

*Katherine of Aragon: Marriage, Scholarship
and Remembrance*

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Abstract

This masters by research observes how the scholarship and political successes of women in Tudor England are undermined by the overwhelming importance of marriage. This will be shown through the case study of Katherine of Aragon, who was a highly acclaimed and virtuous woman of her time. Katherine's unusual education led her to be active in political capacities usually expected of men. These included being chosen to represent Spain as the first Ambassadress of Europe and later counsel the young King Henry VIII in foreign policy and be entrusted as his regent in 1513. Perhaps because of her foreign status, or her intellectual merit, Katherine succeeded as a queen consort, surpassing what was expected of her as a political tool of democracy.

Instead, Katherine is often remembered as the loyal and stubborn first wife of Henry VIII, divorced for her inability to bear Henry a surviving son and heir. Unlike Castile, England was not ready for a female regnant monarch that Katherine had seen rule first-hand and having no male heir would lead to her downfall. As Katherine realised this, she became more concerned with the education of her only daughter, Mary. Katherine enlisted the help of humanist scholars to ensure that Mary would receive the 'New Learning' as it became known in England, so that she would receive a new view of the classics which combined their study with the importance of religion. This method became the set way for future monarchs, and this can be attributed to Katherine.

The first chapter will look at Katherine's contemporaneous presentation through her representation which survives on artifacts and portraits made during her reign and the iconography surrounding her emblem of the pomegranate. The second chapter will look at recreations of Katherine in verse, plays and artworks, beginning with recreations made closest to her death, continuing to the Victorian era. The last chapter will look at modern recreations of Katherine within films and historical fiction and her annual commemoration. This thesis will look at how Katherine's memory has changed over time and show that her scholarly and political achievements have been overshadowed by the dynamics of her turbulent life and the romantic reputation of her marriages.

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Introduction

This masters by research will analyse how Katherine of Aragon presented herself and how this presentation has been undermined by a romanticized view of her marriage and divorce following her death. When Katherine came to England, she was an anomaly of her gender. England was governed by men who acted with the interest of strengthening the lineage of the Tudor family. Katherine, as a foreign princess was a tool of political diplomacy, betrothed to marry the heir to the throne, to create a lasting friendship between Spain and England against their mutual enemy, France. Katherine would later become politically influential and be highly praised for her patronage of humanism in England. Katherine's influence and her intellectual ability made her more unique for her time. Through an analysis of Katherine's life and her recreations, this research thesis will show how intellectual and political achievements of women are dominated by the reputations of their marriage. Katherine's abilities which gave her the unusual capacity to be more active within traditionally male fields are often put aside in order to portray the later drama of her marriage and elevate the reputation of her successors. This perspective allows us to understand the wider effect of Katherine's often-distorted recreation in modern fiction as well. This effect will be observed while looking at the effects of representation, recreation and memory.

Understanding the significance of Katherine's life is important as in more recent years she has been given little scholarly attention. Katherine is largely analysed within popular history compilations that look at all of Henry's wives together, where she is often minimized within the narrative of Henry's reign. Historian Alison Weir and the journalist Giles Tremlett are of the few who have dedicated an entire study to Katherine. This in turn has led to some skewed perceptions of Katherine which have been replicated many times within fiction, films and plays. Katherine has been overshadowed by the popular interest in her successor Anne Boleyn and her daughter Elizabeth I, both in fiction and in academic history. This thesis will use the example of Katherine to understand the relationship between female scholarship, marriage and the womanly virtues and

lives of women. This is important as it is Katherine's marriage to Henry VIII which largely identifies her against her successors and not necessarily her own personal achievements. This work will question whether marriage equates to a happy ending and if it really is a signifier of success, while expanding upon the criticism of marriage within *Marriage and Violence* (2008) by Francis E. Dolan.¹ Exploring how marriage impacted Katherine specifically allows us to see how she portrayed herself against how others have perceived her. For Katherine, it was her marriage which was both the catalyst to her success and the cause of her downfall.

Katherine is often portrayed as the painfully stubborn and loyal first wife of Henry VIII, who was deeply devoted to Catholicism and was famous for her humbleness and piety. It is Katherine's later life, leading up to the divorce, which is given greater attention, as it is here that she is remembered for being unable to give Henry a son and for refusing to help him annul their marriage. For instance, Tremlett chooses to start his analysis here. Katherine would beg the Pope to confirm the validity of her marriage, but it would come too late. Katherine is shown to fiercely defend her queenship against the King, prolonging their separation for several years, but subjecting herself to great suffering. Popular historians such as Alison Plowden have stated that the people of Tudor England held Anne Boleyn accountable for the sufferings of Katherine.² Feminist historian Karen Lindsey believes however, that both Anne Boleyn and Katherine of Aragon were "strong-willed and passionate, [and] became living symbols of the old and new religions."³ Katherine can certainly be described as passionate as this combines her love and faith as well as her suffering. Both women are remembered for being highly intellectual for their time, especially compared to some of Henry's

¹ Francis E. Dolan, *Marriage and Violence*, University of Pennsylvania Press, (Pennsylvania, United States:2008)

² Alison Plowden, *Tudor Women Queens and Commoners*, Sutton Publishing, (2002) p.66

³ Karen Lindsey, *Divorced, Beheaded, Survived A Feminist Reinterpretation of the Wives of Henry VIII*, Da Capo Press, Perseus Books Group, (1995), Prologue, xxix

later wives, but this religious conflict had great implications which changed the religious course of England and so encourages greater attention to Katherine's intensity, stubbornness and her unquestionable devotion. It is from here that Katherine as the last Catholic queen before the English Reformation is also depicted as a martyr for the Catholic faith. Tremlett goes as far as saying that "She was not alone in believing that a violent end awaited her... What is abundantly clear, however, is that she was ready -even happy- to die for her own cause."⁴ Between her refusal to accept the Oath of Succession and her witnessing the executions of some of her dearest clergy men, it is possible that Katherine felt this way, it was certainly the fear of the ambassador Eustace Chapuys in his reports to the Emperor. As seen in the state papers for Spain, it is recorded that

The King of that country (England) has twice stated in public that both the Queen and Princess are guilty of high treason for holding the statutes of his kingdom in contempt, and that, though he may lose his crown in consequence, they shall be subjected to the same penalty as other traitors. No wonder then if the Imperial ambassador expresses his fears in pregnant words of the danger in which both are.⁵

However, for Henry's fear of causing civil unrest or instigating an invasion from abroad, it is more likely that this would not have been her ending. Instead, Katherine was isolated, far from the people and her daughter, until her quiet death at Kimbolton Castle.

The narrative of Katherine's early upbringing and arrival in England, usually presents the difficulties of securing her first marriage and the issue of her dowery. However, where Katherine's

⁴ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry's Spanish Queen A Biography*, Faber and Faber, (2010) p.5

⁵ Ed. Pascual de Gayangos, "Spain: January 1536, 1-20", in *Calendar of State Papers, Spain*, Volume 5 Part 2, 1536-1538, (London: 1888), pp. 1-10. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/spain/vol5/no2/pp1-10> [accessed 25 February 2021]

education and foreignness are regularly discussed it is often to varying lengths. Although it is widely agreed that Katherine was highly intellectual for her time, this fact is appreciated less by some. Writer Antonia Fraser acknowledges that “few queens have shown the qualities of mind possessed by Catherine”⁶ and that she received an excellent classical education.⁷ However, Fraser also undermines this appraisal by comparing Katherine’s intellectual capability to the physical qualities of Henry and emphasises Katherine’s education when associating it with Henry’s. This is further shown when she aligns Katherine’s education with that of “many Renaissance princes and princesses.”⁸ This minimizes the significance of Katherine’s upbringing that prepared her to participate in the politics of England, when most women would not be capable of doing so or be expected to be able to. Tremlett in his biography of Katherine opposes this by stating that she and her sisters became some of the most acclaimed women of their age as their mother Isabella believed that education was the key to success. Isabella took a keen interest in Katherine’s education and learning of languages and more domestic and courtly activities including needlework, dance and hunting.⁹ This would aid Katherine in helping her husband and representing Spain when the time came. Alison Weir also states that “Katherine of Aragon... proved that women could be both learned and virtuous.”¹⁰ Which agrees that while she was making waves in what would be taught to future women, Katherine was still highly skilled in activities expected of women including languages, needlework and music. The lack of scholarly detail creates conjectures and makes it difficult to understand her intellectual ability and political presence alongside her womanly virtues.

⁶ Antonia Fraser, *The Wives of Henry VIII*, Vintage Books (1994) p.53

⁷ Antonia Fraser, *The Wives of Henry VIII*, p.25

⁸ Antonia Fraser, *The Wives of Henry VIII*, p.53

⁹ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry’s Spanish Queen A Biography*, pp.47-48

¹⁰ Alison Weir, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, Vintage, (2007) p.4

The differences in presenting Katherine's education extend into the issue of Katherine being foreign and initially unable to speak English. It is commonly accepted that Katherine although well versed in Latin and French, was unable to speak English when she arrived in England. Fraser shows Katherine to be further isolated however, as she states that her pronunciation of Latin was so different to the English that she was still unable to make herself known.¹¹ Lindsey agrees that Katherine did not speak English but explains that Arthur and his siblings had helped her to learn and that she was initially adored by her new family, which perhaps argues against such an intense isolation at the beginning.

Following the death of Arthur, with her dowery still not paid, Katherine is shown to be shunned out of court and into cheap lodgings. When discussing the seven years of Katherine's window-hood, her suffering and mistreatment by Henry VII and Ferdinand are shown, but her activities in court are not always recorded consistently. As Katherine increasingly struggled to support her household financially, she began to pawn many of the valuable items which she had brought with her, some that were intended to be used as part of her dowery. In the end, Ferdinand made Katherine his ambassador for Spain to re-elevate her position at court with minimal expense on his part.¹²

Katherine was devoted to her father and Ferdinand would use this to continue to manipulate her and in turn Henry, who would always want to follow in his footsteps.¹³ In some historical accounts, neither Katherine's ambassadorship or her knowledge and experience are included. This is greatly significant because this capacity put her training from Isabella into practice and prepared her to advise Henry in foreign policies and later lead as his Regent. This as Retha M. Warnicke shows, portrayed Katherine to be influential politically and be far more involved than what was expected of

¹¹ Antonia Fraser, *The Wives of Henry VIII*, p.25

¹² Karen Lindsey, *Divorced, Beheaded, Survived*, p.23

¹³ Karen Lindsey, *Divorced, Beheaded, Survived*, p.29

a queen consort.¹⁴ Compared to Henry, Katherine had a “political astuteness that rivaled his”, but she did not love power the way Henry did.¹⁵ This was especially helpful to the inexperienced Henry in the early years of his reign and showed Katherine to be his closest advisor before the rise of Cardinal Wolsey. The working relationship of Katherine and Henry should be investigated further as well as her political involvement. This could show that Katherine’s activity was uncharacteristic for English consorts, but less so for princesses and queens from abroad, especially as Katherine had been trained to be Queen so specifically by her mother who was a female ruling monarch.

It is Katherine’s significance and the ways she applied her knowledge and experience which is weaker within her general historical account. This has wider implications as it was through her scholarship that Katherine built connections with the universities in Oxford and Cambridge and with leading humanists through her devotion to Catholicism and her opposition of Lutheranism. Her connections to her parents and husband as Defenders of the Catholic Faith grew her reputation and her own perspectives increased the respect men, such as Erasmus, had for her. As a result, Katherine’s scholarship began to make court-wide changes to the education of women and is directly responsible for making the New Learning the accepted method of study for monarchs and noble families, including women. Although the intensity of Katherine’s devotions is generally felt by most writers, the health implications of how seriously she took them are not always appreciated. As her sisters had done in difficult times, Katherine is known to have partaken in strict fasting,¹⁶ and was aware of the known mental illnesses that ran in her family.¹⁷ Katherine’s sister Juana

¹⁴ Retha M. Warnicke, *Elizabeth of York and Her Six-Daughters-in-Law: Fashioning Tudor Queenship, Queenship and Power*, Palgrave Macmillan, (2017) p.275

¹⁵ Karen Lindsey, *Divorced, Beheaded, Survived*, p.29

¹⁶ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry’s Spanish Queen A Biography*, p.43

¹⁷ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry’s Spanish Queen A Biography*, pp.54-55

would suffer greatly following the loss of her husband, but this was not perceived in the same way as the suffering and lamentations Katherine experienced which were later promoted as virtuous and in line with martyrdom. Understanding Katherine's devotions and studies further would perhaps explain the suffering of women and the control men held over women's education by marital restrictions and religious structures that would also repress their potential to ascertain scholarly success.

Katherine's parents carefully planned each of their daughter's marriages as diplomatic agreements with surrounding powerful kingdoms, including Portugal, England and within Spain as well. These agreements held the promise of continuing the line of Castile and Aragon with their heirs expanding the power of Spain. This would not come to great fruition with the deaths of Katherine's sisters, leaving the untested son of Juana called Charles, as Ferdinand's heir.¹⁸ Following the death of Isabella, Ferdinand's power over Castile was brought into question, which in turn caused Henry VII to reassess the value of the precontract between his son Henry and Katherine, as it was believed Ferdinand could be ousted at any time. As Isabella was the regnant ruler of Castile, her death meant that Ferdinand's control over Castile would be contested and his reputation was generally weakened.¹⁹ However, Ferdinand would die in 1516, just weeks before the birth of Katherine's daughter Mary. These losses had great implications for Katherine as they created great changes to her family stability and political status during both of her marriages and up to the divorce. Isabella also championed for the welfare of Katherine, with her gone, Ferdinand's lack of compassion towards Katherine during her widowhood is made more evident. The death of Ferdinand which represented the diminishing strength of the Catholic Monarchs, weakened Katherine's lineage and political influence in the diplomatic agreement England upheld with Spain. Katherine had also been

¹⁸ Karen Lindsey, *Divorced, Beheaded, Survived*, p.39

¹⁹ Karen Lindsey, *Divorced, Beheaded, Survived*, p.21

greatly involved in some of England's military failures due to her manipulation by Ferdinand.²⁰ This combined with her inability to provide Henry with a son also caused for a further reassessment, even though Katherine had been accredited for one of Henry's greatest military successes at the Battle of Flodden. Following Ferdinand's death, the balance of European power began to swing in favour of France and Henry needed to reconsider his alliances. This contextualises the breakdown of Henry and Katherine's marriage further. It also shows the root of her political influence and its impact as a foreign queen consort when governing England. Investigating this further would also show Katherine losing her influence with the accession of Wolsey and her status of her reign following her many miscarriages and still births.

Ian Maclean's *The Renaissance Notion of Woman*²¹ will be used to better understand Katherine's environment in terms of the expectations of feminine virtues and of female education. This will contribute towards understanding Katherine's significance which will be reinforced with the works of Constance Jordan, Gloria Kaufman, Teresa Elizabeth Howe and Elizabeth Mazzola. These historians further understand the changing notions around women's education in the sixteenth century and engage with the humanist appraisal of Katherine's work by figures such as Desiderius Erasmus and Thomas More. Jordan and Kaufman will be especially referred to when looking at Katherine's patronage of the Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives to aid her daughter's learning. This patronage led to his popular work *The Education of a Christian Woman* (1538)²² being printed. Vives argues that eloquence and teaching are not fit for women and it is these classical beliefs

²⁰ Karen Lindsey, *Divorced, Beheaded, Survived*, p.39

²¹ Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman, A Study in the fortunes of scholasticism and medical science in European intellectual life*, (Cambridge University Press: 1980)

²² Juan Luis Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman: a sixteenth-century manual*, trans. Charles Fantazzi (Original date;1538 Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000)

which draw criticism against his supposed motivations to educate women. Vives's criticism of female scholarly ability will also help to show that most women were not expected to reach an advanced education and should instead aspire to be a humble and obedient wife within a strong marriage. This also shows the reputation of the woman through her marriage and that the success of the marriage supersedes her individual, including scholarly achievements. Vives is especially important as his work was dedicated to Katherine, who he presented as a perfect example of a humble and obedient maiden, wife and widow.

In the reign of her daughter Mary, Katherine would be presented as this perfect example of an obedient and loyal wife. William Forrest chose to represent Katherine through the main protagonist, Griselda, in his verse *The History of Grisild the Second*.²³ Here he represented Katherine during the divorce as the loyal and obedient wife of a tyrannical husband. The analytical works of Gail Ashton, Matthew C. Hansen and Ursula Potter will be especially helpful to develop ideas regarding Forrest's possible intentions and in comparing Griselda to Katherine. Ashton, although not specifically linking Griselda to Katherine, suggests that Griselda's patience and obedience could be interpreted as a form of deception against her male counterparts, designed to maintain her femininity while surrounded by masculine expectations. Hansen, on the other hand, studies the "Englishing" of Katherine and specifically discusses the recreation of Katherine in both Forrest's work and a later example called *All is True* by William Shakespeare and John Fletcher.²⁴ Hansen's work will help to compare the earliest characterisations of Katherine in fiction.

²³ William Forrest, *The History of Grisild the Second: A narrative, in verse, of the Divorce of Queen Katherine of Arragon*, ed. W.D. Machray (Original date; c.1588 London: Roxburghe Club; no. 101, 1873)

²⁴ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, (perf.1613; printed as Henry VIII, London, 1623)

The historian Mark Rankin believes that *All is True* embodies the legacy of Elizabeth I to flatter the Scottish King ruling the English throne.²⁵ Rankin's analysis will be used to argue the effects of Jacobean plays and the use of women as political devices that are used to communicate the political inspirations of the creator. Katherine in this play is unarguably a political device and has evolved from the loyal wife seen in the representation of her as Griselda, to the politically wise and passionate Catholic queen. Katherine's character blurs the divide between good and bad. As a Catholic, she represents the opposition to Henry and the immovability of the church, but as a woman she is also shown as a victim of Henry's tyranny. Amy Appleford believes that Katherine is the only character who is unambiguous in this play as she remains heroic to her cause.²⁶ Although her character is less debatable, her purpose within the play is more complicated than perhaps suggested by Rankin. Although she is a 'good' character, this chapter will see that Katherine's fight as the Spanish and Catholic queen, could also symbolize the continued opposition between Protestant England and Catholic Spain. This is emphasised by Shakespeare's timing of the birth of Elizabeth with the death of Katherine, as it is the Protestant Queen Elizabeth who ties the Protestant King James to the throne. This is further suggested by John N. King who believes that Elizabeth was revived as a "model ruler whose perpetual virginity symbolized political integrity, Protestant ideology, and a militantly interventionist policy against Spain. Because these values were increasingly found wanting at the court of England's Scottish king."²⁷ These views which attacked Jacobean pacifism also act against the 1604 Peace Treaty which was established early in James's

²⁵ Mark Rankin, "Henry VIII, Shakespeare, and the Jacobean Royal Court", *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, Vol.51, No.2, Tudor and Stuart Drama, (2011)

²⁶ Amy Appleford, "Shakespeare's Katherine of Aragon: Last Medieval Queen, First Recusant Martyr", *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 40:1, (Duke University Press: 2010) p.150

²⁷ John N. King, "Queen Elizabeth I: Representations of the Virgin Queen", *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No.1, (Cambridge University Press:1990) p.67

reign, that ended the twenty-year hostility England had with Spain under Elizabeth.²⁸ Katherine's characterisation in this text could therefore actually be inspired by James' political relationship with Spain and further the events of the Dutch Revolt, instead of asserting his claim as he was already established as the King of England by the time of the play.

The secondary literature discussed in the third chapter is especially influential towards understanding the impact of marriage and the roles of women. Dolan states that female characters are often portrayed through everyday tasks that would not have involved them, so as to allow for a romanticised view of female behaviours within marriages. William B. Robinson also builds upon this interpretation as he criticizes many Tudor films for giving women traditionally female roles that do not represent the more elite responsibilities of female consorts, which the work of Warnicke further explains. Basil Glyn argues that these recreations in film and fiction are made with the heritage of the British Monarchy in mind, so are designed to preserve their longevity and continuity in the narrative. This aligns with the Victorian wish for continuity in their histories as well as the political ideologies of the Conservative party in the 1980s, which was responded to with an increased popularity of feminist historical fiction pertaining to women. Lindsey was one such historian who became inspired in this movement in the 1970s and began studying Tudor women in the 1980s and was critical of the popular histories emerging in this time and of feminist historians largely focusing on later women.²⁹ These interpretations allow us to understand the use of Katherine as a vehicle for the perspectives of modern women, as well as being a link to Britain's past, creating a continuity from the present through an interest in heritage.

This thesis will initially use surviving artifacts and artworks made during Katherine's reign to show her contemporaneous historical representation. These will include the celebratory armour of Henry

²⁸ *ibid*

²⁹ Karen Lindsey, *Divorced, Beheaded, Survived*, p.xxix

VIII,³⁰ the belt chape of Henry's guard Ralph Felmingham³¹ and the woodcut of Henry and Katherine's joint coronation.³² These artifacts are decorated with Katherine's pomegranate and help to show Katherine's place as queen and the celebration of joining England with Spain. Henry's armour portrays the pomegranate interlinked with the Tudor Rose as celebration of their marriage and the chape which portrays Saint Barbara with the rose and the pomegranate on either side, also represents the diplomatic union that was upheld until the divorce. Upon the divorce, Felmingham who was still recorded as being in Henry's guard at the trial of Anne, perhaps discarded the chape into the Thames, where it was found years later. The positioning of the pomegranate, especially in the woodcut above Katherine, is very significant as it immortally marks Katherine's queenship and her status next to Henry.

Following the analysis of Katherine's queenship, this thesis will look at contemporary portraiture made of her. These will include the works of Michael Sittow who painted the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalene, with Katherine believed to be sitter. These will be compared to a portrait made by Sittow which was said to be of Katherine, but may actually be Henry's sister Mary, that shares many similarities to the previous two portraits. The iconography of these paintings aligns with the symbolic interpretations of Katherine drawn from the analysis of the pomegranate and continues to provide Katherine with a saintly image of a martyr. This interpretation of Katherine as a martyr will be further investigated by analysing a description of her funeral recorded in the Vienna Archives.³³ These earlier portraits will be compared to later artworks and recreations of Katherine to show how

³⁰ Armour, Silvered and engraved armour (c.1515; Tower of London, England, object number II.5)

³¹ Silver-gilt belt chape of Ralph Felmingham (c.1530; Medieval London gallery, Museum of London)

³² Stephen Hawes, *A Joyfull Medytacvon to All Englande*. (Woodcut; London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1509; Cambridge University Library)

³³ Contemporary description of the death and burial procession of Katherine of Aragon, (1536) Vienna Archives of Charles V, translation provided by the historians at Peterborough Cathedral

creators look back to their predecessors to create a familiar image of Katherine and use her representation to portray their own motivations.

In the second chapter, William Forrest's verse narrative of *The History of Grisild the Second: A narrative, in verse, of the Divorce of Queen Katherine of Arragon* (1588),³⁴ and Shakespeare's play *All is True* (1613),³⁵ will be analysed to understand how Katherine has been represented and recreated closest to her death. This will also show how these creators would use Katherine's memory to suit their political motivations and increase support for her daughter Mary. In the first example, Forrest portrays Katherine in a saintly fashion with the aim of showing her virtuousness and obedience. He does this through the description of Griselda but also in the margins alongside his text. The second on the other hand portrays Katherine's defiance to the divorce and shows her character as a Catholic to be on the side of defeat. This creates interesting interpretations of Shakespeare's motives and suggests that she could resemble the maintained peace England held with Spain under James's leadership.

In later years, *All is True* would inspire William Hogarth's engraving *Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn*.³⁶ Hogarth, who was famous for satire would use the play to promote his hatred of the wealthy and his political belief that the fall of Sir Robert Walpole was on the horizon. Hogarth would portray this through his caricature of Walpole as Cardinal Wolsey and his characterisation of Katherine and Henry Percy. The play would also continue to be performed into the Victorian era; this will be shown through an analysis of a portrait made of the Kemble Family performing *All is*

³⁴ William Forrest, *The History of Grisild the Second: A narrative, in verse, of the Divorce of Queen Katherine of Arragon*

³⁵ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*

³⁶ William Hogarth, *Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn*, (print of an engraving; London: c.1728-1729; Royal Academy of Arts, object number 17/3694)

True, with the famous tragedienne, Sarah Siddons playing Katherine at the trial. This portrait will be compared with another portraying a historical interpretation of the trial and the changes to Katherine's self-representation by creators representing or recreating her in the Victorian era.

The last primary source materials that will be analysed are twentieth and twenty-first century film and historical fiction as well as my account of Katherine's annual commemoration service held in 2019. These films include *The Private Lives of Henry VIII* (1933),³⁷ where Kathrine's character has been intentionally excluded, *The Sword and the Rose* (1953),³⁸ *Anne of the Thousand Days* (1969),³⁹ and *The Other Boleyn Girl* (2008),⁴⁰ as well as the television series *Henry VIII* (2003).⁴¹ These will be compared to see differences in Katherine's recreations and how they have changed from her self-representation. The historical fiction novels *Katherine of Aragon the Virgin Widow* (1961) by Jean Plaidy⁴² and *The Constant Princess* (2006) by Philippa Gregory,⁴³ will also be compared to further explore the development of historical fiction that is based around the roles of women and the definition of marriage. Analysing these films will show the restriction of Katherine's character by the romanticised view of marriage and the divorce and the historical

³⁷ Alexander Korda, Dir. *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, (1933)

³⁸ Ken Annakin, Dir. *The Sword and the Rose*, (1953)

³⁹ Charles Jarott, Dir. *Anne of a Thousand Days*, (1969)

⁴⁰ Justin Chadwick, Dir. *The Other Boleyn Girl*, (2008)

⁴¹ Pete Travis, Dir. *Henry VIII*, (2003)

⁴² Jean Plaidy, *Katherine of Aragon Three Novels in One, Katherine, The Virgin Widow*, The Three Rivers Press, Crown Publishing Group, (2005)

⁴³ Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, Harper Collins (2006)

novels, which have greater space to discuss Katherine's character, will show more of her contemporaneous early life, which is largely left unexplained by film.

Chapter 1 will observe her story through the iconography of her chosen emblem, the pomegranate. The pomegranate is always placed next to, or below, Henry's rose and identifies her place next to Henry. The symbolism of the pomegranate further foreshadows her marriage and reign as whole. The pomegranate shows Katherine's struggles while remaining trapped in England and within her marriage, as well as the losses she suffered of all but one of her children. Through the symbolism of the pomegranate, we can understand the importance of inheritance and heritage. Additionally, we can see the wider impact of Katherine's religious devotion and actions as one of the most advanced women of her time. This analysis will be followed by an interpretation of her to discuss a contemporary insight into her later life and her religious devotions that can also be linked to the connotations of martyrdom identified from the pomegranate. This is especially significant as it is here that Katherine is often re-imagined. Both the first and second chapters will look at how she is perceived by artists and her contemporaries, who choose to link her with biblical and legendary figures of the past, including the Virgin Mary, to elevate her virtuous personality. This chapter will conclude with an analysis of a contemporary description of Katherine's funeral in 1536.⁴⁴ This source shows a perspective of a loyal follower of Katherine and the intricacies of the symbolism surrounding Katherine and her memory.

The second chapter of this thesis will address the ways in which Katherine has been remembered and recreated through fiction and art made closest to her death. Perceptions of Katherine have changed over time with creators using her to bolster their own agendas. Understanding authorship and provenance allows viewers to see some motivations of creators and specific messages to their audience. Chapter 2 will also show that women were often trapped within abusive marriages by the

⁴⁴ Contemporary description of the death and burial procession of Katherine of Aragon, (1536)

womanly virtues expected of them. This is supported by the work of Ian Maclean who states that a woman, due to her “tendency to vice” and having “weaker powers of reason”, “is furthermore subjected to the ‘natural’ state of marriage in which the wife ‘must bend her will to the will and authority of her husband’”⁴⁵ This criticism of marriage will be especially shown through analysing Katherine’s representation as the character of Griselda within William Forrest’s *The History of Grisild the Second* (1588) and in her recreation in Shakespeare’s *All is True*, where Katherine is subjected to the actions of Henry and is entrapped by the Cardinal’s expectations of her womanly virtues.

