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**Review Essay: Retha M. Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn: Family Politics at the Court of Henry VIII***

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Therefore, as no other art historian before him was able to do, Liedtke can correctly describe the particular pose of any given mount as having been depicted in either a "levade," a "coubette," a "pesade," a "passage," a "capriole," and so forth. Like Liedtke, any connoisseur of the period could quickly read these signs and evaluate them properly—which moderns cannot do, that is, without Liedtke's book in hand. Besides its other virtues, Liedtke's monograph provides the interested reader with a nearly complete bibliography of scholarly contributions on the evolution and meaning of equestrian art.

In fine, this handsomely produced volume is an essential acquisition for all libraries on art—and political—history.

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Retha M. Warnicke, *The Rise and Fall of Anne Boleyn: Family Politics at the Court of Henry VIII*, Cambridge University Press, 1989, xi, 326 pp, ill., biblio., index, \$10.95.

Accounting for the "spectacular rise and tragic fall" (242) of Anne Boleyn, Retha Warnicke proves that, in interpreting oft-told tales of King Henry VIII's machinations for producing a male heir, this story can be recounted from fresh historiographical perspectives. The author also invokes medical and psychiatric insights of twentieth-century science to explain the behavior of sixteenth-century princes; she reinterprets literary and historical sources from which she extracts new meanings to describe society in Henrician England and add new dimensions to historical perceptions of Henry VIII. In fact, Warnicke claims, Henry was the "master of his own house" (255); even his most powerful ministers like Thomas Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell, were servants rather than makers and disposers of Henry VIII's queens.

By amassing genealogical and historical details, the author explains how Anne Boleyn's father and other relatives established ties to factions at the Henrician court to advance Anne from her modest beginnings to the queenship and to improve their own lots. By Warnicke's account, Anne Boleyn was foremost a dutiful pawn to Boleyn family ambitions, and the family exploited her status until her fall from Henry VIII's good graces dictated that these opportunists distance themselves from her to save their titles and riches.

Although Warnicke demonstrates that the Boleyn family's machinations yielded them advantages, she argues less persuasively that love (rather than Boleyn family maneuvering, Anne Boleyn's coquettish behavior, or Henry VIII's

lust for her) led Henry to select Anne for his next queen after Catherine of Aragon. After a stormy courtship, adversative relationships persisted in the marriage of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. Yet despite the writer's evidence suggesting that affection and mutual distaste alternately characterized their marriage, Warnicke concludes that genuine love dominated their relationship until Anne's miscarriage of a deformed male child caused Henry VIII to think that she had bewitched him. Next, in a notably incisive chapter, Warnicke shows how contemporary social mores confirmed for Henry VIII his judgment of Queen Anne and helped him to justify executing her. Warnicke pictures Anne Boleyn as a queen who respected social traditions and religious conventions and abided by their constraints, but who became a tragic figure. Warnicke's Anne is a woman whose femininity, fair-mindedness, and gentle human impulses were exploited by relatives and Henrician courtiers. In short, Warnicke recounts an old story lucidly, usually sustains her new historical judgments, and tempts readers to reassess traditional thinking about Anne Boleyn's place in Tudor state affairs. In fact, in spite of the author's dogmatism at points, her volume's best qualities include substantive historiographical discussions. For instance, Warnicke skillfully analyzes sources like Eustace Chapuy's diplomatic dispatches; she exposes Wolsey's and Cromwell's untruths and distortions of fact that have sometimes misled historians; and she persuasively criticizes "modern argument[s]" (154) about the influence of Aragonese factions at the Henrician court and purported alliances between Cromwell and Anne Boleyn to manipulate English state affairs.

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Frederic J. Baumgartner, *Henry II, King of France: 1547-1559*, Duke University Press, 1988, xiv, 358 pp., biblio., index, \$39.95.

Biography has been an unfashionable form of historiography in the era of the *Annales* school, but recent years have seen the appearance of several distinguished biographies of French kings by scholars such as M. G. A. Vale (Charles VII), R. J. Knecht (Francis I), and David Buisseret (Henry IV). Frederic Baumgartner's study of Henry II is a welcome addition to this list and fills a large void in the literature of Renaissance France. It is the first scholarly biography of Henry II in over seventy-five years.

Henry II, second son of Francis I, was born at the height of the French Renaissance. The famed "roi-chevalier" and "père des lettres" would no doubt be relieved that he is more remembered as "père des lettres" than as "père