. Edward and Elizabeth also had strong reasons for emphasizing heredity. Although Elizabeth’s right to the throne remained more contested than Edward’s because of her gender and the legacy of her mother, Anne Boleyn, both Edward and Elizabeth strongly reinforced their heredity to counter arguments of their legitimacy. With Edward this is evident in the few state portraits he commissioned, as his form and fashion replicate Henry VIII’s standard representation.

Another way that Tudor imagery traditions continued was in the mixture of social and religious symbols through the sword and book motif. Edward VI and the Pope is one of the strongest metaphors of the “book” from Elizabeth’s reign. In this image, a dying Henry VIII passes his legacy on to Edward while opposite the bed, the Pope’s body lies crumpled on the floor. Because Elizabeth used images of her father and brother as dynastic validation, historians believe this painting was constructed to celebrate Elizabeth’s victory over the Catholic Church. Isaac Oliver’s Elizabeth I Memorial Portrait (1603-1604) is another example revealing how Elizabeth carried on Henry VIII’s secular understandings of the sword and imagery appropriation of the “book.” In this painting, Oliver depicted a Tudor crest with a book labeled “Verbum Dei” and a sword, labeled “iustittia.” The book’s inscription of “Verbum Dei,” or “word of God,” connected Elizabeth’s reign to religious authority while recalling previous manipulations of the Bible, as this same imagery motif was employed in the Great Bible title page. The label on the sword in this Elizabethan portrait also directly connects to Henry VIII’s messages. Henry ordered works labeling his kingship as “just,” the same

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278 King Edward VI and the Pope, c. 1570.
279 Crispin de Passe, Queen Elizabeth I, 1603, engraved copy after Sir Isaac Oliver.
280 The Great Bible Title Page, in Lloyd and Thurley, Henry VIII.
inscription Elizabeth chose to record on the sword. While Elizabeth’s continued use of Henry’s visual motifs offers an important conclusion of Tudor representation, her changes also offer important insight into these symbols’ meanings within earlier Tudor portraiture. For example, her use of the sword adds some insight into this contested symbol. Elizabeth’s limited references to the sword, despite facing similar religious challenges, reveals that the sword was seen as more representative of masculine ruling power.\textsuperscript{281} Thus, Elizabeth demonstrated that many of these messages of power continued in some form to the end of the Tudor dynasty. Through the continued use of the sword and book motif and the similarities in which royalty was visually represented, Elizabeth’s art offers an image of monarchy that demonstrates the fully-realized goals of Henry VIII and his strong legacy.

Henry VIII demonstrated in his reign that he understood the position his children would have and the key role they would play of not only representing the Tudor monarchy, but also carrying his legacy and image. The way he controlled their representation in portraiture from his reign and the way he used imagery manipulation to depict them in a similar style demonstrates his understanding that these visuals would be passed on, forging Tudor memory. This concept explains Henry VIII’s understanding of propaganda. Henry VIII was obsessed with creating a message of an ideal kingship to the point that he not only attempted to control his own body but also his family’s representation. This influence of Henry VIII’s views on his family’s representation is evident in Anne Boleyn’s elaborate coronation, Edward VI’s state portraiture

continuing Henry VIII’s representation style and Elizabeth I’s continued messages of purity and education that Henry VIII established with Scrott’s portrait *Elizabeth I When Princess* (1547).\(^{282}\)

**Conclusion: Image, text, and the Tudor dynasty**

From before the Reformation to the end of the Elizabethan era, a vast assortment of religious and secular images held power for all social levels of Tudor society. Though these images ranged from simplistic forms of the cross to eclectic religious prints and state portraiture, each one was used for a specific function and was directly related to its environment. Therefore, visual culture is valuable for contextualizing Tudor England’s larger religious and political shifts. From a religious aspect, these monarchs’ treatments of Catholic images demonstrated that iconoclasm was not a straightforward image removal, but only one part of a complex reaction to religious images. Shifting based on each monarch’s political and personal intent, this reaction was usually part of a multifaceted political strategy that involved image removal and replacement to enhance the monarchy’s new status. In addition to the calculated removal and select replacement of some previous images, Tudor portraiture revealed how monarchs’ appropriation of religious motifs in their secular images carried important political functions. Images also held further important connotations in political transactions. The actual physical role of images in politics and the importance of favorable representation are evident in Hans Holbein’s portrait of Anne of Cleves, ordered by Henry VIII to see if she was a suitable bride. When complying with this task, Protestant advisors influenced Holbein to portray Anne of

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Cleves more favorably than she truly appeared. This incident, which caused strains between the king and his favorite court painter, is only one example of how images and politics were connected in the Tudor era. The direct and indirect uses of imagery in political reform strategies, representations, and transactions reveal that the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Elizabeth I are valuable demonstrations of visual culture shifts. Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Elizabeth I saw these as objects filling a specific, needed political function of communicating religious alterations and views of monarchy to the people. Thus, these images increased their power over the people and cultural constructed royal identity. This examination of royal use of art and its reception attains a fuller picture of England throughout the Reformation era and aids in visualizing the important aftermath of reform on the monarchy as it shifted from medieval to the early modern era.

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The institution of a Christen man, conteynyng the exposition or interpretation of the co[m]mune Crede, of the seuen sacramentes, of the x. co[m]mandementes, [and] of the Pater noster, and the Aue Maria, iustification and purgatorie. London: Thomae Bertheleti, 1537. In EEBO.

The kynge our soueraygne lorde by his synguler wysdome hath prouydently consydred and amonges other pryncely vertues profoundely reme[m]bred two thynges specyally moost behouefull and neccesarye. 1522. In EEBO.

The mystik sweet rosary of the faythful soule garnished rownde aboute, as it were with fresshe fragraunt flowers, according to the truthe of the Gospel: with fyftye pagens of the hole lyfe and passion of our lorde Jesu Cryst, with certayn placis of the holy scripture corresponding euery pagen: vnto eche place added a deuoute prayer. Also vnto eueru saynge or facte of Cryst, thers correspondent a fayer pictur: that the inwarde mynde might fauour the thinge that the vtwarde eye beholdeth. Antwerp: Martyne Emprowers, 1533. In EEBO.

The Royal Collection Website. “Joos van Cleve’s Henry VIII.”


Images


Secondary