This chapter will move on to show how Hogarth used the play *All is True* and Katherine within it, to portray his political attitudes towards Sir Robert Walpole. This scene in the engraving shows the meeting of Anne and Henry before Katherine and Henry Percy, which allowed for a fitting caricature of Robert Walpole as Cardinal Wolsey, portraying his expected decline from power. When this chapter later compares scenes from the play and more historically accurate portraits, it becomes greatly apparent that Hogarth manipulated both the play and the history it was inspired by to fit his agenda. By using real historical characters, Hogarth’s engraving also portrays the importance of having a continuation from the present to the past when presenting political issues. By looking at images created between the Georgian and Victorian periods, this chapter shows the importance of both the creation of a continuation to the past and of the Tudors themselves to the people of the Victorian era. According to Georgianna Ziegler, Queen Victoria had a great interest in her Tudor ancestors and was especially sympathetic towards Katherine. The interest the Victorians had in developing their histories is demonstrated in the historical research and the historical fiction in this period, which provided a continuity from the past to the present as a means of reassurance in

⁴⁵ Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman*, p.51

a time of great change. This final topic allows for Chapter 3 to build upon the place of fiction and assess the impact of Katherine into the twentieth and twenty-first century.

The third chapter will look at the relationship between female authorship and readership. It will also look at messages regarding modern and Tudor issues with marriage and academic and political achievements of women hidden within narratives for modern readers. This investigation will also analyse the confessional and realist elements of historical fiction to better understand the author's criticisms of marriage and the effect of focusing on marriage on the historic interpretation of Katherine. This will be supported by the analysis of film and the popularity of historical drama. Looking at modern recreations of Katherine will show that they often do not reflect the way in which Katherine presented herself and usually do not promote her unusual successes as a queen regent and as a learned woman. Instead, Katherine is identified as the cast-off, divorced and infertile wife of Henry, who is therefore recreated as a mourning mother, deep in isolation and sorrow. This I have found to be a rather common, but shallow interpretation of Katherine, as it omits her successes which had elevated her reputation as a deeply intellectual and politically wise partner to Henry and instead popularizes the romanticism and drama of the end of her marriage.

This characterisation as a suffering mother was perhaps originally based on early reflections of Katherine created with the intention of encouraging loyalty to Mary through her mother's suffering. This idea will be discussed further in Chapter 2 and Katherine in fiction will also be compared to her historical representation (as discussed in Chapter One) as well as to her presentation at her annual memorial in Chapter 3. These comparisons in Chapter 3 will be made through cross examining the characterisations of Katherine as a mourning widow and mother, an alienated princess and as a peacemaker, using examples across several films and novels. At Peterborough Cathedral's memorial, Katherine is remembered as a loyal and loving Queen, who maintained peace even through her sacrifices and confinement. This Katherine who is presented to visitors, flatters Katherine's historical account. Analysing versions of Katherine that are created from different

motivations allows for an interesting reflection of how Katherine has been recreated, against how she has been remembered. Analysing thematically allows for critical thinking about the representations of the Tudors, but also about the roles in which these especially female characters perform within the narratives and as devices for creators.

It is essential to link fictional recreations of events discussed in Chapter 2 and 3, to the analysis of actual events in Chapter 1. It is also important to compare Katherine self-presentation to her presentation at her memorial, which is detailed in Chapter 3, to see if she is remembered as the person she was in life. This allows for a view of the continuation of Katherine in the past and how she is chosen to be reimagined in the present. Chapter 2 which shows a perspective of Katherine made closer to her time, suggests how she remained relevant after Henry's later dramas. This links into Dolan's argument that Katherine was over-shadowed by Anne Boleyn which is largely discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter One: The Symbolism and Iconography of Katherine of Aragon

Katherine of Aragon arrived in England with the mission of marrying the heir to the throne and providing both England and Spain with future heirs. However, her life was full of struggles and tragedies which can be understood through the symbolism and iconography of her chosen emblem, the pomegranate, as well as through her portrayal later in her life through portraiture and by a description of her funeral.

The Pomegranate

The pomegranate is the symbol of the city of Granada, and it is from the fruit that the city derives its name. Granada's streets are filled with pomegranates and the fruit has long been a poignant religious symbol in Granada with the conquered Moors viewing pomegranates as gifts from Allah. Following the combined siege of Castile and Aragon to push the Moors out of Spain, Granada found itself the last Moorish stronghold. In 1492, Granada marked the Catholic Monarchs' final victory, which was the pinnacle of success for Isabella and Ferdinand, as the defenders of the Catholic Faith. It was so important that they adopted Granada's emblem of the pomegranate and incorporated it into their own, where it remains in the lower section of the coat of arms of Spain (fig.1). The emblems of Castile and Aragon also remain on the coat of arms of Granada too, which depicts a pomegranate, surrounded by lions for Aragon and Castles for Castile (fig.2). Katherine would also take the pomegranate as her emblem of her queenship. It not only marked her family's religious devotion and sacrifice, but also symbolized her home since the age of six. The pomegranate survives as her symbolic representation, although in hindsight, her decision to represent herself with this is perhaps rather ironic and even tragic. Unfortunately for Katherine where her first marriage may not have been consummated, in her second she would only face

tragedy after tragedy. The pomegranate became a “short hand for the reigning Queen”⁴⁶ that would sit beside Henry’s Tudor rose and was not intended to stand alone.⁴⁷

The pomegranate marked Katherine’s home and honour as a Spanish princess, but through its many seeds it also resonated with her mission to marry and form a friendship between England and Spain, and to produce many heirs to continue the lines of the Tudor dynasty *and* Castile and Aragon.

Katherine miscarried often and although carried at least six children, only one of whom, a girl called Mary, survived infancy. Her first, a son called Prince Henry, Duke of Cornwall, would die at only a few months old, following the great celebrations and tournaments held in his name.

Prematurely, Henry had thought he had secured the Tudor line. The pomegranate as it had been intended, can be found in, or on surviving artefacts and images from the period next to the rose. On Henry’s armour of 1514 (fig.3), the pomegranate is clearly engraved to celebrate their union.⁴⁸ The engraving on the armour

consists of a figure of St. George on the breastplate and one of St. Barbara on the backplate.

The rest of the suit is decorated with an all-over pattern of scrolling branches from which sprout Tudor roses and the Pomegranates of Granada with, on the leg armour, the addition of fleur-dr-lys ... The fan-plates of the poleyns bear the sheaf of arrows badge adopted by Ferdinand II of Aragon and the combined Rose and Pomegranate badge of Katherine of

⁴⁶ Hope Johnston, “Catherine of Aragon’s pomegranate, revisited”, *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, Vol.13 no.2, Cambridge Bibliographical Society (2005) pp.153-173, p.155

⁴⁷ Hope Johnston, “Catherine of Aragon’s pomegranate, revisited”, p.159

⁴⁸ Silvered and engraved armour (1514), object number II.5, Royal Armouries Collection, Tower of London, England

Aragon while on the toecaps of the sabatons are the castle of Castile and the Tudor portcullis.⁴⁹

The armour fully embodies the political nature of the relationship between the two families. This is further seen in the famous woodcut of their joint coronation, the Tudor rose above Henry and the pomegranate above Katherine (fig.4).⁵⁰ The History Museum of London houses another surviving icon of Katherine's queenship, a silver-gilt belt chape that was discovered in the river Thames in 1989 (fig.5).⁵¹ The chape shows an image of Saint Barbara, the saint of artilleries, but on either side it bears the pomegranate and the Tudor rose, as well as the initials of its owner, Ralph Felmingham, the Sergeant-at-arms of Henry VIII. He held a royal appointment that the museum describes as being like the role of a royal bodyguard. The placement of the pomegranate on this item is significant because it confirms Katherine's reign, but also depicts the times of uncertainty at the end. The design of the chape reflects the owner's loyalty to both his King, Queen and the Catholic faith. According to the museum, Felmingham was involved in two trials: the first of Lord William Dace in 1534, and the second of Queen Anne Boleyn and her brother, Lord Rochford, in 1536.⁵² This item therefore marks the short time before Katherine's downfall, as Felmingham would have

⁴⁹ Physical description of Silvered and engraved armour 1514, object 11.5, *Royal Armouries Collection*, [Last accessed 12/04/20], URL: https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-18.html?fbclid=IwAR1StUsKQOWMNFMNxL2WxIoiArsJf5e8frACMb7r9bz4s_v1vqXffjTCzWU

⁵⁰ Stephen Hawes, *A Joyfull Medytacvon to All Englande*. printed Wynkyn de Worde, 4to, n.d. (Cambridge University Library) (1509) (The Coronation of Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon)

⁵¹ Jackie Keily, "Pomegranate and rose: Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon", *Museum of London*, (20.04.2016), <https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/discover/pomegranate-and-rose-henry-viii-and-katharine-aragon> [Last Accessed 26.09.19]

⁵² *ibid*

removed the chape after the King's decision to divorce Katherine in 1533. The armour, chape and woodcut show that the pomegranate would sit beside or below the rose. Hope Johnston explains that the pomegranate does not appear in many woodcuts, but when it does it is usually as a companion to Henry's emblem, showing that the emblem of a queen consort would not be presented alone or as the focus.⁵³ The pomegranate as such lasts as Katherine's immortal mark of her reign as it was chosen following her marriage. This suggests that the emblem of the queen consort really holds the purpose of identifying the marriage between the king and queen and was not necessarily intended to represent the queen independently. The pomegranate would therefore act as a personal reminder of Katherine's powerful family and her home that she was uniting with England, whilst her marriage would reduce her independent status.

The pomegranate is not only the fruit of Granada. It is also known to be the forbidden fruit of the Underworld in Greek mythology. According to the myth of Persephone and Hades, Persephone ate some of the seeds of a pomegranate, which resulted in her having to return to Hades' capture for one third of the year, where the rest she could spend with her mother Demeter. This provides a rationale for the seasons, the coming of winter and the introduction of famine. It also includes the motifs of subjection and entrapment. This myth also resonates with the life of Katherine, who arrived as a prospective wife but was forced to remain once she was made a widow and remained trapped in England. As a young wife, Katherine's 'winter' was rough with illness and Katherine's 'famine' would continue while her living conditions deteriorated during her widowhood under Henry VII, until she eventually became useful as the first female ambassador in Europe. Following the divorce, Katherine was subjected to Henry VIII's aggression and like Demeter and Persephone, Katherine and Mary were kept apart. Like Persephone, Katherine's experiences would lead her to be entrapped by the will of men, making the pomegranate also a symbol of subjection, as well as the

⁵³ Hope Johnston, "Catherine of Aragon's pomegranate, revisited," p.171

negative impact of marriage. In the next chapter this subjection as a result of marriage will be explored further through the character Griselda in William Forrest's adaptation of *The Clerk's Tale*.⁵⁴ Griselda, like Katherine and Persephone, suffers from the restraints which marriage places on women and the power it gives men to manipulate the will and actions of women. This text was made following the death of Katherine and portrays her as the loyal but mourning wife of Henry who is remembered for her subjection and suffering at the hands of a tyrant husband.

The symbolism of the pomegranate can also portray Katherine as a Catholic martyr. Firstly, the pomegranate, due to its deep red juices, has come to be known as a symbol of love, life, death and of the blood of martyrs.⁵⁵ It is also a common Christian symbol for the suffering of Christ and his resurrection.⁵⁶ Katherine, as the last Catholic queen before the reformation, would suffer for standing by her faith. Only in her daughter's reign would she be re-legitimized, and Catholicism be reinstated. Secondly, the pomegranate is also common in images of Christ and in the hands of the Virgin Mary, who also resonates with Katherine's character. According to Udo Becker, "the pomegranate's aroma and large number of seeds were interpreted as a symbol of Mary's beauty and many virtues" and resembles the perfect Christian by its spherical shape.⁵⁷ Katherine continually asserted her virtuousness through her humbleness, piety and, above all, virginity at the time of her first marriage. When Katherine faced her judges, she continued to defend her virtuousness and stood by her faith. Katherine saw herself as a true and honest Christian and refused the order to

⁵⁴ William Forrest, *The History of Grisild the Second: A narrative, in verse, of the Divorce of Queen Katherine of Arragon*

⁵⁵ Udo Becker, *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Symbols*, Continuum International Publishing Group, (2005) pp.239-240

⁵⁶ George Ferguson, *Signs & Symbols in Christian Art*, Oxford University Press, (1961) p.37

⁵⁷ Udo Becker, *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Symbols*, p.239

enter a nunnery and to accept the new oath of succession. Katherine was now removed from court and from her daughter. However, the English people were loyal to Katherine as their one true queen, and this created a problem for Henry. As the daughter of two Spanish monarchs, in a previously Catholic country, Katherine became a threat as a symbol not only for civil unrest, but also of Spanish invasion.⁵⁸ Eustace Chapuys would tell of Katherine's refusal to bring deliberate harm to the English people and due to her unfazed loyalty to Henry, she would not be convinced to "agree to an imperial invasion of England on her behalf" and "refused to have anything to do with the plan."⁵⁹ Katherine's household and health would decline as a result, and regardless of Henry's efforts to push Katherine away from the public and promote the Lady Anne, "it remained Queen Catherine, sick and low-spirited as she might be, who was the target of popular affection."⁶⁰ This shows the symbolism of the perfect Christian and of a martyr to resonate with Katherine.

Rather than unsettling the country she loved further, Katherine chose peace. This is where she can be interpreted as a martyr as she sacrificed her well-being, in the defence of her damaging marriage and Catholicism, to maintain peace. This therefore makes her choice of a pomegranate tragic, increased so by her posthumous legitimization through the resurrection of the Catholic Church under Mary as Queen. Mary would also choose the pomegranate as an emblem of her reign, forming a "reminder of Catherine's heritage, and a statement of Mary's royal patronage."⁶¹ Katherine's deepest desire was to see her daughter succeed in ascending the throne and Mary would reinstate herself as the heir to the throne of England, with the same strength her mother and

⁵⁸ Alison Weir, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, pp.215-216

⁵⁹ Alison Weir, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, p.216

⁶⁰ Antonia Fraser, *The Wives of Henry VIII*, p.174

⁶¹ Hope Johnston, "Catherine of Aragon's pomegranate, revisited," p.173

grandmother had. By doing so, Mary was also acknowledging Katherine as the legitimate wife of Henry VIII, giving Katherine and fellow Catholics some redemption. This is emphasised by her choice to maintain the emblem of the pomegranate, dimidiated with the Tudor rose, as it joins her two parents together (fig.6). It also shows the continuation of the line of Aragon and Castile through Mary, allowing Katherine to fulfil her duty. This heritage is reinforced by Mary choosing the emblem of The Bundle of Arrows (fig.7), created by Ferdinand and Isabella to represent them as a shield of the Catholic Church. This emblem shows Mary as a defender of the Catholic Faith, a title which her mother had also been graced with alongside her father.⁶²

From an Ambassador to a future Queen

Julia Fox shows that Isabella's children led an "itinerant life: during the conflict's many campaigns, the queen had kept her offspring at her side whenever possible so that she could supervise their education and upbringing."⁶³ Like Isabella, Katherine understood languages, politics and tactics and was determined to find her feet in England. Tremlett believes that Isabella had had a particularly keen interest in Katherine's education, so much so that Katherine appears to have started learning with her first "letter-case" from the early age of six, when seven was generally the age more expected. It was at this point that Katherine would begin to learn to read, write and understand Latin within a household where the "education of daughters was taken with an unusual and remarkable degree of seriousness."⁶⁴

⁶² Antonia Fraser, *The Wives of Henry VIII*, p.77

⁶³ Julia Fox, *Sister Queens Katherine of Aragon & Juana, Queen of Castile*, W F Howes LTD (2012) p.7

⁶⁴ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry's Spanish Queen A Biography*, p.47

Isabella wanted to provide her daughters with the necessary skills and knowledge to become successful queens, wives and future mothers themselves. Isabella had successfully formed herself into a formidable regnant ruler and her success began to change the way women rulers, including her future granddaughter in England, would be viewed. As Fox argues, “Ferdinand soon discovered that his bride was anything but the submissive stereotype of fifteenth century womanhood. This was no figurehead but a queen in her own right, proving that the concept of a woman sovereign was no oxymoron.”⁶⁵ By controlling her own education, Isabella created new opportunities not only for herself, but for her daughters and her granddaughter. As wives, “Katherine and Juana were led to believe, they should dedicate their lives to the service of God and act as ambassadors to their homeland.”⁶⁶ For Katherine this was more literal as she was made an ambassador for Spain between her marriages.

On the 19th of May 1507 Ferdinand chose Katherine to act as the ambassador for Spain, while they searched for a replacement for Puebla.⁶⁷ Katherine became the first woman in Europe to have such a capacity, enhancing her reputation and position at the court of Henry VII and also raising her out of desperate conditions. Katherine learned to deal with the King, both when flattering him and disputing with him, but she knew her limits. The King “hearing the news [of her appointment], ‘rejoiced’, although it was obvious that he and his advisors believed Katherine to be a lightweight who could easily be manipulated. To some extent she would confound them.”⁶⁸ According to the commentary of Weir, working as an ambassador helped ease Katherine’s worries slightly and

⁶⁵ Julia Fox, *Sister Queens Katherine of Aragon & Juana, Queen of Castile*, p.13

⁶⁶ Julia Fox, *Sister Queens Katherine of Aragon & Juana, Queen of Castile*, p.25

⁶⁷ Alison Weir, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII*, p.59

⁶⁸ *ibid*

improved her physical health, but her financial worries did little to ease her concerned state of mind, which was untreatable by a doctor.⁶⁹ It would seem that, following her diplomatic placement, Katherine played a greater role in securing her second marriage than first thought. Tremlett argues that Katherine had impressed Ferdinand, who had trusted her to make her own negotiations, as she had already secured her marriage upon the death of Henry VII, before Ferdinand had even written to her. Ferdinand commanded her to use all her “skill and prudence to show what you can do...to swiftly close the deal.”⁷⁰ Her involvement in England was so crucial and respected that Ferdinand also wrote “I trust so much in your virtue and prudence that I not only leave to you the direction of your own affairs but would entrust the salvation of my soul to you.”⁷¹ With her own authoritative power, Katherine was able to have a confident presence in the political field. This enabled Katherine to fulfil a role that exceeded what was expected of a queen consort. Warnicke develops this significance further by explaining that

The consorts' diplomatic opportunities varied ... Katherine of Aragon's brief appointment as her father's resident ambassador in England had more far-reaching implications than did the usual queens' roles in foreign policy decision making. Because their husbands' councilors handled negotiation for their children's marriages, only Katherine of Aragon's opinion was sought about her daughter's arrangements, probably because of her status as an aunt of Emperor Charles V.⁷²

⁶⁹ *ibid*

⁷⁰ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry's Spanish Queen*, p.156

⁷¹ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry's Spanish Queen*, pp.156-157

⁷² Retha. M. Warnicke, *Elizabeth of York and Her Six-Daughters-in-Law*, p.245

Warnicke suggests that consorts who had connections abroad had greater responsibilities and involvement in foreign policy. Katherine's queenship made her highly considered due to her having held a greater influence in council, following an early political career and prepared upbringing.

The inheritance of the pomegranate defines Katherine as a daughter of Isabella and represents her journey to being entrusted with the title of Regent, Governor of the Realm and Captain General of the Forces. Henry clearly trusted her as his intimate advisor and to rule his kingdom while he was away. Katherine's tactical knowledge, which she learned next to her mother, led to great successes for England. Katherine was highly praised for the strong advice she had given Henry upon his campaign in France, whilst instructing her troops to win the Battle of Flodden, against the Scots, all while being heavily pregnant. This shows Katherine's resemblance to her mother, as her actions displayed her political capability of organizing an army and its supplies while managing her womanly duties of raising a family. Katherine's experience and authority gave her the rank to lead the army with Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, successfully defeating the invading Scots, but it was her education and understanding that readied her to act and lead. Katherine Parr, the only other of Henry's wives to be entrusted as regent, was highly educated for the time too. Both queens are often considered the most intellectual of the six wives, but the greatest difference in their regencies is that following their roles as intercessors, Parr also had a council that had to agree with or assist her decisions. This council was perhaps put in place due to Henry's increased paranoia, or Parr's limited experience in comparison to Aragon who as agreed by Warnicke, as a diplomat and ambassador had much more governmental experience.⁷³ Katherine showed the abilities and confidence that her mother had instilled in her and using Isabella's emblem, the pomegranate, strengthens Katherine's image by aligning their achievements. The inheritance of the pomegranate also displays the familial priority of educating daughters to achieve such success.

⁷³ Retha M. Warnicke, *Elizabeth of York and Her Six-Daughters-in-Law*, pp.245-246

Considering Katherine as a teacher and a scholar

Katherine's own education was unusual. This was because prior to the humanist learning that Katherine received, most women did not have the opportunity to receive such an education, usually because of their family station, or academic inability to share learning. As historian Elizabeth Teresa Howe explains, those women who received an education

generally did so within the confines of their own homes. In some cases, tutors might be hired; in others, the parents would serve as teachers to their children. Beyond the direct but limited examples provided by saints, queens, nuns, or noblewomen, other sources of guidance in the instruction of young girls may be found in a number of conduct books and pedagogical treatises of the young.⁷⁴

Katherine was one such woman who learned besides her mother and under tutors handpicked by her to teach Katherine and her siblings the new humanist learning of the time. Katherine also studied saints all her life which increased her piety and devotion. The change towards the new education of women would impact some women more than others between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Elizabeth Mazzola further states that like Katherine, "Many girls, especially aristocratic ones, were tutored alongside their brothers."⁷⁵ Prior to her move to England in 1501, Katherine was one such girl who was educated alongside her brother Juan, under tutelage of two Italian humanists Antonio

⁷⁴ Elizabeth Teresa Howe, *Education and Women in the Early Modern Hispanic World*, Ashgate Publishing Limited (2008) p.99

⁷⁵ Elizabeth Mazzola, "Schooling Shrews and Grooming Queens in the Tudor Classroom", *Critical Survey Volume 22, Number 1*, (2010) pp.1-25, p.2

and Alessandro Geraldino, who educated them in the classics.⁷⁶ Tremlett explains that Katherine and her sisters became, “four of the most learned women in Europe” as a result of Isabella embracing this new learning from Italy.⁷⁷ Later the court of England would welcome this new learning with great thanks to Katherine, who like her mother, encouraged her fellow women and daughter to pursue learning.

Although the organization of Katherine’s education came naturally from her mother’s own priorities, Mazzola argues that other parents would have less ease deciding how their girls would be educated and by who. The questions of ‘what’ and ‘who’ would “perplex humanist thinkers and religious authorities as well as the girls’ parents.”⁷⁸ This, however, was more to do with what women could appropriately be taught and less about the financial implications. Mazzola explains this further from her reading of Linda Pollock. Mazzola states that

early modern parents might spend more on their daughters’ schooling than they did on their sons... when ultimately the results needed to be nearly invisible, with women strictly prohibited from the same public sphere for which their brothers were not merely trained to inhabit but to rule over.⁷⁹

⁷⁶Timothy G Elston, “Transformation of Continuity? Sixteenth-Century Education and the Legacy of Catherine of Aragon, Mary I and Juan Luis Vives”, *“High and Mighty Queens” of Early Modern England Realities and Representations Edited by Carole Levin, Debra Barrett-Graves, Jo Eldridge Carney*, Palgrave Macmillan (2003) pp.11-26, p.13

⁷⁷ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry’s Spanish Queen A Biography*, p.47

⁷⁸Elizabeth Mazzola, “Schooling Shrews and Grooming Queens in the Tudor Classroom”, pp.2-3

⁷⁹ *ibid*

By receiving the same lessons as her brother, Katherine had an unusual start into traditionally male spheres that she would be active in during her reign. The expectations for learned women was changing with the political, religious and humanist beliefs around them, but during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it was often believed that women would not progress into the realms of sophisticated learning and position due to the weakness of their gender. The humanist movement would begin to change the ideas of what a woman could and should do. Humanist learning allowed classical learning to reinforce and appreciate religious beliefs, rather than challenge them, and Katherine's patronage promoted this movement.⁸⁰ Fraser argues that Katherine, was "rated" by the highly acclaimed humanist Erasmus, for her scholarship and attentiveness to the work of fellow humanists. He believed more in her patronage than he did of the King's, for he saw her as more consistent with less wavering interests. This is reflected by Fraser's example of Katherine's response to the thesis of Martin Luther about reform and indulgences.⁸¹ Katherine's patronage of the new learning encouraged intellectual women, who were previously deemed dangerous, to pursue advanced learning. Katherine stood as an example of a scholarly female ruler to women at her court, especially for her daughter. Katherine helped to move ideas of womanly virtue by pursuing knowledge, but also by increasing her piety through her intense devotional studies of the bible and saints. Katherine had proven, as her mother had, that a woman could rule and started to turn the now outdated belief that women could not progress into sophisticated academia for fear of losing their virtue.

Katherine is famous for pioneering the importance of women's education, brought about by her specific interest in raising Mary. Tremlett states that "Mary's education was one of Catherine's chief concerns from the start. She herself set about teaching her daughter the basics of Latin and

⁸⁰ Antonia Fraser, *The Wives of Henry VIII*, p.76

⁸¹ Antonia Fraser, *The Wives of Henry VIII*, p.77

delighted in Mary's precocious skills in dancing and, as a musician, at the keyboard of a spinet or plucking a lute."⁸² Although Katherine's involvement in Mary's education generally took on a supervisory nature, she wanted assurance that Mary was practicing the Latin that they studied together after Mary was sent to Wales. Fraser writes that the Queen was glad that Mary had switched from her teachings to Master Federston: "Rather wistfully the Queen asked Princess Mary sometimes to pass on her exercises when Federston had corrected them: 'For it shall be a great comfort to me to see you keep your Latin and fair writing and all.'"⁸³ The effects of Katherine's drive to educate her daughter were court wide. Katherine's own interests made it fashionable for other women to follow suit and Katherine soon became a patron for studies at court.⁸⁴ English humanist Thomas More shared this support for learned women, including for his own successful daughter Margaret Roper, who as Jaime Goodrich details "gained a brilliant reputation among contemporaries for her scholarship."⁸⁵ Maclean explains that the change was largely due to "dislocations" of the philosophies surrounding the progression of women, often caused by "the activities of queens, queen regents and court ladies...Claims that women have equal virtue and mental powers and an equal right to education at home become more strident throughout Europe after the middle of the sixteenth century."⁸⁶ This would prove Katherine's actions to have had an important impact in this movement that would continue into her daughter's rule.

⁸² Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry's Spanish Queen A Biography*, p.239

⁸³ Antonia Fraser, *The Wives of Henry VIII*, p.99

⁸⁴ Antonia Fraser, *The Wives of Henry VIII*, p.78

⁸⁵ Jaime Goodrich, "Thomas More and Margaret More Roper: A Case for Rethinking Women's Participation in the Early Modern Public Sphere", *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, (2008) p.1022

⁸⁶ Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman, A Study in the fortunes of scholasticism and medical science in European intellectual life*, p.66

When it came to Mary's education, Katherine requested the help and guidance of the Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives, who wrote a conduct book titled *The Education of a Christian Woman*⁸⁷ under her patronage. Between Katherine's early education and her powerful role model, Isabella, Katherine's support of the New Learning is unsurprising, even less so her welcoming of Vives. It would seem that

once queen of England, she [Katherine] indulged her passion for learning and patronage as had Tudor women before her...there was a long tradition of supporting the new learning [in the house of Tudor] though its establishment as the scholarship for the new monarch did not take place until Princess Mary's birth.⁸⁸

This provides further evidence of Katherine's lasting impact and activity. Howe depicts this text as being highly influential and it was widely published in several editions throughout Spain. This also shows that through her patronage of humanists, Katherine indirectly helped to add to the texts which daughters could study within their homes. Howe argues that

The *Instrucción* became one of the principle theoretical manuals for the education of women and girls in the first half of the sixteenth century. As such, it marks a transition from medieval, conventional education to the humanistic approach characteristic of the Renaissance.⁸⁹

However, there is strong criticism of Vives for having some draconian beliefs that question the place of female eloquence and female to female education. Howe points out that as the *Instrucción*

⁸⁷ Juan Luis Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman a sixteenth-century manual*, University of Chicago Press (2000)

⁸⁸ *ibid*

⁸⁹ Elizabeth Teresa Howe, *Education and Women in the Early Modern Hispanic World*, pp.99-100

was dedicated to Katherine, for her daughter the future heir, Vives does distinguish between “what is suitable for a future monarch and what is appropriate for an ordinary woman.”⁹⁰ However, the wider friction surrounding female progression promoted by the humanist movement and the beliefs of the old ways is still vividly apparent. Vives was immovable on the belief that a woman must remain silent and obedient. For Jordan, “Even such an ostensible feminist as Vives could not renounce the main tenets of Aristotle's “anti-feminism.””⁹¹ Gloria Kaufman studies Vives work and identifies the part which sparks the strongest criticism from historians such as Jordan and Kaufman within his chapter "Of the Learning of Maids”;

But I give no license to a woman to be a teacher, nor to have authority of the man but to be in silence. For Adam was first made, and after Eve, and Adam was not betrayed, the Woman was betrayed into the breach of the Commandment. Therefore because a Woman is a frail thing and of weak discretion, and that may lightly be deceived: which thing our first mother Eve sheweth, whom the Devil caught with a light argument. Therefore a woman should not teach, lest when she hath taken a false opinion...she spread it into the hearers, by the authority of mastership.⁹²

Kaufman agrees that Vives was too embedded in the Aristotelian belief that women could not be trusted with the authority and responsibility that came with advanced learning, eloquence, and teaching. Jordan specifically states that his work “argues for the humanist education of women,

⁹⁰ Elizabeth Teresa Howe, *Education and Women in the Early Modern Hispanic World*, p.101

⁹¹ Constance Jordan, “Feminism and the Humanists: The Case of Sir Thomas Elyot's Defence of Good Women,” *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (1983), pp.181-201, pp.187-188

⁹² Gloria Kaufman, "Juan Luis Vives on the Education of Women," *Signs*, Vol.3, no.4, The University of Chicago Press, (1978) pp.891-896 p.893

[but] paradoxically concludes with his condemnation of women in public life.”⁹³ Howe explains that Vives’ difference to other humanists came from his almost obsession with preserving feminine chastity, where he suggested strictures to maintain a woman’s behaviour in public and the home. This according to Howe struck Erasmus as too Spanish, especially in “His advocacy of enclosing women and girls to protect their virtue made of their homes virtual monasteries”.⁹⁴ These were attitudes which others such as Thomas Elyot were more willing to move away from. Kaufman argues that although many would give praise to the forward-thinking Vives, the evidence of his actual works does not support these claims. Kaufman believes that Vives aligns himself with the contemporary patriarchy of the time with an “antifeminist dicta.”⁹⁵ Kaufman quite aptly summarizes that “The notion that a woman's chastity is constantly endangered is the single idea that occupies most of Vives's attention and delimits his view of the formal education girls should receive.”⁹⁶ This undermines his dissatisfaction with those who opposed learned women and it is this attitude that controls the limits of women’s educational freedoms. His work, therefore, as Valerie Wayne argues, is more accurately understood as a “conduct book,”⁹⁷ intent on preserving a woman’s virtues before marriage than as an instruction for women’s education. This also shows marriage to be restrictive upon the learning of women and undermine scholarship.

⁹³ *ibid*

⁹⁴ Elizabeth Teresa Howe, *Education and Women in the Early Modern Hispanic World*, p.100

⁹⁵ Gloria Kaufman, "Juan Luis Vives on the Education of Women", p.891

⁹⁶ Gloria Kaufman, "Juan Luis Vives on the Education of Women", p.895

⁹⁷ Margaret Patterson Honnay, Valerie Wayne, “Some Sad Sentence: Vives’ *Instruction of a Christian Woman*”, *Silent But for the Word*, The Kent State University Press, Kent, Ohio, (1985) p.16

It is important to understand that the issue of teaching can also be connected to the need for women to have permission to speak. As daughters of Eve, women were prohibited from teaching or exercising any form of authority when a man was involved. The apostle Paul, in the first of his epistles to the pastor Timothy, wrote that “I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.”⁹⁸ Paul believed that women should learn quietly and in submission, emphasising the need for them to find salvation through bearing children and maintaining their faith and propriety. Maclean identifies Tertullian as another individual who believed that women should obey men, and it is likely that Vives’ discomfort with female teaching begins here. The root of the taboo around women and education resolves in a woman’s “natural infirmity”⁹⁹ and Maclean agrees that “Renaissance writers on this subject do not seem to abandon such beliefs.”¹⁰⁰ Jordon identifies that this prohibition of speech is derived from “Aristotle’s conception of a woman as emotional” which would likely make her judgment faulty.¹⁰¹ Women who were described as too emotional were seen to be inept at eloquence and wisdom. These were skills which Vives and his predecessors, barred from women, which in turn barred them from “civil police”. Howe argues that even the example of the eloquent woman, Katherine of Aragon herself, did not sway Vives’s view and goes as far as to suggest that “His work reflects the unease of most male writers, including More and Erasmus”.¹⁰² This unease was in relation to the worry that women could become garrulous and if they were also intellectual or clever, they could

⁹⁸ 1 Timothy 2:12–14

⁹⁹ Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman*, p.18

¹⁰⁰ *ibid*

¹⁰¹ Constance Jordan, “Feminism and the Humanists: The Case of Sir Thomas Elyot’s Defence of Good Women”, p.192

¹⁰² Elizabeth Teresa Howe, *Education and Women in the Early Modern Hispanic World*, p.101

also be dangerous.¹⁰³ Howe explains that these men were comforted by their notion of assertive women being only as a rule could allow these women to be explained away as "virile women".¹⁰⁴

Katherine was very involved in matters of policy and governing that were deemed to be masculine and could therefore be described as 'virile' in this way. For Mary, the place between maintaining obedience and her future place as Queen was made difficult, as from a young age there was a considerable emphasis placed on securing a marriage for the princess. Although Katherine encouraged Mary's education to specifically prepare her for her future marriage arrangements, it is known that she soon removed herself from Vives when he did not create works that she had hoped to be beneficial for her daughter. This is reinforced by Linda Porter's belief that the 'education' with which Vives was providing Mary with was not helpful, but harmful to her and her later reign, as he was imprinting the idea on to her that all women were inferior to their husbands.¹⁰⁵ This would have been irrelevant to Mary as a Queen in her own right. Vives believed that women should remain pious, and pure, and that they should be rarely seen in public in order to preserve this. As Queen it would be near impossible for Mary to stay away from her people. Vives also strongly believed that even women's thoughts should be controlled, along with their available reading and activities, but this too would be unattainable due to the divine right and thoughts monarchs shared with God that could be questioned by no one. Vives thought that Katherine would find his work agreeable having been a maid, wife and widow herself, but it would seem then that Vives' views conflicted with the project set before him. However, Timothy G. Elston suggests that "Catherine received more than she perhaps bargained for. Ostensibly, Vives's educational efforts were for

¹⁰³ Constance Jordan, "Feminism and the Humanists: The Case of Sir Thomas Elyot's Defence of Good Women", pp. 181-201, p.193

¹⁰⁴ Elizabeth Teresa Howe, *Education and Women in the Early Modern Hispanic World*, p.101

¹⁰⁵ Linda Porter, *Mary Tudor The First Queen*, Portrait, (2007) p.30

Mary, but by extension benefited all women, including Catherine”.¹⁰⁶ Perhaps this created a greater opportunity for women to elevate themselves through further study.

Portraits of Katherine of Aragon

Katherine is commonly presented wearing darker and sometimes deep red dresses, bejewelled with a square neckline that frames a cross about her neck. Katherine appears in an earlier Tudor dress style, with her hair tidied away beneath a hood. Interestingly the characteristics of this appearance correlate with the analysis so far in that Katherine was a virtuous pious woman, often portrayed as a martyr. Her martyrdom is visually linked to her attire being in deep colours including red, while her hair remains covered, preserving her piety. Maclean explains that other womanly

“disqualifications”, extended further into society, including not allowing women to show their natural hair, as this would “incite men to lustful thoughts in church”, in the same way as Eve’s words had “beguiled Adam.”¹⁰⁷ This would suggest a reason for the popularity of gable hood fashions, which Katherine is commonly depicted wearing especially in her later years, when her piety was known to have increased with her studies, as queens often influenced fashion of the time.

However, what is apparent in early portraits is her likeness to her sister Juana and her daughter Mary. While looking at a range of portraits, there seems to have been a definitive template created of Katherine that over time has been adapted. The National Portrait gallery displays an oil painting

¹⁰⁶ Timothy G. Elston, “Transformation of Continuity? Sixteenth-Century Education and the Legacy of Catherine of Aragon, Mary I and Juan Luis Vives”, pp.11-26, p.11

¹⁰⁷ Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman*, p.18

dated to approximately 1520 (fig.8).¹⁰⁸ This image shows a youthful Katherine, with her hands traditionally held in front of her. Katherine is painted in red and gold and is adorned with pearl strands and a jewelled hood. This image is shown as a pair with another of a young Henry. The gallery explains that “Both are likely to be examples of portrait types of the king and queen that would have been produced in multiple versions, some of which would have been paired in this way.”¹⁰⁹ By 1520, Katherine would have been in her mid-thirties and the colours in this image resonate with the interpretations of her becoming the tragic martyr. This image can be compared to two miniatures also held by the gallery that were created by Lucas Horenbout in circa 1525. The first presents Katherine with the same posture wearing a hood, in dark colours and adored in jewels (fig.9),¹¹⁰ and in the second Katherine appears with her hair more on show, with a brighter dress and a crucifix (fig.10).¹¹¹ Both images show her to be closer to middle aged. All three images show Katherine to have a fair complexion with rosy lips and, although more visible in the second, to have fair reddish hair. These images were created during Katherine’s life and conflict with some modern reinterpretations of Katherine that will be looked at in Chapter 3. During Katherine’s youth she was

¹⁰⁸ *Katherine of Aragon*, (oil on oak panel; London: c.1520; National Portrait Gallery Primary collection, NPG L246)

¹⁰⁹ National Portrait Gallery, *Katherine of Aragon*, URL:

<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw194913/Katherine-of-Aragon?LinkID=mp00801&search=sas&sText=Katherine+of+Aragon&role=sit&rNo=0> [Last Accessed: 22/04/2020]

¹¹⁰ Lucas Horenbout (or Hornebolte), *Katherine of Aragon* (watercolour on vellum; London: c.1525-1526; National Portrait Gallery Primary Collection NPG L244)

¹¹¹ Lucas Horenbout (or Hornebolte), *Katherine of Aragon* (watercolour on vellum; London: c.1525; National Portrait Gallery Primary collection NPG 4682)

painted by artist Juan de Flandes, along with her sister Juana (fig.11).¹¹² From these portraits it is apparent that they shared many features including their hair and complexion.

According to Tremlett, Katherine also approved of the works of Michael Sittow.¹¹³ Sittow was the court painter for Isabella and is recorded to have painted Katherine and another two characters for which she was potentially a model. These images share her likeness and follow the template of her other known portraits. The first portrait is contentiously believed to have been painted of Katherine in 1502 and is held in Vienna (fig.12).¹¹⁴ This image shows Katherine in a gold hood, with her hair showing from beneath. She is dressed in a deep red dress with a square neckline, wearing golden chains with links possibly in the shape of the letter K, and is surrounded by a thin double halo. This image is comparable to known images of Katherine, but is also believed to be of Mary Tudor, Henry's sister. Tremlett describes this portrait as a "tender, penetrating image of Catherine, his subject's eyes cast down as if lost in thought while warding off prying eyes with a shy, dissimulated smile."¹¹⁵ Tremlett says that this portrait is "a bit fleshier than in the much earlier, more stylised childhood portrait...by Juan de Flandes."¹¹⁶ This could be indicative of Katherine's ageing that is often marked by contemporaries talking of her becoming more plump and less beautiful, leading to the appearance of the middle-aged Katherine shown in the miniatures by Horenbout. Tremlett when focusing on the golden chains worn by the sitter, identifies delicate features on the chains and collar

¹¹² Juan de Flandes, Portrait of an Infanta. Catherine of Aragon ca. 1496, (oil on panel: Madrid; c.1496; Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Inv. no. 141 (1930.36))

¹¹³ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry's Spanish Queen A Biography*, p.122

¹¹⁴ Michel Sittow, Mary Rose Tudor (1496-1533), Sister of Henry VIII of England, (oil on panel: Vienna; c. 1514; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, Picture gallery, 5612)

¹¹⁵ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry's Spanish Queen A Biography*, p.122

¹¹⁶ *ibid*

that suggest the person wearing them to be Katherine. Whilst being threaded with the letter K, the gold collar is also threaded with alternating red and white flowers, which could be interpreted as the deconstructed Tudor rose. Beneath this “The square neckline of her crimson velvet dress is decorated with small golden scallop shells - a subtle homage to the most revered saint in Spain, St James, whose shrine she visited before setting sail for England.”¹¹⁷ The iconography within her outfit would link the sitter to both England and Spain.

Tremlett believes that Sittow must have seen some

strong-willed servility, (and) seems to have used her portrait as the model for a pair of remarkably similar paintings of Mary Magdalene (fig.13)¹¹⁸ and the Virgin Mary (fig.14).¹¹⁹ In both of these her hair is loosely visible as it cascades in rich, coppery waves over her shoulders. In the Mary Magdalene painting she exudes erotic sensuality, hinting (if it is Katherine) at a very different Catherine from the demure Infanta she herself so carefully projected in public.¹²⁰

There are some clear similarities between the three portraits. Firstly, both the portrait believed to be of Katherine and of the Mary Magdalene are dressed in deep red dresses, (although Mary Magdalene is surrounded by a shawl in a shade of blue). All three paintings share the same facial features, and it appears that even her hair colour and its parting are comparable. These paintings

¹¹⁷ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry's Spanish Queen A Biography*, p.123

¹¹⁸ Michael Sittow, *Catherine of Aragon as the Mary Magdalene*, (oil on oak panel: c.15-16th Century; Detroit; Detroit institute of Arts, Accession Number 40.50)

¹¹⁹ Michael Sittow, *Virgin Mary and Child*, (oil on oak panel: Netherlands;1515; Kaiser Friedrich Museum Association Collection: Gemäldegalerie ID No. 1722)

¹²⁰ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry's Spanish Queen A Biography*, p.123

almost give the appearance of one individual in different costumes. Unlike the Mary Magdalene image, Mary the Virgin wears a white head scarf, covering some of her hair and is wrapped in a red shawl. The Virgin also sits holding the baby Jesus. If Sittow had chosen his model to resemble Katherine it may have been because he saw a strength that she had in common with these legendary women, or because he shared the belief that Katherine had become a martyr for Catholicism, which he reminds the viewer through his incorporation of red clothing. Sittow may also be recreating saintly qualities of Katherine, which would be supported by his choice of the Virgin as the mother of Christ and Mary Magdalene who was a close follower and supporter of Christ. This could also be reinforced by comparing Katherine to Mary as Our Lady of Sorrows. Mary's suffering is displayed as virtuous, and the seven sorrows of her life are considered a deeply Catholic devotion. Katherine, who is often remembered for her suffering, follows suit as a devout Catholic and martyr for her faith.

Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries several historical recreations of Katherine were made. Two were the line engravings by Robert White for Richard Chiswell in 1681 (fig.15)¹²¹ and Cornelis Martinus Vermeulen, after Adriaen van der Were in 1697 (fig.16).¹²² These images show in a hood covering her hair, surrounded by elaborate borders. In both, Katherine wears a dress with a square neckline to display her many layers of jewellery which possibly are drawn to emphasise that she is a queen. The greatest replication of Katherine appears in a portrait made during the eighteenth century (fig.17),¹²³ where she appears in the same posture and is very pale and in similar

¹²¹ Robert White, *Katherine of Aragon*, (a print of a line engraving for Richard Chiswell; London: 1681; National Portrait Gallery Reference Collection NPG D24935)

¹²² Cornelis Martinus Vermeulen, *Katherine of Aragon*, (engraving after Adriaen van der Werff; London 1697; National Portrait Gallery Reference Collection NPG D18834)

¹²³ *Katherine of Aragon*, (oil on panel; London, c.18th century; National Portrait Gallery Primary Collection NPG 163)

colours to the contemporaneous painting from 1520. The similarities between these images show the renewed interest of the Tudors during this era, but also that artists looked to their predecessors to recreate their own version of Katherine. These portraits show that although they do not produce identical images, alterations over time cause her facial features to become sharper, her hair to become completely hidden and in some images, she is more elaborately adorned with jewels. Notably with these later images her age becomes more ambiguous and the extra jewellery she is drawn wearing is perhaps designed to emphasise the wealth and power of the Tudor dynasty, due to an interest in the continuation of heritage.

The Funeral of Katherine of Aragon

From a modern perspective, Katherine's love of God and Henry are possibly the two most poignant things about her. Where some might debate her victimisation, it is her devotion, loyalty to Mary and her place next to Henry that cannot be shaken. In her final hours, Katherine would write her last letter begging Henry to look after her household and her daughter.¹²⁴ In this letter, Katherine manages to find forgiveness for all Henry's actions against her. The text shows her to be a virtuous forgiving woman, who resolutely stood by her faith. In death Katherine was not initially treated and remembered as a queen she willed to remain, but her surviving emblems surrounded her journey to Peterborough, displaying her self-presentation through their hidden meanings. A description taken from the Vienna Archives of Charles V, originally written in French, details the events following Katherine's death and the movement and blessing of Katherine's body before her eventual burial.¹²⁵ The motivations of the writer are clear in this text and are shown through the respect and loyalty

¹²⁴ Katherine of Aragon, Final letter to Henry VIII, (January 1536)

¹²⁵ Contemporary description of the death and burial procession of Katherine of Aragon, (1536)

they give to Katherine as their “Queen.”¹²⁶ This is especially seen when describing the funerary arrangements which abided by Henry’s instruction to remove any note of her prior queenship.

After her death on the 7th of January of “God knows what illness”, Katherine’s body was moved to the Privy Chamber under a canopy of state and left there until the following week, with only “four flambeaux burning.”¹²⁷ They subsequently used this time to construct a lead coffin ready to transport Katherine’s body to Peterborough, which was ready by the 15th, at which point Katherine’s body was moved to the chapel. On this day, the vigils of the dead were said, followed by one mass the following day, with only “six torches of rosin” for light. On the 16th, Katherine’s body was returned to the Privy Chamber, where she would wait a further six days while an “estalage” or display, which they refer to as a “chapelle ardente” was organised.¹²⁸ The description states that there were “56 wax candles in all, and the house hung with two breadths of the lesser frieze of the country.”¹²⁹ On that Saturday Katherine’s body was returned to the chapel, where she would stay until the Thursday, allowing for solemn masses with the assistance of the Duchess of Suffolk, the Countesses of Worcester, Oxford and Surrey, the Baronesses Howard and Willoughby, Bray and Gascon. Mass began on the Tuesday after and four crimson taffeta banners were brought. These bore the arms of Katherine on two, with one for England “with three ‘lambeaulx blancs’ which they say are of prince Arthur.”¹³⁰ The banner of Arthur, next to her own acted as a visual emphasis of her demotion to the Dowager Princess of Wales, returning her to the status of the foreign Spanish princess. Her place as Henry’s wife and Queen of England is all but forgotten and this is emphasised by the fourth banner which represented Spain and England and the old friendship

¹²⁶ *ibid*

¹²⁷ *ibid*

¹²⁸ *ibid*

¹²⁹ *ibid*

¹³⁰ *ibid*

brought about by Katherine's first marriage. In addition to the banners, were four painted golden standards. On the first was "the trinity, on the second Our Lady, on the third St. Katherine and on the fourth St. George."¹³¹ These saints would have been chosen specifically for Katherine to signify her most admirable virtues. The first two were chosen to represent her faith and femininity, shown by the iconography of a perfect virtuous Christian female. This representation of Katherine is fitting with the connotations of her emblem, the pomegranate. The third standard represents Katherine's martyrdom through her parallels with Saint Katherine of Alexandria, who was famous for her dedication to study which led her to convert to Christianity and teach others to do the same. However, St. Katherine became a victim to persecution and was made a martyr at only eighteen years old. Although much older, Katherine dedicated her entire life to her faith and study to ensure her success as a wife, queen and mother, but her devotion was persecuted in the end.

By the following Wednesday "the robes of the Queen's 10 ladies were completed."¹³² Repeatedly referring to Katherine as "the Queen" conveys the intense loyalty the writer had to Katherine and their denial of her demotion. This loyalty suggests that it may have been written by a member of her household, or by an ambassador to the Empire, likely Eustace Chapuys. They continue to describe that the women had not participated in a great deal of mourning until their robes had been completed and a dinner was held with the Countess of Surrey as the chief mourner. A further solemn mass was held on the Thursday and, finally Katherine's body was placed on a wagon ready for the journey to Peterborough Abbey.¹³³ Katherine's body was quietly kept as far out of court as possible and tactfully away from the public, which may also explain the short involvement of the mourning ladies. Katherine's "body was carried from the chapel and put on a waggon, to be conveyed not to one of the convents of the Observant Friars, as the Queen had desired before her

¹³¹ *ibid*

¹³² *ibid*

¹³³ *ibid*

death, but at the pleasure of the King, her husband, to the Benedictine Abbey of Peterborough.”¹³⁴ The Abbey as it was then, was chosen by Henry to keep Katherine and her memory far away from the royal courts, reducing the risk to Henry and his new marriage to Anne Boleyn. The description of Henry as Katherine’s husband reinforces the idea that the author is in denial of Katherine’s divorce. The report describes the long procession, starting with sixteen priests and clergymen on horseback, followed by several gentlemen, where only two were of the house. These were followed then by the “maître d’hotel” and chamberlain holding rods of office, with nine to ten heralds at their sides, all wearing mourning hoods and coats of arms. In the latter parts of the procession followed the fifty or so servants of the previous gentlemen carrying shortly lit torches. These servants walked in front of the “waggon” carrying the coffin, which was being pulled by six horses. The coffin was covered with “black velvet in the midst of which was a great silver cross; and within, as one looked upon the corpse, was stretched a cloth of gold frieze with a cross of crimson velvet, and before and behind the said waggon stood two gentlemen ushers with mourning hoods looking into the waggon, round which the said four banners were carried by four heralds and the standards with the representations by four gentlemen.”¹³⁵ Lastly the women of the procession followed, led by seven ladies as the chief mourners on hackneys, followed by more women and the nine wives of knights on more hackneys and lastly the wagon for Katherine’s chambermaids, with further servants on horseback.

The procession travelled three “French leagues” which equates to approximately nine miles. This perhaps gives an idea to writer’s provenance. They arrived at the “Abbey of Sautry,” where the abbot and the monks received Katherine’s body and placed her within a canopy surrounded by a larger display of “408 candles, which burned during the vigils that day and next day at mass.”¹³⁶

¹³⁴ *ibid*

¹³⁵ *ibid*

¹³⁶ *ibid*

The second mass being chanted by the Bishop of Ely with a further forty-eight Rosin torches being lit and held by “poor men” in mourning hoods.¹³⁷ Finally, Katherine’s procession made the last stretch of the journey to Peterborough that day. Katherine’s body was received by the bishops of Lincoln, Ely, and Rochester and several abbots, all were wearing their mitres and hoods and they joined the procession until the body was placed under the chapelle ardente prepared for her. The reporter described the use of eight beautiful pillars housing a thousand candles of small and larger sizes, with eighteen banners throughout the chapel, which included the arms of Katherine’s nephew, Emperor Charles V, the arms of England, the King’s Mother Elizabeth of York, Prince Arthur, the Queen of Portugal Katherine’s sister, Spain, Sicily, Aragon, and Spain with England, with the three lambeaulx.¹³⁸ They also included more historic and symbolic banners including those of John of Gaunt, the Bundle of Arrows (the symbol of Catholic Monarchs), the pomegranate (the symbol of Granada and emblem of Katherine’s queenship) and lastly, the lion and the greyhound (motifs of the King of England). There were also devices about the chapel including those of Katherine and King Ferdinand.¹³⁹ In gold letters the device of Katherine depicted what would come to be popularly known as her motto, “Humble et loyale”, a final statement for a true and faithful queen.¹⁴⁰ Further vigils were held that day, with more masses in the morning which were held with three of the bishops and some assisting abbots. On the third day, the Bishop of Lincoln led the mass with the Bishop of Llandaff as Deacon and the Bishop of Ely as sub-deacon. With the involvement of so many officials, the text determines that the “ceremony was vert sumptuous.”¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ *ibid*

¹³⁸ *ibid*

¹³⁹ *ibid*

¹⁴⁰ *ibid*

¹⁴¹ *ibid*

The Bishop of Llandaff was George de Athequa, a Spaniard who had been with Katherine in her last days as her confessor. Richard Rex's *Theology of John Fisher* (2003) sheds some light upon Athequa's involvement, as he states that Athequa became a part of the council which Katherine recruited to represent her. This council was led by John Fisher but was also made up of figures such as the Bishop of Ely and the Bishop of London (later Durham). Rex notes that the overlap in this group between those who opposed Martin Luther as well as Henry's later religious policies is "striking," but that "While it is manifestly not the case that religious conservatives invariably supported Catherine, it is clear that her supporters were almost invariably from the more papist wing of the English Church."¹⁴² As a member of Katherine's council, Tremlett understands "Jorge" to have acted as a messenger between Katherine and her Spanish visitors during her banishment. According to Tremlett, the visitors could not speak to her directly and would have to pretend that it was to speak about old friends in Spain.¹⁴³ In her last days at Kimbolton Castle, Athequa gave Katherine her communion and she confessed to him. While breaking the rules of Katherine's confinement, Athequa "forgets" to extract the confession regarding her virginity for Chapuys. Upon her death bed Athequa "administered extreme unction. Catherine answered him bravely, in a clear and audible voice" and began her own prayers to herself as her "final consolation."¹⁴⁴

It seems that the author of the description held similar loyalties to Athequa. In the latter part of the text, they write that, following an offering, the

Bishop of Rochester preached the same as all the preachers of England for two years have not ceased to preach...against the power of the Pope, whom they call bishop of Rome, and

¹⁴² Richard Rex, *The Theology of John Fisher*, Cambridge University Press, (2003), p.170

¹⁴³ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry's Spanish Queen A Biography*, p.254

¹⁴⁴ Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon Henry's Spanish Queen A Biography*, pp.241-422

against the marriage of the said good Queen and the King, alleging against all truth that in the hour of death she acknowledged she had not been queen of England. I say against all truth, because at that hour she ordered a writing to be made in her name addressed to the King as her husband, and to the ambassador of the Emperor, her nephew which she signed with these words- Katherine, queen of England- commending her ladies and servants to the favour of the said ambassador.¹⁴⁵

This is referring to Katherine's final letter to Henry where she only asks for care to be taken for her small household and for Henry to be a good father to Mary, where Katherine signs her name "Katherine the Queen," denying the act of supremacy.¹⁴⁶ The writer is clearly aware of Katherine's activities, further indicating that they may have been close to her. The writer of the text disregards the efforts made to prove that Katherine was not the true queen, which were likely designed to manifest obedience to the new English Church under Henry and Anne. Finally, it is stated that there would be an annual service performed for her, which is still enacted, (this will be discussed in Chapter 3), and her body was laid to rest in a grave at the lowest step of the high altar, just covered with a simple black cloth.¹⁴⁷ The description ends with a dedication to Katherine and the virtuous daughter she leaves behind. The writer is clearly passionate about her cause and the care of Mary. They declare that Katherine

In this manner was celebrated the funeral of her who for 27 years has been true queen of England, whose holy soul, as every one must believe, is in eternal rest, after worldly misery borne by her with such patience that there is little need to pray God for her; to whom, nevertheless, we ought incessantly to address prayers for the weal (salut) of her living image

¹⁴⁵ *ibid*

¹⁴⁶ Katherine of Aragon, *Last letter of Katherine of Aragon to Henry VIII*, (January 1936)

¹⁴⁷ Contemporary description of the death and burial procession of Katherine of Aragon (1536)

who she has left to us, the most virtuous Princess her daughter, that He may comfort her in her great and infinite adversities, and give her a husband to his pleasure, &c.¹⁴⁸

Katherine, it would seem, was believed to have held saintly qualities by many of her loyal people. As the last Catholic queen, she became a martyr for their cause and represented what it meant to be a devout and pious woman. It is evident from looking at the evidence of the funeral description that Katherine was not given the same respect in death that she had received as queen, it is also likely that this was the only time that Katherine was not defined by her marriage to Henry, as instead the service returns Katherine to the status of Arthur's wife. This shows that she is still not independent of marriage, even after being stripped of her queenship. However, it is clear that although Henry had attempted to conceal her queenship, Katherine was still remembered and referred to as the queen by those loyal to her, including the writer of the description and Eustace Chapuys, the Ambassador reporting to the Emperor Charles V. On the 9th of January, Chapuys communicated

the very grievous, painful, and lamentable news of the death of the, very virtuous and holy Queen, which occurred on Friday... Which intelligence, I must confess to Your Majesty, has been one of the most cruel and painful that could reach me under any circumstances; for I am afraid the good Princess her daughter will die of grief, or else that the King's concubine will carry out her threat of putting her to death.¹⁴⁹

This report also portrays the perception of Katherine as a virtuous and devoted Queen that is remembered as a martyr for Catholicism and shows that her demotion is disregarded by the strong Catholic powers of Europe. The dedication within the funeral description also emphasises Katherine's success, for they believe that Katherine was a woman they need not pray for, because

¹⁴⁸ *ibid*

¹⁴⁹ Ed. Pascual de Gayangos, "Spain: January 1536, 1-20", in *Calendar of State Papers, Spain*, Volume 5 Part 2, 1536-1538, (London: 1888), pp. 1-10. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/spain/vol5/no2/pp1-10> [Last accessed 25 February 2021]

there was no doubt that she had found eternal rest after the miseries she had suffered.¹⁵⁰ Her suffering combined with her virtuousness portrays a contemporaneous view of Katherine as a devout and virtuous queen, who suffered at the hands of a tyrant husband and his new wife.

Katherine in life and in death was presented as the foreign princess, but she also presented herself as the rightful English Queen. Katherine is remembered as a patron of humanists with a motivation for educating women and progressing humanism in England. She is seen as a martyr for the Catholic faith, emphasised by her decision to take the emblem of the pomegranate and her being associated with saintly figures. Katherine's immovable faith was a trait she inherited from her parents, and passed on to her daughter Mary, who would restore the Catholic faith upon her succession.

Although Katherine was politically skilled and the most equipped of Henry's wives to rule England, she was ultimately a woman of peace. Katherine's more typically 'masculine' abilities were proven through her intellect and politically driven youth, but Katherine is instead identified by her marriage that ended bitterly due to her inability to bear surviving children. Where Katherine had been demoted from her position as queen in life, she has continued to be remembered as Queen of England in the memory of her subjects, even with her quiet burial that Henry had hoped would bury England's past with her.

¹⁵⁰ Contemporary description of the death and burial procession of Katherine of Aragon (1536)

Chapter Two: Early re-creations of Katherine

Posthumously Katherine's has been depicted both as a heroic martyr and as a melancholic, suffering mother, separated from her only surviving child. This chapter will explore various recreations of Katherine since her death up to the Victorian era to understand how she is remembered and how her character is used as a political device. It is important to understand that these characterisations are relative to the time in which they were created, as audience engagement often encourages authors and creators to make deliberate character choices that were more relevant to their time, than producing an accurate reflection. This chapter will look at earlier interpretations of Katherine chronologically to see how Katherine's character has changed over time. This chapter will analyse her characterisations thematically, to show how Katherine's character changes as a result of her marriage and divorce being romanticized. This will also show the changes made to her historical representation in the process.

The History of Grisild the Second

The earliest example of representation in this thesis is William Forrest's version of the Patient Griselda, which was likely to have been based on Chaucer's *The Clerk's Tale*, from *The Canterbury Tales* (c.1400).¹⁵¹ Forrest's modification of the tale was entitled *The History of Grisild the Second: A narrative, in verse, of the Divorce of Queen Katherine of Arragon* (1588).¹⁵² It was produced for

¹⁵¹ Ursula Potter, "Tales of Patient Griselda and Henry VIII", *Early Theatre*, Vol.5, No. 2, (2002) pp.11-28, p.11

¹⁵² William Forrest, *The History of Grisild the Second: A narrative, in verse, of the Divorce of Queen Katherine of Arragon*

Queen Mary I in the June of 1558, as a familiar analogy of the life of Katherine of Aragon.¹⁵³ In this tale, the main protagonist, the Patient Griselda, who is the loyal and obedient wife of Walter, has her loyalty tested to great extremes. Griselda never gave in and it is her inner strength and outward virtues that will be compared to Katherine. Forrest had intended the work to be received by Mary to compare the virtuous reputation of her mother to the honourable Griselda, the representation which he describes (in the margins of the verse), to be “but a sparke in comparison of her whole lyfe.”¹⁵⁴ Written close to Katherine’s own time, this text shows the memory of Katherine that was turned into an indirect representation of her through a fictional figure. Katherine at this stage was not directly recreated as the timing of Forrest’s presentation was too close to the death of Henry and Mary was his successor. This shows that Forrest also took care to respect the King’s memory and allows us to see the importance of the relationship between Katherine and Mary and the posthumous effect depictions of Katherine can have.

Patient Griselda shares many characterisations and morals with Katherine. The tale has been discussed by several historians, but due to the timing and nature of the piece, it is mutually agreed that understanding the political messages within it has an element of risk. Although Forrest wanted his audience to understand the analogy he was presenting to Mary, he chose to represent Katherine through a fictional figure and not recreate her directly. Walter, who represents Henry,¹⁵⁵ is still carefully characterised, as a direct negative recreation against an almost hagiographic view of Katherine would insult his memory and thus be damaging to Mary’s succession. The tale that was presented to Mary “unequivocally depicts Katherine of Aragon as the tragic Griselda and Henry as

¹⁵³ Ursula Potter, “Tales of Patient Griselda and Henry VIII,” pp.11-28, p.13

¹⁵⁴ William Forrest, *The History of Grisild the Second: A narrative, in verse, of the Divorce of Queen Katherine of Arragon*, p.4

¹⁵⁵ William Forrest, *The History of Grisild the Second: A narrative, in verse, of the Divorce of Queen Katherine of Arragon*, p.5

the tyrant husband...by Sir William Forrest, her chaplain.”¹⁵⁶ This would have been carefully created to honour Katherine, but not to darken the memory of Henry too strongly. Hansen agrees that Mary would need to maintain a connection to her father for the security of her succession: “Forrest is sensitive to this tension [and this] can be seen in the prologue. In a discussion of the extent to which good parents are models for good behaviour to their children and bad parents as models consciously to reject, Forrest relies on his platitudes and non-specifics to avoid casting aspersion on Henry.”¹⁵⁷

Although Potter rightly points out that few, for fear of treason, would have dared print this tale or this perspective during Henry’s lifetime, one person who did was Juan Luis Vives. Vives was a Spanish humanist whom Katherine gave patronage and turned to when organising the education of Mary. According to Potter, he “suggested in his *Linguae Latinae exercitatio* that Katherine’s suffering was comparable to the Patient Griselda’s; William Forrest’s *History of Grisild* made this equation unmissable under Mary”.¹⁵⁸ Potter further suggests that Vives “voiced his opinion of Henry’s treatment of his first wife through the medium of the Latin grammar school exercises he compiled in 1539.”¹⁵⁹ This was just three years after the deaths of both Katherine and Anne and during Henry’s mourning of Jane Seymour. This may explain Vives’ courage in promoting such an opinion, for Henry had succeeded in having a son and may have been more preoccupied while in mourning. The timing of the later rush in publications during the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth

¹⁵⁶ Ursula Potter, “Tales of Patient Griselda and Henry VIII,” pp.11-28, p.11

¹⁵⁷ Matthew C. Hansen, “And a Queen of England, Too”: The ‘Englishing’ of Catherine of Aragon in Sixteenth-Century English Literary and Chronicle History”, *High and Mighty Queens” of Early Modern England Realities and Representations*, Palgrave Macmillan (2003) pp.79-99, p.81

¹⁵⁸ Susan Doran, Thomas Freeman, *Mary Tudor: Old and New Perspectives*, Palgrave Macmillan, (2011) p.16

¹⁵⁹ Ursula Potter, “Tales of Patient Griselda and Henry VIII,” p.12

Potter concludes to be, “uniquely cued to the need to publicly acknowledge the tyranny that their royal mothers suffered at the hands of Henry VIII and convert that public acknowledgement into political support for the reigning sovereign.”¹⁶⁰ This view is convincing as both queens shared the experience of being cast out and reinstated and both would need political support as the first ruling Queens since Matilda. This support would have been encouraged by figures like Forrest and would reinforce the idea that Griselda’s story forms an analogy for Henry’s mistreatment of Katherine.

Gail Ashton states that Griselda’s character “comprises her holy virtue and corresponds to male expectations of femininity. She works hard, cares for her father, is obedient, and full of ‘vertuous beautee.’”¹⁶¹ This description is also applicable to Katherine, who was famous for her feminine virtuous behaviour, while working for both her father and her King. Katherine, above all, is known for her unfaltering obedience which survived Henry’s actions against her. Ashton surmises that

Griselda’s mimesis deflects Walter’s cruelty, and is a means of survival in a world whose rules she knows inside out. It enables her to protect herself and resist appropriation. It also permits her to undermine and subtly criticise that world, to turn back upon it all that has imposed upon women, and thus fracture its univocal assertion of power.¹⁶²

This reflects Katherine’s own patience and obedience under a tyrant King. Katherine managed to break some womanly expectations by becoming one of the most learned women of her time and becoming the first Ambassadors of Europe. As Forrest’s tale unfolds, the audience sees that Griselda’s patience and vow of obedience is increasingly challenged by Walter who removes their children one by one under the pretence that he is going to kill them. He then accelerates the

¹⁶⁰ Ursula Potter, “Tales of Patient Griselda and Henry VIII,” p.26

¹⁶¹ Gail Ashton, “Patient Mimesis: Griselda and the *Clerk’s Tale*,” *The Chaucer Review*, Vol. 32, No. 3 (1998), p.235

¹⁶² Gail Ashton, “Patient Mimesis: Griselda and the *Clerk’s Tale*,” p.237

situation by dismissing her from the royal court and pretending to divorce her. He does this only to bring her back and force her to serve him and his new bride. Griselda's obedience never wavers, and she suffers his torment silently. The tale finally concludes with Griselda proving herself loyal and being reunited with her children and reinstated as Walter's wife. Like Griselda, Katherine was separated from her children and "stripped of her clothes, her jewels, and her waiting women, [and] banished from court."¹⁶³ Katherine suffered the deaths of several children, before being subjected to the final separation from Mary by Henry. Finally, Katherine was removed from court, an action made to dismiss her from the thoughts of the people, to refocus their attention on his new bride. Unlike Griselda, however, she did not have a happy reunion, but this representation does show how Katherine was tormented and manipulated by the constraints of her marriage to Henry and the obedience to him that was expected of her as his wife.

Although Katherine faced many challenges, we have seen that her virtues and faith remained constant. This has been shown by her unwavering loyalty to Henry as well as her refusal to accept the divorce. Like Griselda, Katherine remained loyal until the end. The choice of this tale to represent Katherine to Mary is certainly significant. Potter states that Chaucer's version "anticipates-with remarkable aptness- Katherine of Aragon's tragic fate."¹⁶⁴ This anticipation of Katherine's fall within a powerful patriarchy is elevated by Chaucer's narrator. Ashton sees his narrator as rather ambiguous with his "apparently pro-female narrational stance beneath which he remains implicated in a masculine conspiracy to deny the female either power or subjectivity."¹⁶⁵ This narrative style increases our sense of Katherine's helplessness within a masculine-controlled

¹⁶³ Ursula Potter, "Tales of Patient Griselda and Henry VIII," p.12

¹⁶⁴ Ursula Potter, "Tales of Patient Griselda and Henry VIII," p.12

¹⁶⁵ Gail Ashton, "Patient Mimesis: Griselda and the *Clerk's Tale*," pp.232-238, p.232

world. However, if the purpose of the verse is to portray Katherine's triumphs to Mary, who shares this world with her, Griselda is seen

to highlight the gap between embodied ideal and resistant practice... The unintentional paradox is that Griselda's entire mimetic behaviour is deceptive and ultimately transgressive. It is not simply her patience that triumphs. Her perfect femininity so overshadows the ambiguous nature of her discourse that the masculine world fails to hear.¹⁶⁶

Forrest explains that "The vertues of noble queen Catharyne are remembered at this present day" through his work, "For she was so special gracious, her life the worthier to be put in records."¹⁶⁷ He does this through representing Katherine's hidden strength when overcoming her suffering and mistreatment through Griselda's characterisation. Interestingly, Mary was suffering with the realisation that she was actually very ill and not experiencing pregnancy. This form of suffering she could share with Katherine, who is often portrayed as a mourning mother. Forrest engages with the Catholic narrative by portraying Katherine's suffering with her virtuousness. This is further elaborated by Potter who states that when representing Katherine, Forrest "singles her out as a most feeling mother," whose characterisation as a grieving and suffering mother "dominates the text."¹⁶⁸ This dominant theme is perhaps explained by Forrest's pre-reformation Catholic motivations as "Excessive grieving was frowned upon in Reformation England."¹⁶⁹ This could suggest that Forrest is justifying Katherine's grief as virtuous, but is also using it as a political device against anti-

¹⁶⁶ Gail Ashton, "Patient Mimesis: Griselda and the *Clerk's Tale*," pp.237-238

¹⁶⁷ William Forrest, *The History of Grisild the Second: A narrative, in verse, of the Divorce of Queen Katherine of Arragon*, p.3

¹⁶⁸ Ursula Potter, "Tales of Patient Griselda and Henry VIII," p.14

¹⁶⁹ *ibid*

Catholic reforms, made before Mary's succession. Forrest would be able to display Katherine as a grieving woman representing the time before the Reformation, which would have the dual effect of encouraging support for Mary and promoting Katherine as a martyr for Catholicism. Forrest's interpretation also aligns with symbolic representations of Katherine which pay homage to her religious loyalty and piety, such as the portraits created by Michael Sittow (fig.12,13 and 14), and the views of her contemporaries that were analysed in Chapter 1.

According to Potter, Forrest's "motives are manifold, but the principle aims are to move for the beatification of Katherine by creating a quasi-Marian picture of Mary's saintly and suffering mother; and to reinforce her daughters right to the English throne; and to use the mother's martyrdom to argue the daughter's duty to promote catholicism in England."¹⁷⁰ This suggests that Forrest's recreation of Katherine was for both his own political success and for the benefit of Catholicism in England. Early into the Tudor period, hagiography was emerging as a new literary style which combined religion with Latin scripture, to retell the lives of saints. Joni Henry describes hagiography as a hybrid genre that shows a "fascinating late example of rich tradition of reinvention and innovation, as well as important reminders of the centrality of religion in early English Humanism."¹⁷¹ With the popularity of this style, Forest's approach is fitting and perhaps explains his method of representing Katherine in this way. Potter suggests that to Forrest, Katherine was "characterised as intensely pious, a factor which ... qualifies her for sainthood" and it was her "strengths and values are used to highlight Henry's weaknesses."¹⁷² This is indicative of the author's motivations and is complementary to Ashton's analysis which suggested that Griselda's

¹⁷⁰ Ursula Potter, "Tales of Patient Griselda and Henry VIII," p.13

¹⁷¹ Joni Henry, "Humanist Hagiography in England, c. 1480-c.1520", *Literature Compass*, Vol. 10 Issue 7, (2013)

Abstract

¹⁷² Ursula Potter, "Tales of Patient Griselda and Henry VIII," p.16

patient persona would deflect Walter's cruel one. Potter suggests that Shakespeare was another who identified "retrospect qualities and virtues for which Elizabeth became honoured as a sovereign and he uses them to justify her mother's virtue." However, Potter states that "promoting the virtues of the mother bestows legitimacy on the daughter."¹⁷³ This portrays Forrest's ambitions in relation to Mary, as he consciously used the virtues of Katherine's "sweete sowle"¹⁷⁴ to legitimise Mary's claim and reinforce her duty to Catholicism.¹⁷⁵

John Fletcher and William Shakespeare, *All is True*

The Tudors were important to the Stuarts in reinforcing their inheritance of the English throne. The play *All is True*¹⁷⁶ is particularly interesting as it involves the validation of the new monarch, James I, and the appreciation of the last monarch, Queen Elizabeth I. The plot, however, confuses the lines of good or bad, through its themes of religion and loyalty, which are both shown through Katherine. William Shakespeare and John Fletcher may have used the Tudors to confirm James I as the Tudor successor and satisfy the nostalgia of their audience. It appears that these characters may also have been used as political devices to portray relations between James and Spain, showing that Katherine could still be manipulated into a tool of diplomacy.

In 1623 Fletcher and Shakespeare's play *All is True* was first published as *Henry VIII*. During one of the first public showings of the play in 1613, a real cannon was used as a stage prop, resulting in

¹⁷³ Ursula Potter, "Tales of Patient Griselda and Henry VIII," p.17

¹⁷⁴ William Forrest, *The History of Grisild the Second: A narrative, in verse, of the Divorce of Queen Katherine of Arragon*, p.6

¹⁷⁵ *ibid*

¹⁷⁶ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*

the devastating fire at the Globe Theatre. As the play was written in the Jacobean era, the synopsis relies upon the chronicles of Raphael Holinshed and Edward Halle.¹⁷⁷ *All is True* tells the story of Henry's reign, including his divorce from Katherine, his marriage to Anne Boleyn and the birth of their daughter Elizabeth I. J.C. Trewin and Stanley Wells describe the play as being "Primarily a play of farewells - to the world, to life, to greatness - it has an October sense, a pervading melancholy that is set off by its ceremonial which, if instructions are obeyed, has more pomp than anything else in Shakespeare."¹⁷⁸ The play is indeed filled with dance and pomp and does witness the farewells of Buckingham, Katherine, Wolsey and Catholicism. Katherine's death seemingly "conforms to a pattern already set by [the] two earlier deaths... the last of a series of unexpected falls from high estate depicted in the play."¹⁷⁹ It could be argued that the loss is outweighed by the promise of the future, brought by the birth of Elizabeth, which can be interpreted as a direct message to James I. These elements allow the audience to understand a new recreation of Katherine, who appears as a more determined heroine. As Katherine fades away, Shakespeare allows her to be seen like "the heroine of a classical tragedy, she is led away by her women, at peace and resolved to die."¹⁸⁰ These depictions of Katherine as either a heroine, or a tragedienne, begin to pave the way for further developments in later periods as well.

The narrative of *All is True* drew inspiration from the historical commentary it was based on, but moves away from the historical narrative, and instead offers an alternative interpretation of the events that unfolded. Mark Rankin believes that *All is True* had a vital role in securing James's

¹⁷⁷ Stanley Wells, *The Shakespeare Companion*, Cassel, Octopus Publishing Group Ltd, (2017) p.174

¹⁷⁸ Stanley Wells, *The Shakespeare Companion*, p.174

¹⁷⁹ Amy Appleford, "Shakespeare's Katherine of Aragon: Last Medieval Queen, First Recusant Martyr, p.149

¹⁸⁰ *ibid*

claim to the throne. In his article “Henry VIII, Shakespeare, and the Jacobean Royal Court,”¹⁸¹ Rankin discusses important aspects of the play that were designed to send messages to the leading monarch. He states that *Henry VIII* “constitutes Shakespeare’s only play that was designed specifically with a Stuart royal audience in mind.”¹⁸² This shows the writer’s awareness of their audience and that the Tudors were important to the Stuarts in emphasising their ancestral inheritance of the throne from Henry VII. From this perspective, amplifying this connection was essential for James to have any future success in England. Rankin points out that upon the death of Elizabeth, it was important for James as King of Scotland to produce materials which evoked the memory of Henry VII and thus strengthen his claim to the throne. Encouragingly, James and Henry VII shared the success of fathering two initially healthy, legitimate sons.¹⁸³ James also shared important connections with Henry VIII as well. Rankin discusses the use of Henry VIII through theatre posthumously, particularly using the Tudor story to highlight the strengths of James and his heir, Prince Henry Frederick. With the importance of recognising Protestantism as the state religion in England, playwrights were able to use Henry VIII as a vehicle to provide guidance for James and his son. Although Henry’s own faith was more convoluted and not necessarily defined as Protestant, Rankin suggests that the playwright Samuel Rowley in particular, “readily exploits Henry VIII as a prototype for James’ heir apparent. Prince Henry would acquire a strong reputation for forward Protestant zeal... [and his work] helps to fashion the prince’s emerging reputation for zeal by representing Henry VIII anachronistically as an evangelical Protestant Prince.”¹⁸⁴ This suggests that

¹⁸¹ Mark Rankin, “Henry VIII, Shakespeare, and the Jacobean Royal Court”, *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, Vol.51, No.2, Tudor and Stuart Drama, (2011) pp.349-366

¹⁸² Mark Rankin, “Henry VIII, Shakespeare, and the Jacobean Royal Court,” p.358

¹⁸³ Mark Rankin, “Henry VIII, Shakespeare, and the Jacobean Royal Court,” p.349

¹⁸⁴ Mark Rankin, “Henry VIII, Shakespeare, and the Jacobean Royal Court,” p.350

the new prince may have assimilated Henry's character in the play and shows the effect creative works could have on influencing their audience. Importantly, this play answered the nostalgic need of the courts. In doing so, Rowley also presents Henry as the centre of orthodoxy in his court, as James was within his own. Rankin also suggests that this "assertive version of Henry is calculated to impress James, whose own writings, as we have seen, insist that the dynastic example of his Tudor predecessors be understood properly."¹⁸⁵ James's need to accurately understand his predecessors is indicative of the use of chronicles as a basis for plays including *All is True*. This is reflected by the plot of *All is True* affirming his claim to the throne with the birth of Elizabeth and the symbolism of the maiden phoenix. This would allow the writers to also promote their own messages hidden within characterisations and in a narrative that was portrayed as historically accurate.

From Rankin's perspective, the messages within the narrative would appear political and in favour of the Stuarts. This could be reinforced by analysing the depiction of the birth of Elizabeth and the crucial prophecy of Thomas Cranmer, following the death of Katherine. In this scene, Cranmer romantically tells of the great prophecy that would come to fruition through Elizabeth and her legacy, but the prophecy also tells of another just as great who will follow her. He states that one "Shall star-like rise, as great in fame as she was, / And so stand fix'd: peace, plenty, love, truth, terror, / That were the servants to this chosen infant, / Shall then be his."¹⁸⁶ This prophecy is aimed at James, and the writer's flattery is emphasised further by Cranmer's line: "The bird of wonder dies, the maiden phoenix, / Her ashes new create another heir, / As great in admiration as herself."¹⁸⁷ This implies that Elizabeth, the Virgin Queen "maiden Phoenix", created James as her

¹⁸⁵ Mark Rankin, "Henry VIII, Shakespeare, and the Jacobean Royal Court," p.358

¹⁸⁶ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act V Scene V

¹⁸⁷ *ibid*

heir. This confirms Rankin's view that the play was designed to reinforce James's claim and flatter him as King. Through Cranmer, Shakespeare depicts James's future glory as a phoenix risen from the ashes of the Queen who led England into the Golden Age, all while "shifting... [the play's] genre from tragedy to romance."¹⁸⁸ This is a definite device from Shakespeare, as he has also brought forward the death of Katherine to coincide with the birth of Elizabeth. This shows the writers to manipulate the chronicles that inspired the play to suit their narrative. Henry's success in securing his succession was brought by his marriage to Jane Seymour and the birth of their son Edward. In the play however, this is replaced by the focus upon Henry's daughter, Elizabeth, by his second wife, Anne. Rankin states that the reason for this was because it allowed Shakespeare to promote James's inheritance and so "accords with the play's presentation of James as the figurative scion of Henry VIII and Anne via her daughter, Elizabeth."¹⁸⁹ This gave James an uninterrupted inheritance from Henry VII through his granddaughter.

However, where John N. King would agree that in the early years, James's reign was welcomed by playwrights and the theatre "by plays which praised Elizabeth as a Protestant heroine and contrasted the disastrous events of the reign of Mary I with the myth of the "golden age" that followed,"¹⁹⁰ other plays that were becoming more militantly Protestant were less supportive. For instance, King describes that when looking at a sequel text written by Thomas Heywood, "This nationalistic "triumph" of Elizabeth could be applied adversely to James I and his policies because the self-styled heroism of Sir Francis Drake and the Elizabethan sea-dogs served as blunt argument in favour of the militantly imperialistic and anti-Spanish foreign policy that the new king was reluctant

¹⁸⁸ Amy Appleford, "Shakespeare's Katherine of Aragon: Last Medieval Queen, First Recusant Martyr," p.150

¹⁸⁹ Mark Rankin, "Henry VIII, Shakespeare, and the Jacobean Royal Court," p.359

¹⁹⁰ John N. King, "Queen Elizabeth I: Representations of the Virgin Queen," p.66

to espouse.”¹⁹¹ Instead, the beginning of James’s reign was marked by his agreement to the 1604 peace treaty, called the Treaty of London, that ended twenty years of hostility towards Spain in England. Although the birth of Elizabeth is of main interest to Rankin, the significance of Shakespeare moving Katherine’s death in the play must not be forgotten. *All is True* was performed years into James’s reign and around ten years after the Treaty of London which brought lasting peace between Spain and England. The treaty agreed that England would halt wartime interventions in the Dutch Revolt and disruptions to Spain’s shipping to the new colonies. Spain, in turn, would end any intention of restoring the Catholic faith in England. This suggests that as the play was performed later in James’s reign, the close timing of Katherine’s death with the birth of Elizabeth in the play actually celebrates the Protestant faith being upheld by James and the prolonged peace between England and Spain. This is perhaps supported by King’s interpretation of Cranmer’s prophecy, which he believes is “more accurate than the radical efforts to rewrite history by transforming Elizabeth’s pacifism and noncontroversial religion into precedents for a militantly Protestant foreign policy. It flatters James I as a peaceful monarch who is not only the legal heir of the “maiden phoenix” ...but also her spiritual progeny.”¹⁹² This is also supported by the flattering, heroic characterisation of Katherine. Katherine is often presented defending her position and honour and is shown to have a great intellect and royal prerogative, this is especially seen during the trial where she refuses to accept the court’s right to judge her. In Act II, Scene IV, Katherine kneels at Henry’s feet and asks for Henry to pity her, but as the trial progresses Katherine reasserts her prerogative as, at minimum a Spanish princess, “We are a queen, or long have dream’d so, certain / The daughter of a king.”¹⁹³ Katherine tells Wolsey that his actions and ill respect for her have

¹⁹¹ John N. King, “Queen Elizabeth I: Representations of the Virgin Queen,” p.67

¹⁹² John N. King, “Queen Elizabeth I: Representations of the Virgin Queen,” p.69

¹⁹³ *ibid*

marked him as her enemy. As his queen, Katherine exclaims, “I utterly abhor, yea, from my soul / Refuse you for my judge; whom, yet once more, / I hold my most malicious foe, and think not / At all a friend to truth.”¹⁹⁴ This presence in the play has concerned critics of Shakespeare. While they can agree that she is a “heroic figure”, her

Catholicism (both in the play and in Shakespeare’s own Protestant England) had given many pause...critics often point to it as yet more evidence of Shakespeare’s refusal ‘to simplify for the sake of plot either the public and political, with its untidy tangle of private and national issues’.¹⁹⁵

Katherine is recognisably a heroic character, as Amy Appleford states, she is the only “morally unambiguous figure” in the play who, by her rooted devotion and her defence of her queenship, juxtaposes the positivity of the genre shift from tragedy to romance through Cranmer’s prophecy when Elizabeth is born. However, her character complicates things, as although a hero, she is on the losing side of Catholicism, which does not fit in the time the play is set, nor the time in which it was written.¹⁹⁶ This shows a very early example of depictions of Katherine not being overshadowed for the benefit of simplification. Due to Shakespeare’s motivations, Katherine instead performs an important narrative role.

Katherine’s character development is sympathetic towards the Spanish Catholic monarchs. Given Katherine’s famous piety and loyalty, it would make sense to portray Katherine as morally unambiguous. It would also pay respect to the neutrality of the agreement from 1604, where earlier works made at the beginning of James’s reign had an “emphasis placed upon the errors of the

¹⁹⁴ *ibid*

¹⁹⁵ Amy Appleford, “Shakespeare’s Katherine of Aragon: Last Medieval Queen, First Recusant Martyr,” p.150

¹⁹⁶ *ibid*

Marian government (which) constituted oblique advice to the new king to observe precedents established under Elizabeth rather than to follow the example of Mary I.”¹⁹⁷ It also shows the more peaceful place of Catholicism in Jacobean England following this peace treaty. Katherine’s defence during the trial and in the scenes following shows her lack of ambiguity. Her love for Henry does not waver, nor her firm belief in her queenship.

Shakespeare and Fletcher’s characterisation develops Katherine further than seen in Forrest’s tale. Like Forrest, Shakespeare has chosen to characterise Katherine as a martyr, with the overbearing theme of death and a cause running throughout the play. Shakespeare’s Katherine, however, fights her cause as the last Catholic Queen, until her sad ending, creating pathos for the fallen heroine. This version allows for Katherine to push against the constraints of her gender, which Griselda could not because of her vow of obedience. Hansen compares this re-creation of Katherine to Forrest’s Griselda. He states that “Shakespeare and Fletcher’s portrayal of Katherine of Aragon in *Henry VIII* fully Englishes Catherine by presenting her as the apotheosis of wifely duty and a character of Griselda-like patience.”¹⁹⁸ Unlike the restricted Griselda, Shakespeare and Fletcher’s Katherine can show cunning, intelligence and the ability to defend herself, even if she is at minimum disguising her actions with obedience, as shown earlier by Ashton. Shakespeare’s Katherine remains obedient to her king, even when banished, but her character is created as more explorative than the earlier Griselda.

¹⁹⁷ John N. King, “Queen Elizabeth I: Representations of the Virgin Queen,” p.66

¹⁹⁸ Matthew c. Hansen, “And a Queen of England, Too”: The ‘Englishing’ of Catherine of Aragon in Sixteenth-Century English Literary and Chronicle History,” p.92

Exploring Katherine's character

Within *All is True*, Shakespeare recognises and explores Katherine's intellect and strategic political abilities. This Katherine is shown as a creative and strong individual who understands the patriarchy surrounding her and the limitations of her gender. Katherine defies the expectations of women and shows her inner strength and loyalty to herself. Shakespeare and Fletcher choose to show Katherine's changing status through their political plot, allowing them to explore the public loyalty to Katherine, which still leads to changing attitudes towards her and her becoming a stranger in England once again.

Early in the play, Katherine's political abilities are shown when she is concerned by the response of the people to a recent taxation imposed by Wolsey in King Henry's name. She appears troubled that they are "in great grievance" and that Henry is unaware of the taxation and the effect the response may have on the crown. Katherine is especially worried about their loyalty turning with their "Language unmannerly, yea, such which breaks / The sides of loyalty, and almost appears / In loud rebellion."¹⁹⁹ This shows Katherine as a political, advisor Queen. Katherine tactfully explains to Henry that Wolsey was behind these plans, while emphasising her loyalty to England and Henry. Chapter 1 has previously shown that these attributes are known to have been possessed by Katherine and were uncharacteristic of early modern women generally. Instead of ignoring them characterisations as some later versions of Katherine will be shown to, Shakespeare and Fletcher choose to develop them, portraying Katherine as a strong intellectual queen. Their Katherine is clearly aware of her unusual demeanour and she cleverly retracts her accusation by saying that she is "much too venturous / In tempting of your patience; but am bolden'd / Under your promised

¹⁹⁹ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act I Scene II

pardon.”²⁰⁰ This allows Katherine to plant her idea but hide behind the restrictions of her gender. This tactic is not dissimilar to the earlier criticism of Griselda from Ashton who believes she deceptively conceals her defiance behind her obedience. This behaviour is repeated when Katherine defends her marriage to Cardinals Campeius and Wolsey. Katherine asserts her womanly limitations, stating that she is “a simple woman, much too weak to oppose your cunning.”²⁰¹ Katherine clearly identifies the restrictions of her gender, which are dually hindering her defence and easing the Cardinals’ ability to manipulate her. This is not without seeing their two-faced cunning, however. This understanding is especially seen in Act III, Scene I when Katherine describes herself as “a poor weak woman, fall’n from favour,”²⁰² when showing her displeasure at their visit. Later in this scene Wolsey argues “I know you have a gentle, noble temper, / A soul as even as a calm: pray, think us / Those we profess, peace-makers, friends, and servants”.²⁰³ Campeius reinforces Wolsey’s flattery by saying that

You wrong your virtues
With thee weak women’s fears: a noble spirit,
As yours was put into you, ever casts
Such doubts, as false coin, from it. The king loves you;
Beware you lose it not: for us, if you please
To trust in your business, we are ready
To use our utmost studies in your service.²⁰⁴

²⁰⁰ *ibid*

²⁰¹ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act II Scene IV

²⁰² William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act III Scene I

²⁰³ *ibid*

²⁰⁴ *ibid*

Katherine's response, however, is for them to forgive her actions if they are unmannerly as they know that she is "a woman, lacking wit /To make a seemly answer to such persons."²⁰⁵ Katherine asks the Cardinals to obey Henry's command to defend her well at the trial. This response shows that Katherine understands their perception of her 'unwomanly' direct behaviour seen as "weak women's fears" and that her "noble spirit" is not compatible with her virtues identified by the cardinals. This could be read as the subjugation of Katherine as a result of her being female, regardless of her Queenship. It could therefore be seen that Katherine is aware of this repression, as she stands up for herself, but asks for pardon so as not to break the boundaries set by her gender and enforced by her marriage.

Katherine's composure eventually gives way to her determination in the trial. To Wolsey she says, "Sir, I am about to weep; but, thinking that / We are a queen, or long have dream'd so, certain / The daughter of a king, my drops of tears I'll turn to sparks of fire,"²⁰⁶ and marks him as her enemy and refuses to accept him as her judge. She continues that he would "tender more your person's honour than / Your high profession spiritual: that again I do refuse you for my judge; and here, / Before you all, appeal unto the pope, / To bring my whole cause 'fore his holiness, And to be judged by him."²⁰⁷ Katherine reveals her appeal to the Pope and absolutely denies any other judgement and leaves the court. Katherine's determination and intellectual pride continues to be presented into the third act. Following the trial, the cardinals attempt to speak to her in their mutual language, Latin, but she asks them to speak in English as she is "not such a truant since my coming, As not to know

²⁰⁵ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act III Scene I

²⁰⁶ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act II Scene IV

²⁰⁷ *ibid*

the language I have lived in: A strange tongue makes my cause more strange, suspicious.”²⁰⁸ Here Katherine defends her intellect, as to speak in Latin would be an insult to her growth since her arrival to England and prevent her household from hearing the verdict as well. Their use of Latin also identifies her as a stranger to England again, before the verdict has even been confirmed. Katherine is told to consider that she might “part away disgraced,” so she angrily claims that the cardinals are wanting her ruin. Katherine asks “Is this your Christian counsel? Out upon ye! / Heaven is above all yet; there sits a judge / That no king can corrupt.”²⁰⁹ This scene displays Katherine’s immovable religious loyalty and shows that Katherine will be further isolated by having no English council that isn’t corrupted by the will of the King. Katherine further demands that as she has “lived thus long—let me speak myself, / Since virtue finds no friends—a wife, a true one? A woman, I dare say without vain glory, Never yet branded with suspicion?”²¹⁰ This action shows her ability to speak unapologetically, knowing few could match her worth. By demanding to speak for herself she also speaks for women at the time who were often not given permission to. Katherine is asking to be respected, she has lived long enough to ascertain the right and the ability to speak seriously.

Shakespeare, up to the trial, showed that attitudes towards her remained positive. Loyalty to Katherine and the disagreement with the power of Wolsey is shown through a discussion between a group of lords about the upcoming trial. Norfolk states that

Between us and the emperor, the queen’s great nephew,
He dives into the king’s soul, and there scatters
Dangers, doubts, wringing of the conscience,

²⁰⁸ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act III Scene I

²⁰⁹ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act III Scene I

²¹⁰ *ibid*

Fears, and despairs: and all thee for his marriage:
And out of all these to restore the king,
He counsels a divorce; a loss of her
That, like a jewel, has hung twenty years
About his neck, yet never lost her lustre;
Of her that loves him with that excellence
That angels love good men with.²¹¹

Norfolk is displeased that Henry is so easily persuaded by Wolsey and understands Katherine's worth, comparing her, firstly, with an uncompromising jewel and, secondly, likening her to an angel who loves a good man. Describing Katherine in such terms shows her to be valuable and a loyal, virtuous woman, having been unwaveringly with Henry for twenty years. Norfolk's description also resonates with earlier interpretations of Katherine as being saint-like (as discussed in Chapter One). The Chamberlain agrees stating that, "These news are every where; every tongue speaks 'em, / And every true heart weeps for't," which shows that the people do not support Henry's decision. The Chamberlain ends his response by wishing the King to realise the truth of Wolsey as well, "The king's eyes, that so long have slept upon / This bold bad man."²¹² The alliteration here of 'bold' and 'bad' clearly adds emphasis to this negative depiction. Suffolk interjects that he wishes the King would free them all from Wolsey's "slavery": he has no love for the man and his actions will not affect him, so will leave him to the mercy of the Pope.²¹³ The nobles' disdain engages with the Catholic narrative of the Tudor Reformation, as they were all Catholic prior to the break from Rome. This loyalty towards Katherine is short-lived, however, with the changing attitudes of the cardinals towards her and the attitude of Anne Boleyn.

²¹¹ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act II Scene II

²¹² *ibid*

²¹³ *ibid*

As soon as her position is shaken, Katherine begins to be perceived as a stranger to England. In a short dialogue during Act II Scene III, Anne Boleyn expresses to the Old Lady that no one would ever dishonour Katherine but believes her to grow in majesty even now, as perhaps shown by the nobles. The Old Lady agrees that that even the “Hearts of most hard temper / Meld and lament for her,” and Anne retorts back that for God’s will, she would have been better to have never have “known pomp.”²¹⁴ At this point the Old Lady shows sympathy for Katherine, “Alas, poor lady! She’s a stranger now again” and Anne critically replies that “Must pity drop upon her. Verily, / I swear, ’tis better to be lowly born, / And range with humble livers in content, / Than to be perk’d up in a glistening grief, / And wear a golden sorrow.”²¹⁵ This conversation returns Katherine to her strange status upon arriving in England. Katherine’s isolation is further made clear when she begs Henry for pity and justice during Act II, Scene IV. Here Katherine explains that she is

“...a most poor woman, and a stranger,

Born out of your dominions; having here

No judge indifferent, nor no more assurance

Of equal friendship and proceeding.”²¹⁶

Katherine identifies herself as a stranger born out of England and knows she has nowhere else to turn as a woman, alone, in a country now foreign to her, without the means to return to Spain without disgrace. She asks again,

²¹⁴ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act II Scene III

²¹⁵ *ibid*

²¹⁶ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act II Scene IV

“Beseech you, sir, to spare me, till I may

Be by my friends in Spain advised;

whose couple I will implore: if not, i’ the name of God,

Your pleasure be fulfill’d!”²¹⁷

Her request is refused, but this plea emphasises her lack of Spanish fellowship in England. Her efforts were useless and the secret marriage to Anne and her coronation was published, returning Katherine to the title of the Princess Dowager, widow of Prince Arthur. The result of the trial and Henry’s remarriage leaves a lasting impact on future narratives and recreations of Katherine. Although Shakespeare and Fletcher have portrayed Katherine as a dynamic character, in later works it is Katherine’s failures and misery that are more readily recreated.

This play remains popular in eras to come, but has been modified over time, leading to changes in how it has been received. The play was performed regularly between the Stuart era and the nineteenth century, by which time Wolsey had become the lead role.²¹⁸ By the twentieth century, parts of the play were changed or shortened and at times Henry returned as the main character, with actresses such as Sybil Thorndike in 1925 and Flora Robson in 1945, playing Katherine, who were now the highlights of the performances.²¹⁹ In 1970, the BBC created an adaptation of the play with Claire Bloom as Katherine and Timothy West as Wolsey. Bloom presents Katherine as a calm and determined woman with fair features. This Katherine shows courage through her faith, intellect and virtuous behaviour, but is not without an element of concern, seen through her melancholy. Her

²¹⁷ *ibid*

²¹⁸ Stanley Wells, *The Shakespeare Companion*, p.174

²¹⁹ *ibid*

appearance and age fit with contemporary portraits and for the time in which the play is set.

Bloom's performance recreates Katherine's contemporaneous presentation while respecting the modifications of the playwrights. This Katherine does not fear the challenges posed by Wolsey and she is righteous in her place as a Princess of Spain and as Queen of England. These theatrical recreations kept the Tudors in the minds of the people and their story relevant. This was continued by recreations made by artists that were published via the printing press, and much later, by modern film.

William Hogarth

William Hogarth created an engraving called "Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn" printed in approximately 1728 (fig.18).²²⁰ This engraving portrays a melancholic Wolsey with Henry and Anne, which Katherine and Henry Percy are seated behind. It also presents Hogarth's view of the time in which it was created, as well as some of his possible inspirations behind it. Around 1728 two things of interest occurred. The first was the accession of George II to the English throne after the death of his father, George I. The second was the staging of William Shakespeare's *All is True*, by Colley Cibber at the Drury Lane Theatre.²²¹ These events are important and contextualise the underlying messages within the engraving and they also show the features within it to be clearly allegorical.

²²⁰ Hogarth, William. *Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn*, (print of an engraving; London: c.1728-1729; Royal Academy of Arts, object number 17/3694)

²²¹ Gemma Sykes, "William Hogarth: Satirising 'All is True'", *Shakespeare Birthplace Trust*, (2016) URL: <https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/explore-shakespeare/blogs/william-hogarth-satirising-all-true/> last Accessed: 07/02/2021

Initially the composition of the engraving shows the viewer that the Tudors were relevant to Hogarth's audience. The image also displays the Protestant story of Henry VIII changing his faith in order to pursue Anne Boleyn, importantly, at the expense of Wolsey. It is likely that this recreation was inspired by the play *All is True*, which was being staged around this time. This can be seen through the imagery of Wolsey's failure and Henry and Anne's relationship. This imagery is likely to have been inspired by the simultaneous events of Wolsey's failure to secure the divorce and the marriage of Henry to Anne occurring in secret in the play, all while Katherine's title was demoted to Dowager Princess of Wales. In the play Suffolk says that "His second marriage shall be publish'd, and / Her coronation. Katherine no more / Shall be call'd queen, but princess dowager / And widow to Prince Arthur."²²² Wolsey, who seems to be late to this revelation, refuses to have a "Bullen" replace Katherine.²²³ Wolsey, thinking that he still had the ear of the King, believed that he would be able to "snuff" out this business with Anne, considering her to be a "spleeny Lutheran" heretic who had manipulated the King. However, Wolsey had already fallen from favour and instead of coming to hear his advice, the King had instead arrived to confiscate his belongings that were deemed not fit for a subject. This could also be depicted in the Hogarth engraving as it is believed to set in a room in York Place,²²⁴ which was owned by Wolsey.

Hogarth's choice of characters is also intriguing. The engraving shows Katherine of Aragon and Henry Percy in the background, with Anne, Henry VIII, Wolsey and a servant of some description in the foreground. This is significant, as Katherine and Henry Percy both represent strong Catholic powers in England, Katherine was the last Catholic Queen prior to the reformation and Henry Percy came from one of the strongest noble families of the north. Both were also the rejected other halves

²²² William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act III Scene II

²²³ *ibid*

²²⁴ Stanley Wells, *The Shakespeare Companion*, p.173

of the new royal couple. The curator at the British History Museum has suggested that the image “composition echoes the traditional iconography of the popular story of Fair Rosamond and Henry II.”²²⁵ This perhaps compares Katherine to Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine, the wife of Henry II, who as legend had it, was accused of killing one of his many mistresses, Rosamond, by offering her the choice of being either stabbed or poisoned. Henry Percy sitting next to Katherine is purposeful, but a fictional addition of Hogarth’s. Firstly, because Henry Percy left court following his arranged marriage away from Anne and critically because Percy is also missing from the play. Through the mutual hate of Katherine and Percy constructed by Hogarth, Katherine can be further interpreted in this engraving. It is known that Katherine had fought against those who opposed her, never accepting the terms of her divorce and her demotion to the Dowager Princess of Wales. Shakespeare recreated this fight in his character of Katherine who tells Wolsey that,

My lord, I dare not make myself so guilty,

To give up willingly that noble title

Your master wed me to: nothing but death

Shall e'er divorce my dignities.²²⁶

Chapuis, who supported Katherine, offered to bear arms, which would no doubt lead to civil unrest, or violence or possibly an invasion from the Empire. This is suggested within the play as Katherine fades away, but she believes she has done enough damage to her country and decides to leave in

²²⁵ The British Museum, *Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn*,

https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?assetId=167957001&objectId=1361670&partId=1 [Last Accessed: 04/05/2019]. Ref.: Shelia O’Connell, *The Popular Print in England: 1550-1850*, The British Museum Press, London (1999) p.20

²²⁶ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act III Scene I

peace. It could be suggested that these two disgruntled individuals are representative of this potential. Although just conjecture, perhaps the Percy family could have supported Katherine's cause as loyal Catholics, which could also be symbolised by Katherine appearing to remain on the throne. However, Katherine finding peace also undermines the potential of Katherine as a representation of the murderous wife Queen Eleanor. For Katherine, her biggest downfall was when Anne Boleyn was noticed and pursued by Henry. The Hogarth image could also portray this as the moment of crisis for Katherine, by being inspired by the scene where Anne first dances with Henry in York Place (Act I Sc IV).

Hogarth is famous for creating satirical images portraying issues in society just before a crisis. As a satirist, his images often caricature individuals with dark or even morbid humour, especially seen in images of his such as *Gin Lane* (fig.19) where the drunken woman at the centre of the image is moments away from dropping her baby.²²⁷ He is especially known for using satire to show the divide of the wealthy and suffering poor. In the text below the *Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn* engraving, Hogarth emphasises his interest in Englishness and his disgust of the wealthy through his characterisation of Katherine and Percy. Hogarth writes that Katherine and Percy both “mourn their wretched Fate, And view the Royal Pair (Henry and Anne, who parade through the middle of the room) with equal Hate, Reflecting on the Pomp of glittering Crowns, And Arbitrary Power that knows no Bounds.”²²⁸ Within the play we have seen Anne say that it was better to come from more humble places and that Katherine would have benefited to have never understood such pomp which was to be taken from her.²²⁹ The rhetoric creates a darker image of monarchy. It describes hate bouncing off the jewels in a way that perhaps light would, jewels which represent the crown and the

²²⁷ William Hogarth, *Gin Lane*, (1751)

²²⁸ William Hogarth, *Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn*, (1728)

²²⁹ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act II Scene III

power gained through inheritance, which is chosen, but not necessarily earned, or consistent. This shows the monarchy as a system of greed and pomp. The description alludes to Hogarth's criticism of the monarchy and character after leaving France, a country which he came to hate. It also suggests an insight into the trying times of eighteenth-century England that were familiar to him in his early upbringings. Hogarth was raised in the lower classes as a result of his father's financial shortcomings, and this gave Hogarth a first-hand experience of struggle and poverty.

Hogarth's choice to create an image imitating the Tudors that was embedded with his contemporary criticisms allows him to argue that politics is, and has always been, corrupt. This is supported by his interest in controversy, for he was "attracted by the image of something falling or breaking to suggest a moment of crisis, the narrow edge that separates the apparently stable world from chaos."²³⁰ This is also shown by his decision to display the result of the immoral wanderings of Henry before the corrupt divorce proceedings and the unexpected fall from the high estate by Katherine and Wolsey. In the case of this image, perhaps the couple walking before Katherine represents the tipping point before future crisis, where Katherine remains on the throne and the wake of Protestant England is approaching. Anne is perhaps the main subject of Hogarth's engraving because of her criticism of Katherine's wealth and power in the play. He may have placed her in the centre of the image to emphasise his similar attitude towards wealth which he has embodied through Katherine and Percy.

Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn calls to the specific time in which it was created and to Hogarth's political motivations. This image comments on the accession of George II, and the public expectation of the dismissal of the lead Whig, Robert Walpole. In this satirical engraving, Hogarth has chosen Wolsey to be his caricature of Walpole, as he had expected Walpole to be dismissed as easily as Wolsey had been. During George I's reign, his son George, then Prince of Wales, had

²³⁰ Jack Lindsay, *Hogarth His Art and His World*, Hart-Davis, MacGibbon Ltd, (1977) p.60

become popular with the people. However, events during his reign led to George I permanently removing his son from the royal residency of St. James's palace and the Prince of Wales's first three daughters from the care of their parents, leaving their son, the eldest, abroad. Walpole, perhaps to regain power, joined King George's government, even though he and the opposition had occupied the Prince of Wales residence, Leicester House, for meetings. This is significant as George II is often identified with the opposition of his father. While gaining royal favour, Walpole encouraged the King and his son to reconcile, largely for the sake of creating a public image of unity. They did attempt this reconciliation, but the Prince of Wales's children were still not returned, and he could not return to the palace, leading the prince to believe that Walpole had only created this plan to elevate himself back into favour.

With *All is True* being popularly viewed and current in Hogarth's time, the audience of the play would more easily understand the message Hogarth was presenting, which would give Hogarth a wider viewership. With the help of the printing press, Hogarth used the theatre to influence his art which gave him a two-fold effect. As Jack Lindsay suggests: "In linking his art with the theatre, Hogarth was able to give a deepened strength to his urge to find a new audience. For what was considered serious art there was only a small audience, largely aristocratic, but the theatre could claim something like a representative section of society."²³¹ Hogarth needed his criticisms to reach further afield than his typical aristocratic audience. He would be able to spread his criticism of the Whig aristocrats in politics through a familiar play, which would inspire his satire and present it to the more varied audience of the theatre. Hogarth as a polemicist used this familiar scene to engage with the controversies and potential decline of Walpole, using Wolsey's downfall as Walpole's caricature. Both Wolsey and Walpole came from humble beginnings but ascended to the second most powerful men of their respective times: Wolsey as Cardinal and first-hand to the king and

²³¹Jack Lindsay, *Hogarth His Art and His World*, p.66

Walpole as Treasurer and Chancellor of the Exchequer, the effective Prime Minister, although this was not a position held at this time. Derek Jarrett has written,

Sir Robert Walpole, one of the most effective politicians of the first half of the century, was always careful to avoid any appearance of over-sophistication: the image he sought to cultivate was that of the bluff country squire who brought to the business of central government the same straightforward earthiness which served him in good stead in local affairs.²³²

Perhaps it is at this point the two characters separate, with Wolsey's blatant wealth and affinity to luxury that does not fit with Walpole's simple and basic living.

Later interpretations through art and the Victorian era

In 1817, another image was made of *All is True*. This image shows the climax of Katherine's story at the trial. This painting, *The Trial of Queen Catherine, 'Henry VIII', Act II Scene V, performed by the Kemble Family* (1817) (fig.20), was made by George Henry Harlow.²³³ The painting depicts Sarah Siddons, one of the most famous tragediennes of her time, as Katherine.²³⁴ In this scene, Katherine strongly stands her ground in the foreground of the image, standing straight and looking away from the court. Siddons, as Katherine accusingly points towards Wolsey, who sits low down

²³² Derek Jarrett, *England in the Age of Hogarth*, Hart-Davis MacGibbon Ltd, (1974) p.24

²³³ George Henry Harlow, *The Trial of Queen Catherine, 'Henry VIII', Act II Scene V, performed by the Kemble Family*, (1817), RSC Theatre Collection, <https://www.rsc.org.uk/henry-viii/about-the-play/dates-and-sources> [Last Accessed: 30/05/19]

²³⁴ Stanley Wells, *The Shakespeare Companion*, Cassel, Octopus Publishing Group Ltd, (2017) p.174

opposite her. The levels in the image portray Katherine's defiance against the dismay of the cardinals attempting to try her. Katherine may be looking out towards the audience to evoke sympathy and support for her cause and to show her lack of interest in the men around her. Her costume portrays Katherine with a crown-like headdress with furred green robes. This gives her the appearance of a Queen but does not necessarily portray Katherine accurately. Georgianna Ziegler states that "Siddons's majesty and grandeur are evident" and, although it was initially begun as a portrait of her, "Harlow engaged it to show the entire scene with the Kemble brothers as Wolsey and Cromwell."²³⁵ What is interesting here is the choice of a famous tragedienne to play Katherine. Although Katherine's refusal was aimed at Henry, this portrait shows Shakespeare's opposition of Katherine and Wolsey and that in this performance Wolsey was potentially the principal part. Katherine being performed by a tragedienne shows the choice of characterisation by the theatre company to increase Katherine's relevance and make her more recognisable to the audience of 1817. Due to these alterations or exaggerations, this image does show a movement away from earlier versions of Katherine and the trial. This is more apparent when compared to a later painting by Henry Nelson O'Neil called *The Trial of Queen Catherine of Aragon* (fig.21),²³⁶ which shows a historical account and a very different image.

Although O'Neil's painting is not recreating a scene in the play, it is a recreation of the trial itself. In this image, it is Katherine who is lowered to her knees looking straight at Henry, not Wolsey, her hands raised in prayer. A few things can be taken from this image. Situating Katherine at a level below everyone else is clearly a sign of obedience and defeat. She is begging for sympathy, before

²³⁵ Georgianna Ziegler, "Re-imagining A Renaissance Queen: Catherine of Aragon Among the Victorians", *High and Mighty Queens" Realities and Representations*, Palgrave Macmillan (2003), p.215

²³⁶ Henry Nelson O'Neil, *The Trial of Queen Catherine of Aragon*, (oil painting on canvas; London:1846-48; Birmingham Museums Trust, accession number 1885P2540)

finding her inner strength to argue back. Katherine wears a long black dress with a more traditional headdress. Katherine is often pictured in black or dark colours, but this portrayal may also have been inspired by the image of mourning during O’Neil’s time as well. O’Neil was a Victorian painter and writer, who was famous for focusing on literary and historical works. Black was a colour of mourning and was used to cover coffins in Tudor times, including Katherine’s. Katherine, who is commonly depicted as a mourning mother, had lost many children as well as her family. This would make black a more appropriate colour as it held the same meaning for Queen Victoria too. Ziegler also compares these two paintings and notes that “Catherine no longer dominates the canvas with her strident gesture as in Harlow’s trial scene...The pocket with handkerchief hanging at her side gives a domestic touch to her figure.”²³⁷ The Victorian era was a time of revival for the Tudors, but also a time where women became linked with the ideals of domestic living and of being securely married. Perhaps O’Neil’s piece appears more in keeping with contemporary Tudor images as well as the domesticated view of queenship that was applied to Victoria as well.

In 1837, Queen Victoria ascended to the throne and needed to assert herself as the rightful leading monarch. Just as James I connects his succession to Elizabeth and Henry VII, Victoria also relied on Elizabeth’s reputation as Gloriana to assert herself as queen. According to Michael Dobson and Nicola J. Watson in *England’s Elizabeth: An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy* (2002),

At the time the reputation of the monarchy as an institution was arguably at an all-time low, the princess herself was virtually an unknown, and queens regent had been few and far between. In this atmosphere it was inevitable that the new queen would be assimilated to

²³⁷ Georgianna Ziegler, “Re-imagining A Renaissance Queen: Catherine of Aragon Among the Victorians,” p.216

her most illustrious predecessor as a Virgin Queen, Gloriana herself, and despite Victoria's own thoroughly conventional condemnation of that lady as immodest.²³⁸

Elizabeth is often given the credit for the “Golden Age” that came with the continued discovery and conquest of the new world, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and the peaceful religious settlement in her kingdom. This provided Victoria with the perfect model to appeal to the British people, during a time of increasing industry and sophistication, while being surrounded by the overwhelming importance of Englishness and Protestantism in the empire. Dobson and Watson go as far as to say that

Rather oddly, Elizabeth was thought to have sponsored the development of almost any sort of modernity associated with the greatness of Victorian Britain, spanning the emergence of the Baconian science and the invention of domestic conveniences, both, of course, major features of the royal-sponsored Great Exhibition of 1851.²³⁹

In the early years of her reign, Victoria studied history, politics and English literature, which she avidly discussed with Lord Melbourne. These discussions were recorded in her diaries, allowing for an insight into the young Queen's thoughts. Victoria frequently returned to discussions about Katherine and her mistreatment by Henry. Ziegler portrays times where Lord Melbourne explains to Victoria that the events such as the death of the Earl of Warwick were troubling early on for Katherine and they continued to affect her throughout her reign. As a proud Protestant, Melbourne attempted to explain to Victoria that it is Henry VIII to whom the country owed the reformation, but

²³⁸ Michael Dobson, Nichola Watson, *England's Elizabeth An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy*, Oxford University Press, (2002) p.147

²³⁹ Michael Dobson, Nichola Watson, *England's Elizabeth An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy*, p.151

Victoria believes that his motivations for encouraging it were "not the best."²⁴⁰ Melbourne justified Henry's actions by explaining that "Those women [his wives] bothered him so" and dismissed Victoria's particular concern for Katherine, by saying that "That was his conscience" and "he thought he was living in a state of concubinage, not of marriage."²⁴¹ Victoria later returns to Henry's wives and is still concerned about Katherine. Melbourne maintained the same unsympathetic view, stating that "He got tired of her" because she was a "sad, groaning, moaning, woman", which according to Ziegler, although made Victoria laugh, showed her growing independence of thoughts, which she expressed by her returning to defend Katherine.²⁴² This statement also shows a view of Katherine held during this time, a negative interpretation that this study has seen to be often exaggerated. This, Ziegler further explains, is evident by Victoria's awareness of profligacy, from the behaviour of her own uncles, and shows her ability to apply this to her own interpretations. Ziegler believes that Victoria may have pitied Katherine for her "ill-usage as a pawn in the hands of men: her father, father-in-law, and her husband,"²⁴³ which refers to Katherine being used as a tool of diplomacy between Spain and England and as potential leverage for Henry VII, as well as her later mistreatment by Henry. Katherine, by being very capable in traditionally male skills that were not expected of women, proved to be highly successful in the early part of her marriage. However, the end of her marriage showed her to be unsuccessful in her duty that was expected of a queen consort, the duty to provide England with a healthy male heir. It is important to note that in Victoria's time, marriage was the only acceptable "independence" for women, her own marriage created different ideas of female monarchy. Victoria's successful marriage created "an image of

²⁴⁰ Georgianna Ziegler, "Re-imagining A Renaissance Queen: Catherine of Aragon Among the Victorians," p.203

²⁴¹ *ibid*

²⁴² *ibid*

²⁴³ Georgianna Ziegler, "Re-imagining A Renaissance Queen: Catherine of Aragon Among the Victorians", p.205

family and home that came to dominate the public view of monarchy in the period."²⁴⁴ These images created a domesticated view of queens and female sovereignty in general, which would affect the Victorian perspective of Katherine too, especially with the changing notion of queenship. Victoria's own sovereignty was built upon the glorification of Elizabeth, for all her positive attributes, but not to the extent of her masculinity, or in her failing to marry and have children. Victoria instead, is softened by domestic and family ideals, giving her a very Victorian middle-class image. As Victoria was a constitutional monarch, her powers were far more limited than Elizabeth's, but she did use them to affect both foreign policy and domestic affairs in England. Ziegler determines that the

nineteenth-century view of female sovereignty is thus conflicted. While on the one hand it domesticates the powers of the actual sovereign by making her appear more familiarly middle-class as wife and mother, on the other hand it glorifies the position of the middle-class woman, giving her moral direction over the affairs of men so that in Ruskin's terms, she becomes queen of her own home.²⁴⁵

However, historians of this century also tended to domesticate their presentations of Katherine. They would do this by putting greater emphasis on her moral stance and the domestic side of her life, her place as wife and the importance of her children, over say her regency in 1513, for instance. The Victorians who were leading the way when it came to engineering and trade, were very interested in their historical past. The world was rapidly developing around them with the growth of industry and their expanding empire and the tight urbanisation of industrial cities in Britain. With

²⁴⁴ *ibid*

²⁴⁵ Georgianna Ziegler, "Re-imagining A Renaissance Queen: Catherine of Aragon Among the Victorians", p.207

such change they turned to their past for reassurance. T.W. Heyck explains that this was communicated through historical texts where

the main features of historical writing in the time of the men of letters 'all derive from one basic contrast: the "age of history" was also an age of rapid and unprecedented change'. Amidst the intense sense of change wrought by the population explosion, industrialization, urbanization and political turmoil, the reading public wanted to establish continuities with the past, to be assured that English institutions were sound.²⁴⁶

Victorian writers provided their readers with literature and fiction that would reassure them of the progress around them and

use the past as a guide through perilous times, and to secure a basis for hope that continuing change would be beneficial. Hence the early and mid-Victorians were profoundly historically-minded: they approached their public issues in historical terms; and they constructed myths of parliamentary freedom and individual liberty which gave them a national identity.²⁴⁷

This reinforces the link between Victoria and Elizabeth. As argued by Dobson and Watson, "Victoria's queenship could be legitimated and elaborated by this powerful fantasy of Gloriana,"²⁴⁸ and Victoria would use the Tudor myth to add to her national identity in a time as turbulent as hers. This allowed for her people to see her in line with a great female monarch of the past, reassuring them of her value through a strong female figure. Their need to find continuities to their past continued into their fictional literature that developed following the increased popularity of

²⁴⁶ T.W. Heyck, *The Transformation of Intellectual Life in Victorian England*, Croom Helm Ltd, (1982) pp.122-123

²⁴⁷ *ibid*

²⁴⁸ Michael Dobson, Nichola Watson, *England's Elizabeth An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy*, p.151

historical literature, provided by the likes of the Strickland sisters. This was because the Victorians enjoyed a particular type of literature which emphasised their link to the past. Heyck states that

It is worth remembering that many of the best novels were historical... Like the novelists, the historians were supposed to educate as well as entertain. Most historians responded by trying to give the public support and comfort through emphasis on the continuities between the past and present, the relevance of past events to present issues, and the survival of time-honoured causes and institutions.²⁴⁹

This combination of comfort and education created a popularity in historical fiction, of which a large portion has been dedicated to the Tudor era. As Victoria used the Tudor heritage to assimilate the success of Elizabeth, historical novelists during this time were “long interested in the discussion of nation creation; from Scott onward the substantiation of a sense of national identity has been part of the historical writer’s purpose and mode of working.”²⁵⁰ This use of heritage and national identity alludes to the motivations of future novelists and film makers who use the Tudor court to present their own modern issues.

This chapter has explored the ways in which Katherine was represented and recreated following her death. It has investigated her use as a political device, especially as a martyr for the Catholic cause. Katherine has been remembered as a highly intellectual individual through Griselda potentially disguising her defiance beneath her piety and obedience. This has also been remembered by Shakespeare and Fletcher, who allowed their version of Katherine to be defiant and politically aware, but clever in also disguising her defiance. She does this with retractions of her words and with an apology for the ‘weaknesses’ of her gender. By the eighteenth century, Katherine retains

²⁴⁹T.W. Heyck, *The Transformation of Intellectual Life in Victorian England*, p.123

²⁵⁰ Jerome de Groot, *The Historical Novel*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, (London and New York: 2010) p.140

her importance as the Spanish and Catholic Queen, but her intellectual and political abilities which made her so unusual in her own time begin to be lost. At this point it is her marriage that Katherine is identified and recognised by, largely negatively through her pending divorce and banishment from Henry. Hogarth further presents Katherine negatively by using her to display his disgust of the wealthy. By the reign of Victoria, we have seen that Katherine has been reduced even further as she is now pitied by Victoria and only widely remembered for being the wife Henry was bored with. This chapter has allowed us to understand a depreciating trend of Katherine's characterisation. Only her dynamic characterisations of defiance, piety, mourning and religious loyalty survive. The intellectual virtues Katherine promoted through education and religious study are all but forgotten, until her involvement of the Pope at the trial. It seems that the trial is what keeps Katherine relevant in later recreations as it marks the beginnings of the English Church and the reign of Anne Boleyn.

Chapter Three: Modern re-creations and memorials of Katherine

The Tudors have been especially popular in the postmodern twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Katherine of Aragon comes to modern minds through fiction and is often characterised differently depending upon the motivations of the creator and the time period. These characterisations can also relate to situational factors at that time, such as surrounding political events, as seen with William Hogarth in Chapter 2. This chapter will argue that historical fiction and films have the ability to present new interpretations of historical events by creating fiction around the facts. This allows novels to explore different perspectives and possibilities in areas less supported by historical records. Katherine is also annually commemorated at Peterborough Cathedral, where she is remembered for some of the characteristics that fiction writers recreate, as well as her contemporaneous character that was analysed in Chapter 1. In January 2019 I witnessed Katherine's annual memorial, which demonstrated the interests of the people she attracts, but also how she draws interest to Peterborough as well, encouraging people to often visit her grave and leave gifts. This chapter will firstly explore ideas of what historical fiction and film are, to better understand its popularity and audience. When defining film and fiction, criticism surrounding the portrayal of the effects of religion and reform will be discussed. This will be important to consider alongside the interests of women both viewing and making these works, as their interests often present the issue of marriage. This analysis reflects the motivations of the authorship through a historical context. This concept builds upon Dolan's *Marriage and Violence*.²⁵¹ It is often seen that largely female characters, particularly Katherine, are downplayed by narratives which do not consider a more religious background. Generally, the Protestant story is more apparent in portrayals of Henry VIII and the annulment with Katherine. Yet few authors recreating the Tudor monarchs convey the

²⁵¹ Francis E. Dolan, *Marriage and Violence*

Catholic perspective leading to the break from Rome. We have previously seen that those that do recreate this struggle, use the absolute Catholic, Katherine, who is sometimes depicted as a martyr, to represent it. Understanding the ways in which the narrative has been retold allows for the continued analysis of Katherine's character. This will be followed by a thematic discussion of specific characterisations of Katherine shown through film and fiction between the 1930s and the early 2000s. These will also be looked at in comparison to her historic record remembered at Peterborough Cathedral. This allows for my analysis to compare examples and critically analyse characterisations that have been recreated of Katherine. Chapter 3 can be read as a continuation of Chapter 2 but will take on a more thematic structure. This chapter will create a non-exhaustive modern interpretation of Katherine that discusses selective perspectives in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, while considering modern criticisms of the genre as well.

When looking at historical fiction, it is important to first understand the definition of a historical novel (the same principle can be applied to film). According to the Historical Novel Society, historical novels are considered to have been written by someone who was not alive at the time that the narratives are historically set, or they must be written fifty years post the events being recreated.²⁵² The term "historical fiction" would at first appear to be an oxymoron, due to history being meant to present facts, and fiction naturally being imaginative and flexible.²⁵³ For this reason, historical fiction is often not taken seriously by some historians such as David Starkey and Antony Beevor, who "attacked historical novels for blurring fact and fiction. Paradoxically, he (Beevor) argued, the better the novel, the more dangerous it proved in terms of misleading readers."²⁵⁴ In some cases, historical fiction is rejected by historians, due to the assumption of novelists

²⁵² Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, Springer Nature Limited, London, (2012) p.202

²⁵³ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.201

²⁵⁴ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.224

"prioritising rose-tinted stories and invented mythologies over historical standards."²⁵⁵ Peter J. Beck has shown that Starkey is an intense critic of historical fiction. Beck quotes Starkey as stating that Philippa Gregory's historical novel, *The Other Boleyn Girl* (2008):

is largely written about women, written by women and read by women. ... It's a quite amazing book, in the sense that the author, Philippa Gregory, has managed to write an historical novel based on four known facts. I think it's one fact per 75 pages.

Starkey also dismissed Hillary Mantel's *Wolf Hall* (2009) as "historical tosh."²⁵⁶ Starkey is acutely critical of historical fiction as it has the freedom to be creative and not have to follow "the rules" of strict factual academia, allowing it to "pointlessly" "invent anything."²⁵⁷ Starkey sees historical fiction as romanticised and dramatized novels for a female readership. However, this criticism also pertains to the relationship between female authorship and readership and the timing of which it was popular.

This style of fiction creates interpretations of everyday life for women who generally do not receive such historical recognition. This means that authors may need to distort some facts to create space for these female characters to grow in ways that are more familiar to period fiction. Although not intended to be received positively, Starkey has argued that historical fiction is largely written by women, about women, for women readers, which presents an interesting idea regarding the relationship between female authorship and readership. This relationship allows authors to present specific modern messages to its female readership in a familiar and engaging way. Beck states that

²⁵⁵ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.201

²⁵⁶ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.206

²⁵⁷ *ibid*

More than any other genre, the historical novel has allowed women writers to override the constraints imposed by gender, re-imagine women's history, publish consciousness-raising politically radical texts under the guise of entertainment, and reach out to a large audience.²⁵⁸

This observation shows that women can use fiction as a means of re-establishing women's history and communicate their own motivations and modern issues to other women. This can be seen through confessional and realist styles within texts. This also allows their stories to allude to their own political and moral beliefs. This type of fiction is perhaps a development that first began with the Victorians wanting to seek reassurance of the events unfolding in the present through their histories. Following the success of the Conservative party in the 1980s, there was a reactionary resurgence in this style of historical fiction from female authors. With the Conservative political strategy aiming to return Britain to its Victorian imperial greatness, there was a heightened interest in historical fiction about Britain's heritage.²⁵⁹ In Britain, "The language of Conservatism foregrounded the notion of *return -recovery, restoration, revival, resolution-* in the name of continuity, appropriating the past for its own reactionary ends."²⁶⁰ The increased popularity of women's historical fiction was a response to the revived Conservative political ideologies, and was largely written by second wave feminist authors, intent on establishing women's history. This historiography is important to understand the differences between the works and characters created

²⁵⁸ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.207

²⁵⁹ Diana Wallace, "'Herstory' to Postmodern Histories: History as Dissent in the 1980s". *The Woman's Historical Novel*, Palgrave Macmillan, London, (2005), p.176

²⁶⁰ *ibid*

by Jean Plaidy and Philippa Gregory, which this chapter will focus on when discussing historical novels.

Jean Plaidy (a pseudonym for Eleanor Hibbert) was a self-confessed “compulsive author” who believed that “the essence of success is sincerity” and spent a great deal of her time researching and writing her books.²⁶¹ She is famous for using the name Jean Plaidy for her historical books, where she recreated real historic figures and the name Victoria Holt for her period fiction that had authentic historic backgrounds, but fictitious characters. When asked about her audience in an interview with the BBC Radio Four’s Roy Plomley, Plaidy replied that (her books),

don't really aim at anything. Because I never work mechanically...I just sit down and write a piece of life, something that is in me and I want to get out. But they are different publics, of course. Jean Plaidy's public are people who like history, or want to learn something about it, or know something about it and want to polish up what they already know.

Victoria Holt readers are largely women, Jean Plaidy's are both sexes - all ages, Victoria Holt's are all ages but women... mainly, they want a good story, they want to lose themselves in a story.²⁶²

Plaidy’s interview took place in 1972, but her motivations behind her writing do align with the perspective that “The early fiction of second-wave feminism had been dominated by the confessional realist novel, but in the mid-1980s women writers increasingly turned to genre fiction.”²⁶³ Plaidy separates her styles of writing and takes a great interest in the historical research behind her fiction. Plaidy understands that being genuine is important to both the reception and

²⁶¹ Roy Plomley, *Castaway Jean Plaidy interview*, BBC Radio Four (1972)

²⁶² *ibid*

²⁶³ Diana Wallace, "'Herstory' to Postmodern Histories: History as Dissent in the 1980s," pp.176-177

success of the story, with her audience likely to already be interested in learning more about history. However, Plaidy writes with emotional feeling, meaning that her historical fiction takes on a more contemporary confessional style as she puts her own thoughts and feelings into the characters she recreates. Although this could be criticised for modifying the facts, it is impossible to know what someone was thinking and feeling hundreds of years ago, meaning that Plaidy's emotive and confessional style within her historical fiction fills in where the facts stop. This allows for Plaidy's Katherine to show her hardships between her marriages in the first book of her trilogy in a style similar to later writers.

When Philippa Gregory came to popularity, her work was being published

‘at a time when people wanted a new sort of historical fiction: more realistic, more radical, more sexy, and harder edged’. In this vein, the concept of ‘authentic fallacy’ articulates the fact that many readers want to believe that what they are reading really happened...Gregory has benefited from the cultural shift arising from history's present-day visibility and society's responsiveness to diverse representations of the past.²⁶⁴

Beverley Southgate has explained that it is the “‘human’ interest of historical fiction that still draws a popular response; for it can reveal alternative subjects and perspectives, and invite an enjoyable (as it seems) ‘empathy’ with people from the past.”²⁶⁵ This means that as people in search of continuities, “‘we find the sentiment of history, the feeling for the past’”,²⁶⁶ which encourages us to want to believe the stories we are presented with. Gregory was greatly influenced by the history of class struggle and the works of E.P. Thompson and is a very politically driven author. Gregory who

²⁶⁴ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.219

²⁶⁵ Beverley Southgate, *History Meets Fiction*, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, (2014) p.6

²⁶⁶ *ibid*

has been writing within the third wave of feminism that developed around the mid-1990s, emphasises that “my politics which are pro-women and pro-the common people means that I write novels which are not stuffy or snobbish but engage with real people’s difficulties in a very difficult world.”²⁶⁷ This shows Gregory using presentism and her creative liberty within historical fiction to promote her own political beliefs through depictions of strong women of the past. Perhaps Gregory creates a more radical Katherine than the earlier Plaidy would have done. Gregory and Plaidy share the need for historical accuracy, however, as Gregory states “I feel very strongly that as an historian it is my task to represent the history as accurately as I can. But as a novelist it is my job to make the story come alive.”²⁶⁸ Both authors do this as they were both writing popular fiction for an audience interested in learning more about history. Beck reinforces this by explaining that Gregory’s “writing is engaging and accessible, even to those with limited historical background. Imbued with present-day concerns and messages that women mattered in a male-dominated past.”²⁶⁹ Southgate agrees that authorship and environmental factors can be found within narrative works and are often more telling of the time they were made than of the time being recreated. Southgate writes that

For fiction represents and actually embodies some of the widely accepted social mores and intellectual presuppositions of its age; and so it often provides evidence, not so much for historical periods in which its stories may be set, but for the time in which it was actually written.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁷ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.215

²⁶⁸ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.221

²⁶⁹ *ibid*

²⁷⁰ Beverley Southgate, *History Meets Fiction*, p.8

The differences between Gregory's *The Constant Princess* (2006)²⁷¹ and Plaidy's *Katherine of Aragon The Virgin Widow* (1961)²⁷² reflect the different times in which they were written. Although Plaidy's novel was written in the early 1960s, it is more a novel of the 1950s. This novel was created following a time full of post-war anxieties including those towards the freedoms of women, which by the end of the 1960s would develop into the women's liberation movement. In the 1950s minority groups would search for an identity for themselves, this included women and it is here that the place of women in society would start to be questioned. This is where Plaidy recreates Katherine in a way that reflects the womanly stereotype of her time, a woman who is more focused on her house and home than pursuing her own education or career. Although Plaidy creates an identity for women in historical literature, it does not necessarily challenge the norms of the time. Plaidy's Katherine does what is expected of her and focuses on her marriage and she rarely questions this. When Arthur dies, she also lacks the ambition to pursue her future in the way Gregory's Katherine does, which shows the anxiety towards women wanting to engage in a career as opposed to being the homemaker. Instead, Gregory depicts characters who show an increased drive for women's independence from their male counterparts, as a result of her perspective as a modern feminist author and historian. Gregory's Katherine is determined to rule and follow her destiny in becoming the ruling Queen of England, she even expects to be able to do so by ruling over Henry, believing him to be too young and naïve. This Katherine believes that "For the first ten years he would know nothing, and by then, perhaps he might be in such a habit of obedience that he would let his wife continue to rule."²⁷³ The feminist movement that has inspired Gregory so strongly has accelerated so rapidly in recent years. It is possible that independence is indeed the

²⁷¹ Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, Harper Collins, (2006)

²⁷² Jean Plaidy, *Katherine of Aragon Three Novels in One*, The Rivers Press, Crown Publishing Group, (2005)

²⁷³ Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, p.238

message that postmodern, and twenty-first century female authors are conveying to their largely female audience, behind their depiction of the historical constraints of marriage. Gregory enjoys using strong women to convey messages of independence and feminism, allowing modern people to empathise with women of the past battling their own challenges. Gregory, when discussing her recreation of Elizabeth Woodville, states that “I am interested in powerful women. I think she will fascinate modern women in the same way that many historical women strike a chord”.²⁷⁴ In *The Constant Princess*, perhaps Gregory is recreating Katherine to resemble this new career driven woman, who is independent of her husband.

Although this chapter will interpret works of fiction carefully, the limits of analysing fiction must be considered. While fiction blends imagination with fact, fiction also allows for further explorative historical thoughts too. Southgate quotes Ann Rigney’s suggestion that “The fascinating thing about imaginative literature is that it provides a laboratory where historically variable ways of seeing the world are expressed through the prism of poetical forms in such a way that they are made uniquely observable both for contemporaries and later historians.”²⁷⁵ Although fiction should be handled with care in regards to its reliability in comparison to academic history, it does allow for those with an interest in history to consider the “What if?” possibilities. The creation of fiction and films based on historical events allows viewers to see what could have happened around the facts that we already know, or project interesting ideas about things that are either unproven or need investigating further. It also allows for modern audiences to see a visual interpretation of the past. Beck has shown Weir to argue that “Reading historical novels opened up a new window on the past to reveal engaging personalities and stories” which inevitably led to her own passion for history.²⁷⁶ Southgate

²⁷⁴ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.218

²⁷⁵ Beverley Southgate, *History Meets Fiction*, p.10

²⁷⁶ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.224

has also commented that "novelists, unconstrained by any pressures to disciplinary consensus, might be more free than historians to look at the past in fresh ways – and ...catch sight of alternative people and events from alternative perspectives."²⁷⁷ Historian Basil Glyn agrees with the belief that historical fiction becomes an extension of historical heritage and is an opportunity for creators to engage the present with the past. He suggests that works of fiction and film

weave together images from historical paintings ... stories from history books and iconography borrowed from other films. They present a seductive and alluring *mise-en-scène* of enormous wealth, luxury and privilege that is very much the product of inheritance and historical legacy. But they also tell stories that are shot through with present-day concerns, anxieties and reference points.²⁷⁸

Beck quotes Thomas Keneally, the famous award-winning author of *Schindler's Ark* (1982), as saying that he has attempted to "avoid all fiction though, since fiction would debase the record"²⁷⁹ which would perhaps be damaging to history in its academic form; his own novel was seen to be so factual that there is debate as to whether it should count as a historical fiction novel at all.²⁸⁰

Gregory defends this point as she believes that "In the same way a historical novel will have the facts that interest the author strung into a novel-like form. No one is saying it is a definitive view of the age – it is just a view. It is just the author's view. And it is a prejudiced, biased view – just like

²⁷⁷ Beverley Southgate, *History Meets Fiction*, p.8

²⁷⁸ Basil Glynn, "The Tudors and the post-national, post historical Henry VIII", Mandy Merck, *The British monarchy on screen*, Manchester University Press, (2016) pp.340-341

²⁷⁹ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.205

²⁸⁰ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past and Present*, pp.204-205

any history book.”²⁸¹ Alternatively, Beck also quotes Hilary Mantel's explanation of the purpose of historical fiction: "I don't believe there's a better story than the facts as they unfolded, and I think it's up to the novelist to shape the drama around those facts, not to shape the facts around the drama.”²⁸² Mantel, Gregory and Plaidy, share the belief that they begin where history has to stop, not altering the facts. This study will discuss the effect of historical fiction on the observers of Tudor history which will also allow us to see how Katherine's narrative develops around the facts.

It is also important to discuss the effects of fiction through historical film. Although television and cinema reach a wide number of viewers and are easily accessible, films are restricted by a more limited timeframe to portray ideas and perspectives of the time that they are recreating. This is where Robinson's critique is important, for he believes that: “Films depict the Tudor era with varying degrees of accuracy and invention but generally do a poor job of portraying the period of reform in England, particularly as it pertained to women.”²⁸³ While focusing on the experiences of women in Tudor England and how they are re-imagined, it is important to be able to identify certain weaknesses, or omissions that could be restricting characterisations, including the representation of religion. Robinson states that

Indeed from the first Tudor movie in 1895 ... they incorporate religion, if at all, merely as a subplot. They are frequently inaccurate, seldom show much understanding of doctrine and practice, and often bring presentist perspectives to their handling of religion, privileging

²⁸¹ Philippa Gregory, “Historic Passion: Born a Writer: Forged as a Historian”, *History Workshop Journal*, 59 (2005) p.242

²⁸² Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.205

²⁸³ William B. Robinson, “Stripped of Their Altars: Film, Faith, and Tudor Royal Women from the Silent Era to the Twenty-First Century, 1895–2014”, J.A., Kramer K.A. (eds) *Women during the English Reformations*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York, (2014), pp.145-146

tales of intolerance and persecution over stories about devotion and charity. Most deal with royalty and emphasize romance.²⁸⁴

Glyn builds upon this, for he believes that Tudor historical films are indeed period dramas which use “lavish costume” to portray the monarchy and act as a “means of establishing the pomp and splendour of the monarchy on film. In the case of the Tudors, the extravagance of costume enables the royals not simply to inhabit but to dominate absolutely the theatre of power.”²⁸⁵ This shows the use of drama and costume to romantically and dramatically present the heritage and wealth of the monarchy to modern audiences. This, however, is at the expense of portraying the reform in England which contextualises the monarchy within the religious changes happening in England.

It is at this point in which the work of Robinson can be engaged with Dolan’s perspective on marriage and the themes that are involved in Tudor historical fiction. These are themes which especially involve women and the importance of marriage. This is of two-fold importance. Firstly, because it is important to understand that marriage was the height of success to women of the Tudor time, including Katherine of Aragon, as it secured their future and their inheritances. Marriage would therefore also be a crucial event to female characters within fiction. Secondly, it allows for the dissemination of modern messages on the importance of choice and stability from the creator. Dolan correctly identifies that the issues surrounding marriage are more reinterpreted within the Tudor genre than any other issue. However, it is also discussed by Dolan that novels particularly made to tell the stories of Tudor or Renaissance women and queens are quick to investigate the domestic activities of running the houses that surround them. These novels go into a level of minutiae about these activities which would not involve these women even supervising most of

²⁸⁴ *ibid*

²⁸⁵ Basil Glyn, “*The Tudors* and the post-national, post historical Henry VIII,” p.347

them. Although authors are often inclined to recreate a space that would be more familiar to the reader than the historical figure within it, Alison Light explains that “At best popular historical novels may have helped to open up a space within which different groups of women have started to perceive how marginal their needs and concerns have usually been taken to be. They offer a number of new perspectives on the past, which sit less easily alongside text-book history.”²⁸⁶ This argues that authors recreating female characters are also creating their histories. Light also identifies that women have often become marginal in academic history and are therefore susceptible to being written out of it. This shows historical fiction about women to present a new space to interpret women who may have previously been objectified in a male narrative of history, which leads to these creations in historical fiction to not sit well with traditional historical academia. As far as historical representation of women goes, these women may have never existed, due to women being perceived as ‘passive’ within a dialogue made by ‘active’ men,²⁸⁷ which is established through the “great man theory”, of which Henry VIII is an appropriate example. With increased interest in the history of everyday life and feminism, a new focus upon women in history has become popular with academics and in turn, within historical fiction. It is from this which fiction attracts great criticism.

Robinson argues that films “generally relegate royal women to secondary, transitory, and “traditionally female” roles, offering little indication that Margaret Beaufort and Elizabeth of York were major church benefactors or that Katherine of Aragon, Anne Boleyn, and Katherine Parr were intelligent, influential Christian humanists”,²⁸⁸ (as seen in Chapter 1). Katherine was once famous for her humanist intellect, now she is remembered for her role as the wife of a king. Perhaps Glyn’s

²⁸⁶ Alison Light, “‘Young Bess’: Historical Novels and Growing Up,” *Feminist Review*, 33, (1989) p.59

²⁸⁷ Ian Maclean, *The Renaissance Notion of Woman*, p.51

²⁸⁸ William B. Robinson, “Stripped of Their Altars: Film, Faith, and Tudor Royal Women from the Silent Era to the Twenty-First Century, 1895–2014,” p.145

perspective that characters are indeed used for the purpose of heritage links these views further, by showing that they are used in a similar way to how the Victorians searched for continuity in their fiction²⁸⁹ and the Conservatives felt the need for continuity in their ideology. Glyn explains further that representations lack neutrality:

representations always carry with them particular ideas about how we might view the past, and how the past might be used in the present. One of the most vital features of Britain's royal heritage is the sense of longevity and tradition; to mobilise it is in part to establish a sense of continuity between past and present, to insert the national present into a national tradition. Paradoxically, if the royal films at one level align their celluloid monarchs with the ideologies of tradition and continuity, at another they play a vital role in modernising the contemporary image of the British monarchy.²⁹⁰

This shows that female characters within film are intended to represent the heritage and traditions of the past but also be easily recognisable to the audience of the present. This is perhaps done by reducing influential women such as Katherine of Aragon to "secondary" roles so that they can tell familiar stories to female viewers about the consequences of their marriage, while romantically maintaining the longevity of the past.

Rather than providing accurate depictions of the lives of Tudor women, perhaps Dolan is accurate in saying that historical female characters are instead used to "explore the lingering unease about whether marriage constitutes a sufficiently or reliably happy ending for women",²⁹¹ by inserting modern ideas of the present into stories of the past, as depicted by Glyn. This possibly explains the

²⁸⁹ T.W. Heyck, *The Transformation of Intellectual Life in Victorian England*, (1982) pp.122-123

²⁹⁰ Basil Glyn, "The Tudors and the post-national, post historical Henry VIII", p.340

²⁹¹ Francis E. Dolan, *Marriage and Violence*, p.132

relationship between female authorship and readership which Starkey identified. Nevertheless, this is a striking thought when looking at the story of Katherine who had a less than happy ending. This is explored further by Dolan, who states that by

Placing their narratives in the Tudor court, the novelists are free to be critical of marriage because they can suggest that marriage was too restrictive *then*, for *those* privileged women. Yet the novels consistently suggest that the problem the heroines face is a definition of marriage that is both particular to the Tudor period and still recognizable to readers.²⁹²

This definition of marriage is further explained from the perspective of biographers as being an opportunity for "social advancement and security" for women, and a way to gain publicity, but it would be at the cost of "subjection", "subjugation" and "self-abnegation", to be dominated by a "domestic tyrant".²⁹³ Henry VIII is remembered as an infamous tyrant in his reign and in his life domestically, making his relationships the perfect context for this message from female authors. With an increasing female authorship, it could be apparent that women's success as authors is proportional to their message of showing that (like Katherine of Aragon), it is possible to succeed individually. This would possibly encourage the fight against patriarchal suppressions in society that marriage can allow and allow some authors to use their criticism of it to display this further.

Dolan argues that Katherine is perfect to show this perspective on marriage. Katherine suffered the costs to her individuality throughout her marriages and following her divorce. Katherine was subjugated beneath the will of her parents and Henry VII and later her husband Henry VIII. In the later stages of Katherine's life, it appears that she greatly subjected herself to self-abnegation, as is

²⁹² *ibid*

²⁹³ *ibid*

seen from her last letter to Henry, where she puts her undying love for Henry before herself.

Katherine was forced aside by her successor and Dolan notes that Katherine remains in Anne Boleyn and Elizabeth's shadow.²⁹⁴ Unlike Anne and Elizabeth,

While there have been several novels about her, she [Katherine] does not command the level of attention that has been devoted to Anne or Elizabeth. Considerable evidence survives about her marriage to Henry, since it was so long, yet she is a shadowy figure even in television about Henry's wives, as if the story doesn't really begin until she is out of the way and Henry undertakes the urgent, bloody process of securing her replacement. Readers might be expected to identify with what happened to Catherine- a contested divorce- more than the brutal end met by her successor.²⁹⁵

Far less is academically written regarding Katherine specifically, even when looking at historical fiction and film, showing a clear weakness in this area. Other widely received analytical works on historical representation, including those by Dobson and Watson, largely focus on Elizabeth I. Although Katherine's story did not end with the bloody execution Anne faced, it was one of hardships and tragedies. Katherine was a devout woman who was assaulted repeatedly by the repercussions of her marriages. The lack of religious context to Katherine's narratives leads to limitations in re-imaginings of her life and explains her minimal appearances in film. The severity of Katherine's suffering and struggle cannot be appreciated without reinforcing a religious context. The lack of context also prevents any attention to Katherine's strengths as a leader and determined student of the new learning and devoted Catholic.

²⁹⁴ Francis E. Dolan, *Marriage and Violence*, p.133

²⁹⁵ *ibid*

Keeping Katherine in the shadow of her successors represses Katherine's character which is therefore recreated with irregular amounts of detail in film. It appears that some creators simply replicate a familiar characterisation of Katherine from the beginnings of the divorce, which allows for little—if any, character development. However, themes of Katherine's character can still be identified through these small appearances in film and her larger presences in the novels *The Constant Princess* and *Katherine of Aragon The Virgin Widow*. These novels provide a greater focus on Katherine's early life, leading up to her marriages, which is largely excluded from film. Understanding the importance of marriage allows for several characterisations of Katherine's recreations to be explored. Some representations show Katherine as the rigid and mourning, but loyal mother, wife and widow who was relatable to the earlier Griselda. Others show Katherine as the stern alienated Spaniard, as was seen in *All is True*. However, few, more intriguingly, portray her as the intellectual peacemaker who is remembered in her memorial and was also depicted in *All is True*. Each characterisation will be discussed as part of a comparative cross-examination of film and fiction read against the commemoration of Katherine at Peterborough Cathedral. As an example, this final depiction of Katherine as a peacemaker, which is remembered at the memorial, is much less common and will be analysed through her character in the television series *Henry VIII* (2003),²⁹⁶ and through Katherine's victory over Scotland in Gregory's *The Constant Princess*.²⁹⁷ Katherine's character is often presented as a combination of these characterisations, but in varying intensities according to the plot.

²⁹⁶ Pete Travis Dir, *Henry VIII*, (2003)

²⁹⁷ Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*

Katherine's fiery awakening from her mourning

When looking at older recreations of Katherine as the mourning mother, it is incongruous to see that tragediennes were cast to play her. This can be linked to the trend in film that the Tudor story only begins with the divorce, as pointed out by Dolan. This trend is particularly apparent in twentieth century film and is exemplified by the British comedy *The Private Life of Henry VIII* (1933).²⁹⁸

Although described as a British film, Glyn points out that

The Private Life of Henry VIII, despite being, as Chapman asserts, 'the film that is seen as making the breakthrough for British films in the American market', actually had multiple international dimensions... From the outset, producer-director Alexander Korda saw the project as an 'international film', one that would 'appeal and succeed abroad'.²⁹⁹

Following the opening credits, a statement appears which says "Henry VIII had six wives. Catherine of Aragon was the first: but her story is of no particular interest-she was a respectable woman. So Henry divorced her". This acknowledges Katherine's highly noble and respected character but suggests that this makes her not dramatic enough or of high enough entertainment value. This dramatic intention is reinforced by the film narrative beginning in the more dramatic, latter stages of Henry's marriage to Anne, nearing her execution when she was found to be unfaithful. This dismissal of Katherine is emphasised by the almost blasé way that the divorce is stated, as this was a dramatic turning point in Henry's reign.

It is especially common that films begin with, or are focused on Anne Boleyn joining the Queen's court, leaving Katherine's screen time short and her characterisation manipulated to flatter Anne. A

²⁹⁸ Alexander Korda Dir, *The Private Life of Henry VIII*, (1933)

²⁹⁹ Basil Glynn, "The Tudors and the post-national, post historical Henry VIII", pp.312-313

typical example of this is the film *Anne of the Thousand Days* (1969)³⁰⁰ directed by Charles Jarrot. As the title suggests, this film focuses on the accession of Anne Boleyn, her thousand-day reign and her eventual demise. After the opening scenes, the narrative returns to a ball earlier in Henry's reign. Anne comes to Henry and Katherine's attention while dancing with Henry Percy and Katherine acknowledges that Anne is new to court. Henry, who remains transfixed on Anne, explains that she is the youngest Boleyn daughter, newly returned from French court. "Do you like her Kate? Shall we keep her here in court to cheer you?" Henry asks. Katherine can see through this attempt at hiding his lust for the younger woman as a ploy of faux concern for her entertainment. Katherine flatly responds by saying "Whatever you command, my Lord." This further explains Katherine's character, for she has already had to watch Henry's trauancies with Mary Boleyn and suffer the loss of her infant children. It would have been easy for her to see his new intentions with Anne Boleyn. Henry aggressively sneers, "Suppose I command you to give me a son." Katherine has a hardened look that shows that she has received this unsympathetic treatment before. It is apparent that this Katherine is still deeply suffering, leaving her with the appearance of being a mourning shell of her former self. Katherine wishes that she could have had a son and Henry quickly replies that she could not because their marriage is a "curse in Heaven and Hell madam." This upsets Katherine and she leaves the room hastily with her ladies. The depiction of Katherine leaving the court is a re-occurring device across several films, as it allows for the plot of Henry's affairs to unfold and shows Katherine escaping the subjugation of her tyrant of a husband, who refers to her as his "Spanish cow" with whom he is bored. Katherine's characterisation strongly fits the mourning mother persona and is emphasised by her costume throughout being in dark colours. Following Henry's return from Hever Castle, Katherine is seen listening to music and completing her tapestry, but upon seeing Henry with the flirtatious Anne, Katherine looks anxious and asks her

³⁰⁰ Charles Jarrot Dir, *Anne of a Thousand Days*, (1969)

ladies to play something more cheerful as “men prefer women who laugh and are gay.” Katherine’s anxiety and dark costume next to the lively, colourful Anne shows her to be visibly older and lacklustre. This shows Katherine to, indeed, be in the shadow of Anne, who by being more vibrant and cheerful is flattered by Katherine’s miserable appearance.

Katherine in *Anne of The Thousand Days* reaches a climax that develops her character from the mournful infertile mother to a defiant queen. When she is informed with the news of the annulment, she is fuelled with pride, and is justified by her conscience, faith and loyalty to her daughter. Immediately Katherine blames Wolsey for planting the idea in Henry’s mind and will not believe that it is his true wishes. Henry arrives to see her, and the ambassador promises that he will do all in his power to aid Katherine, who asks him to send word to her nephew, Emperor Charles V, and his holiness, the Pope. The ambassador explains that her hope only lies with Charles, as the Pope “bends to the wind”, which suggests some of the changes happening on the continent. Henry bluntly tells Katherine that “God tells me that our marriage is a sin. My conscience is deeply troubled. Incest will be punished, and we have been punished, you and I, with dead sons.” Katherine is shocked, her jaw is dropped and her eyes flood with angry tears. Katherine responds that “Our daughter Mary is alive and well, Henry.” Henry, however, is adamant that their marriage must be annulled as he believes a daughter is not enough to secure Tudor England. The theme of marriage has overwhelming importance to Katherine and at this point the effect of her marriage failing means an end for her security and queenship. Henry attempts to comfort “Kate” by reminding her that it is God’s will for this annulment, but Katherine knows that she is of a clear conscience and using God to justify his actions angers her more. Henry asks Katherine for her help to put their case before the Pope which visibly disgusts Katherine, who is incredulous that Henry would ask her to tell the Pope and the world that she and their parents had lied, and to lie now and betray Spain, to give Henry his annulment. This depiction of Katherine shows her to be aware of her subjection and alienation she experienced under both of their parents. Henry becomes aggressive and orders her to do what he asks, but Katherine defies him, she will not under any circumstances betray her daughter, and

advises him to find sons with his other women. This shows Katherine to be subjected to the mistreatment of a tyrant as a result of marriage, but also shows this film to have a greater interest in the religious aspect of Tudor life than other examples. Katherine becomes the fiery Spanish queen who will not accept any rule of the King, or even the Pope, which would make her child a bastard.

Katherine was once dependent upon Henry when she was seen as a foreign princess and was initially isolated, but her experience as his wife has clearly left her abandoned again, returning her to her isolation. Katherine's dependency could be interpreted as beginning right from her coronation as Warnicke argues: "Katherine's shared coronation with her husband, despite her heritage as a king's daughter, emphasized her dependent royal status more than those of her predecessors."³⁰¹

This we have seen to be emphasised by the pomegranate always being shown next to the Tudor rose (as discussed in Chapter 1). In this film it is her experience as a devastated mother that has left her further isolated and depressed, but defiant in protecting her only surviving daughter. Katherine's prayers are answered, when she is informed that Rome has been sacked by the Spanish Emperor and the Pope cannot agree to Henry's annulment due to pressure from the Queen's nephew. This plot contextualises the King's motivations and the religious state of England by being under threat from Europe.

By the early 2000s, film series, drama-documentaries and films were becoming more popular. In these newer adaptations, Katherine continues to play a side role as a mourning mother in the shadow of Anne. However, in the television series *Henry VIII* (2003),³⁰² Katherine and Henry's early relationship is very different from earlier films. This is because at the beginning, Katherine is very emotional and is initially supported by Henry through the loss of their children. This differs

³⁰¹ Retha M. Warnicke, *Elizabeth of York and her Six Daughters-in-Law*, p.49

³⁰² Pete Travis, *Henry VIII*, (2003)

from other productions which begin by displaying Katherine's isolation in her loss and her experience of punishment and blame for her infertility. It is critical to understand the significance of this plot difference as unlike with narratives which begin closer to the divorce, this film allows for a brief reimagination of Henry and Katherine's earlier relationship when they were considered a strong humanist match and shared a love for each other. Starting the narrative earlier in their reign allows for a wider insight into Katherine's character development, as opposed to repeatedly casting her as a fragile rigid divorcee. However, Henry's sympathy soon changes to blame when he can sire an illegitimate and healthy male child with his mistress Bessie Blount, who he names Henry Fitzroy (meaning son of the king). Shortly after this devastating blow for Katherine, Anne appears before Henry with Lord Percy to obtain the King's blessing for their marriage. Anne's witty attitude captivates Henry, which leads him to refuse his blessing and at this interaction Katherine appears concerned. As in other films, Katherine appears angular, with a heavy Spanish accent and very dark hair, and is clearly of noble stature.

Following the growth of the relationship between Anne and Henry, Henry is denied a divorce by Katherine. Katherine is defiant in her position as queen and on her way to the court to test the validity of her marriage, the public are seen to be chanting "Long Live Queen Katherine, our one true queen!" indicting their defiance against the divorce as well. This support is similar to the loyalty shown to Katherine by the nobles and their disapproval of the trial in *All is True*.³⁰³ It is at this turning point that Katherine transforms from a woman weighed down with sorrow to the Queen, urgently protecting her crown and daughter. Katherine stands with her head held high and demands Anne explain why a maid of hers should betray her. Anne responds by saying that it was Katherine's failure to produce a son that led to her betrayal, as any concern of the King is also hers. Katherine powerfully states that she would fight out every inch and not lie by saying that her first

³⁰³ William Shakespeare, John Fletcher, *All is True*, Act II Scene II

marriage was consummated; she would not step aside and invalidate her daughter's claim to the throne. This assault on Katherine's ability to bear children is a constant with other productions including the slightly later film, *The Other Boleyn Girl* (2008),³⁰⁴ based on the novel written by Philippa Gregory, in an almost identical scene before the trial begins.

The relationship between Katherine and Henry in film *The Other Boleyn Girl* (2008) is not as loving. In Katherine's first scene she is lying in bed recovering from her final labour. She is inconsolable, for her baby is stillborn. To make matters worse, Katherine asks her doctor "was it a boy?" The doctor mournfully nods. Katherine turns to Mary, "no brother for you, to make this country safe. I'm sorry", then asks the doctor to inform Henry. Henry merely acknowledges the loss but is not surprised and continues to work with his council. It is at this point that the Howard and Boleyn families begin to plot their avenue to power, realising that the King and Queen no longer speak, much less share a bed, meaning the loss of this last child will be the final one for Katherine. Katherine's trauma creates an opening for Mary Boleyn, to whom Henry has taken a shine, and she acts as instructed by her uncle and father. Mary is requested to come to court as one of Katherine's ladies by Henry, Anne agrees to go with her, and the pair are introduced to the Queen. Katherine is unaware that she would be receiving any new ladies, but, as in the earlier films, is not surprised that these young women are there at the request of her husband. Katherine does not hide her displeasure at having the Boleyn girls before her and makes Mary prove herself in front of them all. Katherine states that for her husband to have appointed her "she must be some kind of gift, or surprise", while challengingly raising an eyebrow. Mary is stuck for a response, so Katherine pressures her more, assuring the audience that Katherine knows that Mary is here under the guise of service to Katherine, when really, she is there for Henry's pleasures. Katherine acknowledges her beauty and forces her to sing. Eventually, Katherine less coolly claps for her efforts, commending her by saying

³⁰⁴ Justin Chadwick Dir, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, (2008)

“Bravo” and smiling slightly, “a nightingale, welcome to court”. As the sisters leave, Katherine’s gaze follows them. Katherine is aware that they are simply pawns in a man’s game, as she once was when allying England with Spain. This is conveyed by one of the ladies, Jane Parker, who tells Mary that although that introduction to the Queen was difficult for her, she should see things from Katherine’s side too. This interaction shows the manipulation of women by men for political gain and the consequences of being a political match through marriage as well. It is not long before Mary is encouraged into Henry’s bed and falls pregnant with the baby boy that her uncle had hoped for. Katherine solemnly receives the news that Henry has successfully had a son with another woman, but even though Mary had given Henry a son, she too is inevitably pushed aside for Anne.

The plot of this film again revolves around the issue of marriage, first by the importance of Katherine’s duty as Queen and then by the marriage of Mary Boleyn to William Carey for security, which is in stark contrast to the unaccepted marriage of Anne Boleyn to Henry Percy that was for love. Anne also uses the promise of marriage to manipulate Henry. Importantly Anne is aggravated that Katherine remains as Henry’s right hand in matters of state, hinting at Katherine’s political affinities that have been under appreciated in the last few examples. The direct recreation of these affinities, however, would decrease Anne’s more flattering characterisation next to Katherine which is perhaps why they are excluded. Henry finds sending Katherine to a convent to be the only solution, which would make Anne Queen in all but name. However, having been influenced by Lutheranism whilst in France, Anne suggests the idea of an annulment. This introduction of foreign influence nods at the religious reform approaching England, but also shows that Robinson is correct in stating that religion is more of a subplot.

Katherine again defiantly puts the Boleyn sisters in their place. Katherine approaches the sisters and Mary stating that the crowds are with her shows Katherine’s public support. They turn and ironically bow in Katherine’s direction. Katherine responds “So the Boleyn whores. Two former ladies of mine. What did I do to upset you, that you should turn against me like this?” As in the

earlier film, Anne explains that it is because Katherine failed to give England a son. Katherine's anger reaches its height as she is called to court. "How dare you," Katherine defends herself powerfully,

You want me to creep away and become a nun. Well, I shall not. You want me to lie before God and admit my first marriage was consummated, well it was not. You want me to retire and give out my daughter's claim sole rightful heir to the throne, well I shall not. Not in a thousand years, not if you rack me within an inch of my life. I am Katherine, Queen of England. The King's one true wife and mother to the heir to the throne. Beloved of the people and beloved of the King who you have bewitched.

In both *Henry VIII* and *The Other Boleyn Girl*, Katherine, although furious, holds her own eloquently in the face of her enemy, thus displaying that even in the height of her emotions she is still the level-headed, intellectual advisor of Henry and not just a weak and 'emotional' woman.

Although these interpretations of Katherine appear to show her to have a strong self-control and intelligence, this does not mean that all representations of Katherine with this angry defiance are as flattering to Katherine's intelligence and position. Robinson agrees with this in his introduction of *The Tudors in Television*, a text which primarily focuses on *The Tudors* television series. In this section he states that

If Chap. 2 criticizes the series for eschewing historical accuracy...Chap. 3: "Catherine of Aragon in *The Tudors*: Dark Hair, Devotion, and Dignity in Despair," credits it for breaking with the typical on-screen treatment of Catherine, who almost always suffers badly in

comparison with Anne Boleyn...film and television often concentrate on her later years, make her appear old and shrewish, and downplay her intellect, learning and religion.³⁰⁵

Robinson has also found Katherine to be in the shadow of Anne and that many of her strongest historical characteristics seem to be reduced to favour Anne. This shows that Katherine is indeed being identified by her marriage. This results in Katherine's independent successes, and the features which made her unusual for her time being chosen to be excluded, so that the drama of her later life can take precedence. In film, Katherine is commonly cast as a middle-aged woman with darker and older features. This emphasises the reduction of Katherine's character to allow Anne to stand out as a bright and youthful character and leave Katherine in her shadow. When looking at historical accounts of Katherine in the first chapter, it was apparent that even when middle-aged, Katherine did not seem as shrewish as she is seen in film, perhaps this shows the creative decision even more.

Katherine the mourning widow

Katherine's first marriage was cut short by the death of Arthur, after he and Katherine became seriously ill, leaving the young Katherine an insecure and suffering widow. In this section, Gregory's *The Constant Princess* (2006), and Plaidy's *Katherine of Aragon, The Virgin Widow* (1961), will be compared to understand how the early part of Katherine's life has been recreated when the divorce no longer takes precedence in the narrative. This will also show how her early reign is presented by both authors, with their texts written in different times, against her contemporaneous presentation. Both versions show Katherine's suffering from her loss of Arthur and her survival of the sweating sickness. In *The Constant Princess*, it is clear that Katherine's

³⁰⁵ William B. Robinson, *History, Fiction, and The Tudors: Sex, Politics, Power, and Artistic License in the Showtime Television Series*, Springer, (2017) p.8

emotional character develops greatly as a result of her grief and loneliness, which is emphasised by her dedication to Catholicism. Katherine shows awareness that her melancholic grief is a serious problem, but it seems that her rational personality manages to compartmentalize these issues. From here Gregory's Katherine grows into a woman who has a confidence about her but also a slight cold of heart. Gregory's Katherine, although deep in mourning, can control her emotions of grief and fear when things get tough, or certainly for long enough to get what she wanted. This makes for an interesting characterisation, as it foreshadows the future fierce and strong Spanish Queen who would lead England and face trial. This determination is reinforced with events unfolding. On the death of Elizabeth of York, Katherine thinks about the drive Elizabeth must have had in order to marry whoever would make her queen, even if she loved Richard and not Henry.³⁰⁶ Although she remains mournful and regretful, this empowers her and encourages her to put her duty first. This determination to achieve a marriage could resonate with the suggestion Tremlett raised (as noted in the first chapter), that Katherine was more involved in arranging her second marriage than is often portrayed. Gregory, unlike Plaidy, has chosen to re-imagine this perspective and believes that "Any story about a woman who is confronted with a situation in which she has no power, where she has to figure out how to survive, will always be of interest to women in our society".³⁰⁷ Plaidy alternatively shows a Katherine who does more of what is expected of her.

When Gregory's Katherine is in discussion with the Spanish Ambassador, Henry VII and her parents about her future in, or out of England, she unintentionally attracts the newly widowed King Henry VII. However, her main intention is to entice his son Henry, by teaching him Spanish and sending him books and flirtatious smiles.³⁰⁸ All the while Katherine believes him to be a stupid boy

³⁰⁶ Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, pp.228-231

³⁰⁷ Peter Beck, *Presenting History Past and Present*, 220

³⁰⁸ Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, pp.226-227

who she could make obedient to her by the time that they were crowned with him being six years her junior. These events show Katherine's motivations and her political intentions to play the court. This characterisation of Katherine also aligns with the perspective of Griselda being deceptive as discussed in the last chapter. Although the offer of marriage is presented to Katherine from Henry VII, Gregory's Katherine continues to fight for a betrothal to his son. Whilst talking with Henry VII, Katherine quickly realises that if she married him, she would become queen, but her heirs would follow after his son Henry and his wife, the new Princess of Wales, and future queen.³⁰⁹ Katherine understands that she would have to step aside should the king die and that this marriage would not allow her the freedoms to rule as a queen as she was considered his child bride and under the influence of his mother Margaret Beaufort.³¹⁰ Ultimately she would fail in seeing her own son on the throne after her and would not have the same level of power Beaufort currently yielded. Katherine would not become the queen she had been raised to be, even though she could marry a king and secure an alliance with Spain.³¹¹ This shows the reader the importance of marriage in producing heirs and forging alliances. Gregory shows Katherine to be intent on, and capable of having, personal success. This conjecture perhaps shows Gregory expressing her pro-women motivations through Katherine. Gregory's Katherine realises that she would ultimately fail in extending the line of Spanish-English monarchs that should follow her, as their children would follow Prince Henry. For Katherine, these prospects would not do. In her view, the children that she would bear would be superior with hers being of both Spanish and English lineage. This belief is not inaccurate, as Warnicke points out, consorts would provide additional elite status for their heirs, which would add to their hereditary claim to the throne. She states that

³⁰⁹ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.272

³¹⁰ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.270

³¹¹ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, p.273

The consorts it was expected, would hold at least two other noble familial positions: as daughters of rulers, if not kings, and as mothers of the dynasty's heir. [In addition, they could hold status as siblings and widows]. Among the Tudor consorts, only Elizabeth of York, as daughter of Edward IV and the mother of Henry VIII, met the two expected qualifications. As is well known, Henry VIII's first consort, Katherine of Aragon, failed to give birth to a surviving son [but was the daughter of two regnant rulers and sister to the heir of Castile and Aragon].³¹²

What separates this from the earlier version of Katherine, constructed by Plaidy, is the way Plaidy's Katherine responds to the death of Arthur and the rumour of her pregnancy. Unlike Gregory's character who had lied about not consummating her first marriage, Plaidy's Katherine is virginal. Katherine and Elvira Manuel, (Katherine's duenna, or chaperone) are fiercely determined to make this clear when challenged by the false rumour of her pregnancy. Gregory constructed this element of her narrative based on her belief that consummation was more likely. Gregory believes that the uncertainty around Katherine's virginity only exists because more sympathetic historians that admired and believed Katherine and Don Elvira's claim of virginity, "put the lie into the historical record where it stays today."³¹³ Lindsey argues, however, that there is no reason to doubt Katherine's claim of virginity:

It is hardly surprising, with the grueling festivities and the public nature of their bedding, that the inexperienced girl and the delicate boy failed to consummate their marriage that night. So Catherine would insist in years ahead, and there is little reason to doubt her. The

³¹² Retha M. Warnicke, *Elizabeth of York and Her Six Daughters-in-Law*, pp.5-6

³¹³ Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, p.487

heady formalities that demonstrated to the world the potency of the new dynasty weren't necessarily conducive to the circumstances for creating heirs to that dynasty.³¹⁴

Regardless of the truth, both authors use their fiction to explore possibilities which are not proven to be fact. Perhaps with Plaidy closely following the historic record and her version being written in the 1960s, issues surrounding women's marital experiences would not be as openly debated as they are by the time of third wave of feminism, when Gregory created her more radically feminist Katherine. Plaidy's style of narrative foreshadows the challenges that follow and Katherine's future relationship with Henry, likening it to a commentary on the history. Plaidy's Katherine is deep in remorse and is so consumed by it that "The weather had changed, but Katherine was unaware of all the beauty of an English spring. She could think only of the husband whom she had lost, the husband who had been no husband."³¹⁵ This is significant as this Katherine missed home and the warmth of the Spanish sun, so had looked forward to the better weather. Katherine's ignorance of the changes around her also alludes to the major plot decision of preserving her virginity.

Plaidy's Katherine looks forward to returning home, believing that she would return to her mother as her sister, Isabella, had done.³¹⁶ This Katherine follows protocols and expectations, which contrasts to the determined Katherine Gregory re-imagines to have schemed her way to staying in England. This longing to return is emphasised by Plaidy's Katherine paying attention to her family and personal emblem of the pomegranate. As Katherine looks at her pomegranate emblem she thinks of her warmer home: "The pomegranate would no longer merely be a device; it would be all

³¹⁴ Karen Lindsey, *Divorced, Beheaded, Survived* p.17

³¹⁵ Jean Plaidy, *Katherine of Aragon, Three Novels in One, Katherine, The Virgin Widow*, p.59

³¹⁶ *ibid*

about her - growing in the grounds, pictured on the shields and the walls of her parents' palace."³¹⁷

This desire to go home is only strengthened by the conditions in which Katherine is kept and her treatment by the King. Katherine, with her dowry still not fully paid, was becoming of less use to the King. This is made clear by Elizabeth of York having to meet her at Richmond, during their bereavement. However, Henry VII takes this a step further by saying she should be removed further to the edge of court while he awaits instruction from her parents; she is owed nothing from England now that Arthur is dead.³¹⁸ What is especially different is that Gregory's Katherine used the rumour of her potential pregnancy to her advantage in order to delay her return to Spain. Plaidy's Katherine on the other hand found peace with the possibility of returning to Granada and was, in fact, embarrassed that such a rumour could have spread.³¹⁹ Elvira reminds Plaidy's Katherine of the young Henry, who she was certain that Katherine could expect to marry when he was old enough.³²⁰

This is possibly inspired by the diplomatic agreement which betrothed Katherine to the heir of England, whoever that may be, even if Arthur should die. Comparatively, this marriage is not a certainty in *The Constant Princess* narrative and Katherine has to fight for a betrothal. Plaidy's Katherine is far less forward thinking than Gregory's Katherine, who is determined to succeed in becoming Queen. Gregory's Katherine is more clearly developing into the leader of her own life and repeatedly ignores advice she sees to be hindering her chances of becoming queen. This is shown when the ambassador is concerned for Katherine's safety and pleads with her to let him plan to return them to Spain, but Katherine refuses as it means she will never return to fulfil her life

³¹⁷ *ibid*

³¹⁸ Jean Plaidy, *Katherine of Aragon, Three Novels in One, Katherine, The Virgin Widow*, p.57

³¹⁹ Jean Plaidy, *Katherine of Aragon, Three Novels in One, Katherine, The Virgin Widow*, p.72

³²⁰ Jean Plaidy, *Katherine of Aragon, Three Novels in One, Katherine, The Virgin Widow*, pp.72-73

ambition of becoming Queen of England.³²¹ The character Plaidy creates is perhaps more in keeping with her research into Tudor women and even of the gender inequality that Plaidy would have been surrounded by. Gregory as a more radical feminist and modern writer would perhaps be more willing to challenge Katherine's innocence and response to handling her future.

Inevitably both versions of Katherine successfully secure the betrothal to the future Henry VIII. Gregory's Katherine is often nearly overcome with the grief of losing Arthur and maintaining his lie, but puts her duty before her emotions, even when she must reassure Henry of her virginity. In Katherine's struggle to stay in England, she describes herself not as a deserting soldier forgetting his duties, but as a "sentry" that will not leave his post.³²² While her determination prevails in her aim to marry Henry, it seems that her motivations at seventeen were to keep her promise to Arthur and become the Queen she was born to be. Gregory's Katherine does develop a love for Henry in the end and grows in character for it. She and Thomas Wolsey are credited for the perfection in the planning the invasion of Calais with Henry, drawing on her knowledge and the experience she gained from her mother.³²³ Katherine's success only continues in Scotland. She decides to ride out with her army wearing a breast plate and helmet and tells her ladies that she fears not, as her mother had had to fight for her power and she has waited for the day that she would too.³²⁴ In Gregory's version, Katherine's story is a struggle for power, but it is also a story of an internal search for strength. Gregory creates a character who is determined and intelligent, whose skills were unexpected for her gender, but is flattering towards historical interpretations of Katherine. Gregory's characterisation more readily sends a message to readers that a woman could pursue her

³²¹ Peter J. Beck, *Presenting History Past & Present*, pp.301-302

³²² Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, p.230

³²³ Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, p.465

³²⁴ Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, pp.471-472

dream and in doing so shows the importance of being tactful in a hostile masculine environment. Gregory's Katherine shows strength in the face of remorse and cunning in times of doubt for her security, all fuelled by the will of her mother and her spirituality with God. These characterisations are likely to be motivated by Gregory's feminist beliefs and reflect her political intentions. Gregory shows that women can be successful in a male-dominated world through a strong female figure. This Katherine shows the effects of marriage and the strength of womanly abilities.

The alienated Spaniard

Having been raised in Spain and brought to England as a pawn in a political alliance, Katherine found herself in an alien country with an unfamiliar culture and, importantly, a foreign language, where only Latin and her faith could help her. Katherine is often recreated with a stern personality, her faith is under appreciated and is therefore not a factor used to help develop Katherine's character, thus leaving her appearing as the alienated Spaniard Queen. This characterisation can be observed especially in Walt Disney's *The Sword and the Rose*³²⁵ which was set earlier in Henry's reign. Although the production was not very successful, it unusually focuses on the relationship between Henry and his youngest sister Mary Tudor. Henry's sisters, Mary and Margaret, and his children Mary and Edward, are rarely re-imagined in film and other adaptations such as *The Tudors*. William B. Robinson argues that

The cinematic fate of Henry VII's daughters, Princesses Margaret and Mary, is even more outlandish... In reality, Mary married but did not murder Louis XII of France, remarried to Brandon, and opposed the Boleyn marriage on religious grounds; however, she appears only in the fictionalized romance, *When Knighthood Was in Flower* (1922), based on the

³²⁵ Ken Annakin Dir, *The Sword and the Rose*, (1953)

1898 novel by Edwin Caskoden (pseudonym for Charles Major), and the Disney remake, *The Sword and the Rose* (1953).³²⁶

In *The Sword and the Rose*, Mary fights against the arranged marriage to King Louis XII and Henry eventually compromises by saying that she can choose her second husband, but Mary still attempts to escape. This film's main intention is to show that marriage in this time was solely determined by men and perhaps does not lead to a happy ending as suggested by Dolan. Like Katherine historical presentation, Mary will not be bound by restrictions and expectations given to her and is rather bold and cunning, with a witty sense of humour. However, Mary and Katherine do not get along. This time Katherine is not overshadowed by Anne Boleyn, but by Mary Tudor, who like Anne, is flattered by Katherine's opposing characterisation. Next to Mary, Katherine comes across as a cold and self-centred personality, without the vibrancy, wit and intelligence of Mary. Katherine is presented as less perceptive, believing the Duke, Brandon, to be an older page, not a captain of the guard, charging him to deliver a message to the Princess Mary. It is also apparent that in the English court, Katherine is alienated and not welcome. Katherine is referred to as "that Spanish woman" by Buckingham, when asking what the Queen could want. This hints at Katherine's estrangement as the foreign princess and links Katherine's characterisation of defiance to the trend of being an alienated Spaniard. This film is set long before the divorce, but still shows little of Katherine's development and achievements, which implies that the repression of her character is a creative decision made to emphasise Mary's personality.

Unlike the charming, although argumentative, Mary, Katherine appears very stern and serious. Mary approaches Katherine and addresses her by saying "Good morrow sister Kate" with a small curtsy. Katherine who wears a red and gold gown and gable hood, sits before her and responds by

³²⁶ William B. Robinson, "Stripped of Their Altars: Film, Faith, and Tudor Royal Women from the Silent Era to the Twenty-First Century, 1895–2014", pp.145-146

saying, “when the Princess Mary addresses me in public, would she not find a term of greater difference”, with a heavy Spanish accent and a slight tone of annoyance. Mary responds by telling her that she was simply complimenting her by recognising her as her brother’s wife, but she “shall not presume upon the intimacy again.” This dialogue identifies an issue of status. Katherine referring to Mary in the third person allows her to speak indirectly and from above her and confirms Katherine’s estranged place. Katherine tells Mary that she is concerned to hear that some of the nobles have not yet received an invite to her May Day ball. Mary purposefully aggravates Katherine further by smugly stating that now “the royal favourites (of Katherine) have been singled out, I will give their names my careful consideration, may it please the Queen’s grace.”

The May Day Ball displays the angry and isolated character of Katherine, who looks forlorn as the dancing continues and stands in outrage with Henry as the Volta begins. When Henry takes no action Katherine angrily raises her arm ordering the music to a halt. Katherine spits “I ordered the music stopped; we cannot permit such an indecent exhibition.” Mary, however, tells Katherine that if she is not happy with the way they dance at *her* ball she may retire whenever she desires. It is at this point that Katherine angrily turns to Henry, asking “Will the King permit me to be insulted thus?” Henry, however, takes Mary’s side and begins to dance with her and her ladies. This infuriates Katherine and she hastily storms out of the ball room, embarrassed that her husband allowed Mary’s insult. This display shows Katherine to be immovable and is emphasised by Mary’s more fluid character. With this film being released in 1953, Mary’s celebration and character as an English princess may be inspired by the celebrated coronation of Elizabeth II. Katherine being further presented as the foreigner “Spanish woman” may also symbolise the ending of the international isolation Spain was put in after World War II, by their signing of the Pact of Madrid in the same year. From Katherine’s point of view at least, Mary does not dignify Katherine enough as her Queen. This characterisation is quite an unflattering perception of Katherine, considering the narrative is set earlier in Henry’s reign. Although there is no evidence of Katherine’s losses in this film, it could be suggested that this stern character is hardened from her journey to becoming Queen

and by her duties that are historically set to fail. This is an idea that can be reinforced by Philippa Gregory's interpretation of Katherine who has become more tough following the death of Arthur, which is developed much further than through this film.

Both Gregory and Plaidy present the loneliness of Katherine's early life on English shores. Plaidy shows Katherine struggling with the language barrier, which left her only able to communicate with Arthur in Latin and a Welsh man called Griffith in French.³²⁷ Both novels show Katherine's isolation which creates an alienation about Katherine as the foreign princess. Plaidy's Katherine especially sees herself as far less beautiful than her ladies and does not understand Arthur's insistence that Henry would have been the better match. Plaidy foreshadows Henry and Katherine's future relationship alongside consistent remarks regarding Arthur's health and capabilities, while the younger brother excels. Katherine's alienation is enhanced by Henry's interest in Katherine and his wish that she would learn to speak English sooner, as he has much he would like to say.³²⁸ Plaidy reinforces Katherine's foreignness by Katherine's perception of English pageantry of being quite simple when Henry believes that no Spanish one could match theirs.³²⁹ Katherine realises that she is growing more alone by the day and recalls that the Archbishop of Santiago should be returning to Spain. Katherine's mind wanders to the goings on in the Alhambra and places she once called home.³³⁰ It is apparent that with being born abroad, Katherine is still considered the foreigner, even into her queenship. It is almost always the princess that is sent to a foreign court as part of the

³²⁷ Jean Plaidy, *Katherine of Aragon, Three Novels in One, Katherine, The Virgin Widow*, pp.51-52

³²⁸ Jean Plaidy, *Katherine of Aragon, Three Novels in One, Katherine, The Virgin Widow* p.41

³²⁹ Jean Plaidy, *Katherine of Aragon, Three Novels in One, Katherine, The Virgin Widow*, p.40

³³⁰ Jean Plaidy, *Katherine of Aragon, Three Novels in One, Katherine, The Virgin Widow*, p.50

marriage agreement, perhaps Katherine being a foreigner shows more about English attitudes of the time than her isolation in England.

Katherine the Peacemaker

Katherine in fiction is sometimes depicted as being a peacemaker when she receives greater character development. This attribute is apparent in Katherines who transform from the mournful mother to the defiant betrayed Queen, but also find it in their hearts to forgive and find peace. Returning to *Anne of the Thousand Days*, Wolsey having failed Henry and Anne, seeks Henry's forgiveness, but this results in Henry asking him to exile both himself and Katherine, only sparing him for his "past services." From her exile, Katherine lies dying in her sick bed, while being tended to by her daughter Mary. Katherine asks how the King could not write and how he could forget so much, but Mary replies that "He does not forget, Mother. He just has no wish to remember." This shows Katherine as being naïve to Henry's intentions, but the voice of reason comes from her daughter. It is historically inaccurate to present these two women together, as it is known that when Katherine was exiled, she was refused permission to see Mary again, but for the purposes of the narrative, Mary represents Katherine's defence and the reality of Henry's actions. Mary attempts to comfort Katherine by telling her that Anne has continued to fail Henry in giving him the son she promised, and that his eyes have already begun to wander. However, Katherine's reaction is increased sadness, for she pities Henry, to the disbelief of Mary. Katherine believes that she should pity Henry, as she is his true wife and Mary their daughter is first in line to the throne, should no son be born legitimately. When Katherine dies soon after it is in some state of self-abnegation, but the effect of her legacy resonates throughout Anne's reign. Thomas Cromwell says that the people believe Anne to be a witch and Katherine still lies within their hearts as the true Queen. This

Katherine could not treat Henry as she had been treated, so instead maintained Henry's ignorant peace. In the television series *Henry VIII* (2003), Katherine is again exiled, and the public show no fear in denouncing Anne, stating that Henry has cast aside "Katherine the Queen" a "daughter of Christ". Katherine is presented with the opportunity to encourage an uproar with the offer of an invasion from abroad, led by her nephew Emperor Charles V. This is significant, as such an action would manipulate Henry's fear of civil war inherited by his father as well as present a threat from the most powerful ruler in Europe. Katherine's supporters awaited a response, but as historically recorded, she responds, "You are very kind. But no, we mustn't. I'll not give the word. I've done England enough harm already. And I do not wish to go to my grave having made it any worse." This element of the film allows for the exploration of Katherine as a peacekeeper that this study found her to be in Chapter 1 and in *All is True* in Chapter 2.

With *The Constant Princess*, set earlier in Katherine's reign, we instead see Katherine's sympathy towards her sister-in-law, Margaret, in Scotland and her ability to show mercy when her predecessors may not have. The biggest transformation Gregory's Katherine undergoes is the spiritual realisation that the rulers and parents she had looked up to were wrong about war and that making peace is more important, as war will only end when people can live side by side in peace.³³¹ When the opportunity arises to destroy Scotland, Katherine finds compassion for the Scottish Queen and decides that peace is the answer and not the destruction that her parents would have chosen, as they had against the Moors.³³² This change of perspective is instigated when Katherine meets with a Moorish doctor when she needs his advanced medical opinion. Katherine learns from him that maybe they were "born to be friends" not enemies.³³³ Katherine eventually finds respect for other

³³¹ Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, p.478

³³² Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, pp.476-479

³³³ Philippa Gregory, *The Constant Princess*, p.386

cultures and their knowledge, especially with the limitations of English doctors and universities. This is significant within the novel as it shows Katherine's ability to see through society's structures, including those about religion, race and gender. This would resonate with Gregory's stance as a feminist writer who is politically pro-the common people, in an increasingly multicultural time. It also resonates with Katherine's respect for scholars across Europe historically.

It appears that when Katherine's recreations are given a greater depth and a religious context, they can portray her historically peaceful virtues that have also led to her being remembered as a martyr. Katherine is remembered for her forgiveness and peaceful virtues by the historians at Peterborough Cathedral. Katherine was not forgotten by the people who loved, admired and recognised her as their queen, in her time and in years to come. After her tomb was pillaged during the Civil War and by a bishop, Katherine was considered important enough for her memorial to be rebuilt. During the Victorian era, the Cathedral underwent renovations, but the attention to Katherine's tomb was due to Katherine Clayton, a wife of one of the Canon at Peterborough. With the help of the *Daily Mail*, Clayton set up an appeal reaching out to all women who went by a variation of the name Katherine to donate money towards the tomb's reconstruction. Elizabeth Jane Timms has shown that Katherine remains significant into the Georgian era as she has identified that the arms above her tomb denote those of a queen consort of England and those of a Spanish Infanta that were put there by Queen Mary, wife of George V.³³⁴ Henry had only left her with the arms of Wales and Spain, forcing her in death to be remembered as the Dowager Princess of Wales, a title she refused adamantly in life. These newer arms, however, show that Katherine's marriage was revalidated and has been returned to the status of consort of England too. In Peterborough, Katherine is of utmost importance and the city celebrates her life with an annual commemoration festival involving

³³⁴Elizabeth Jane Timms, "Looking for a Queen of England in Peterborough", *Royal Central*, (3rd August 2019), <https://royalcentral.co.uk/features/looking-for-a-queen-of-england-in-peterborough-127938/> [Last Accessed 4.11.19]

tourists and school children from the local community. This festival brings interest to Peterborough and, of course, to Katherine as well. Interestingly, Peterborough is twinned with Alcala de Henares, near Madrid in Spain, which was the birthplace of Katherine, bringing her places of birth and rest together in her honour.

Every year during the week of the 29th January, Peterborough Cathedral hold their annual Commemoration Service for the Life of Katherine of Aragon. On the 25th January 2019, I attended the service and the following account is based on this occasion. This service was promised following her funeral according to the contemporaneous report analysed in Chapter 1 and it has been acted upon ever since. The service began with a welcoming from the Dean of Peterborough and an opening hymn, followed by a summary of Katherine's life after arriving in England, from the Queen Katherine Academy. In their speech they outlined her previous title as the Princess of Wales and her marriage to Prince Arthur, and that during her widowhood she had become an Ambassador for the Spanish Court in England, emphasising her importance as the first female ambassador in European history. The commemoration continued to discuss Henry's dissatisfaction in his marriage to Katherine and their lack of successful heirs, leading to the severing from Rome and the forming of the English Church. As Supreme Governor, he acted to invalidate their marriage, leading to Katherine's banishment, from which point her health would decline at Kimbolton Castle, until her death and internment at Peterborough Cathedral. The rest of the service orientated around four main points taken from a prayer which was dedicated to the remembrance of Katherine and gave thanks for her life. These four points were Katherine's "Faithfulness", "Love", "Peacefulness" and "Forgiveness". A candle for each was lit. It was at this stage that the children were encouraged to look to the past and then to the present and eventually the future, before singing a second hymn, *One more step along I go*, to mark a celebration of the first virtue. This hymn depicts the nature of God following all of us in every step, wherever we may travel and whatever we may learn and giving us courage when the world is tough. This speaks to Katherine's undying faith in God and the

Catholic Church, even in her darkest moments and even when everything had been taken away from her.

At the end of the hymn the first candle was lit and for the second virtue, a reading of 1 Corinthians 13: 1-7,13, was given in Spanish. This reading conveyed the message that even people with great knowledge and faith “but do not have love, [are]... nothing” but finished by saying that love “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.” This resonates with the popular perception of Katherine as a patient enduring and faithful woman, who had an uncontested love for her King, country and daughter Mary. The second candle was lit, and the congregation moved on to the subject of peace. To begin with, the hymn *Peace, perfect peace*, was sung, followed by the lighting of the third candle and a performance of music by Thomas Tallis. This was played as the remembrance wreath was laid on her tomb by dignitaries and participating school children. From multiple visits to Peterborough Cathedral, I have observed that drawings and notes are also often left on the tomb, as well as flowers and pomegranates by visitors paying their respects. Katherine is still important to modern visitors paying respects to her grave. Katherine grew as a woman by her understanding of peace. Katherine chose to end the war with Scotland when she had the opportunity to extend it further to regain peace in England. When fighting for her queenship she also took a peaceful approach, even when she had the support of the people to cause great civil unrest in her name. Henry knew that until she was gone, Katherine would remain a threat on his soil. She never fulfilled this threat and chose to leave peacefully, but defiantly refused the removal of her title. This title appears to have been upheld by sympathetic Victorians, as upon her tomb, as with two of Henry’s queens in the Tower of London, she is marked as Queen of England.

As the organ plays, a prayer is made thanking for the continued peace and diplomacy between England and Spain, by their servants Elizabeth and Filipe. Emphasis is placed on the blessing of mutual respect and understanding, while being able to live in “joint devotion to our one Sovereign

Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour and our Hope.” This is followed by the Lord’s prayer in both Spanish and English. Finally, the service ended with the lighting of the fourth candle and the reading of Katherine’s final letter to Henry. In this letter, Katherine writes that her death is impending, but her love is never ending. Katherine wishes for Henry to take care “of the health and safeguard of your soul which you ought to prefer before all worldly matters, and before the care and pampering of your body, for the which you have cast me into many calamities and yourself into many troubles”. Katherine continues, “For my part, I pardon you everything, and I wish to devoutly pray God that He will pardon you also. For the rest, I commend unto you our daughter Mary, beseeching you to be a good father unto her.”³³⁵ Lastly, Katherine asks for the care of her maids and servants, asking that the maids be given marriage portions, which would have been very little as there are only three of them left and that her servants be given their wages for this year and the next, if they are “unprovided for”. Katherine signs her final letter, insistent of her love and devotion, vowing that her eyes “desire you above all things, Katherine the Quene.”³³⁶ Katherine until the end reasserted her determination and queenship. She also showed her ability to forgive Henry for her suffering and love him still. This letter showed her devotion through her belief that God would look after Henry because she forgave his actions against her. A final hymn was sung, and the Dean closed the service with a blessing on all God’s people “in every land and every tongue,” asking the Lord to find mercy in those who seek him and comfort for those who need it, and last that God will give his people “peace by all means.” This emphasised the peace which Katherine had hoped to maintain by her refusal to be involved with any plan of invasion from abroad that would harm the people of England.

³³⁵ Katherine of Aragon, *Last letter of Katherine of Aragon to Henry VIII*, (January 1536)

³³⁶ *ibid*

Twenty and twenty-first century recreations of Katherine have shown her to be created by female authors for a female audience. Katherine, as a strong female historic figure, has been used as a vehicle by authors and creators to communicate modern messages of the present through her issues of the past. Through feminist and pro-female motivations, the Tudor historical novel more than any other historical fiction, has been used to portray issues surrounding marriage and the constraints of gender. In the 1980s women set to work on re-establishing women's history as a response to the revival of Victorian imperial ideals by the Conservative Party. By the third wave of feminism, fiction was being used to promote the success of female authors and their ability to succeed without male input. Writers like Philippa Gregory use Katherine to promote women's scholarship and strength, but also the restrictive, negative impact of marriage on women.

As films move further from the historic record, it seems that Katherine's character becomes increasingly repressed in order to enhance the image of Anne Boleyn. This creative decision appears to be repeated through most modern films and shows that Katherine remains in Anne's shadow. As a result, the characteristics which made Katherine unusual for time, such as her humanist scholarship and religious devotion are usurped by the bigger onus placed on presenting the drama surrounding Henry's marriages. In film there is little in the way of a religious context which would allow Katherine's suffering as a result of this drama, or her historic characteristics, to be appreciated, which would perhaps show her scholarship and devotion more.

This chapter has found that recreations of Katherine vary in detail and that only those with the most contextual depth allow Katherine to develop from the mourning mother who has become alienated by her misery of losing all but one of her children and Henry's pursuit of divorcing her, to the fiery Spanish Queen, determined to defend her throne and daughter's legitimacy. The most thorough interpretations finally show Katherine to be able to find peace in her defeat. Katherine historically refused the offer of action in her name and this has been recreated in *Henry VIII* (2003) and remembered at Peterborough Cathedral's annual memorial. The memorial portrays Katherine's

choice to maintain peace and forgive her husband whom she still loves above everything else. *The Constant Princess* also found Katherine to be capable of choosing peace following her victory at the Battle of Flodden. Gregory's Katherine grew to be a defiant Queen, that was able to face all the odds against her succeeding in her duty to her parents and Arthur. In this recreation Katherine was also shown to be independent, tactical and knowledgeable and eventually open to new cultures that would help her to see that her parents, the Warrior monarchs of Spain may have been wrong about warfare, as peace was a better and more permanent solution.

Largely, fiction and film leave Katherine in the shadow of her successors because their recreation of her tends to begin close to the divorce. This trend represses Katherine's scholarly and political achievements that were seen in her youth and which would elevate her character and align it more with her historic representation. Instead, this timing allows Katherine's marriage to identify her and give Katherine's character less opportunity to develop. This leads to these depictions of Katherine generally having the purpose of flattering Anne's more vibrant personality as a "secondary" character to the narrative. These recreations do not consider a more detailed religious background which would help give depth to the lives of Tudor women, including Katherine as well as to the importance of marriage. Religion, as rightly argued by Robinson, is merely considered a sub-plot. Between the criticism of Robinson and the proposed purpose of women in historical fiction by Glyn and Dolan, it would seem that Tudor women are indeed used to show women of the present the confines of their marriage and the repression that surrounds them within a patriarchal society. This allows authors to promote the importance of independence and choice to modern readers through strong female characters, thus presenting their own political agendas within their narratives. While presenting issues of the present through strong female characters of the past, authors use Tudor women to present England's heritage, creating a continuity between the past and the present. This is shown by the popularity of women's historical fiction during the more liberating 1960s, when the women's rights movement fought for equal rights and opportunities for women. This is further seen by the resurgence of interest in women's historical fiction following the success of the Conservative

party in the 1980s. Overall, it appears that Katherine is indeed remembered at her memorial as she has presented herself, but within fiction and film her character is adapted to the intentions of the author or director, whether that be to promote Anne, or the drama that came with the divorce. As Chapter 2 witnessed, with the exception of the historical novels set in Katherine's early years, it is her scholarship and success as a female ambassador and regent that are undermined by the presentation of Katherine's marriage within modern recreations.

Conclusion: Who was Katherine and how should she be remembered?

This Mrs set out to see how Katherine of Aragon presented herself and how she has been remembered and recreated over time. It also aimed to show how scholarship can be undermined by the importance of marriage through Katherine's representation and recreation.

Katherine's contemporary presentation was analysed through the symbolism of her emblem, the pomegranate. This emblem ties her memory of Granada to her duty to produce heirs for Spain and England but proves to be painfully ironic and to highlight the suffering, tragedies and failures she faced in her second marriage. Although the pomegranate represents fertility, Katherine suffered the deaths of all but one of her children who by being female was not suitable to inherit the English throne. Eating the seeds of the pomegranate within the story of Persephone and Hades also symbolises the subjection and entrapment of women including Katherine, as a result of their marriages, thus symbolising Katherine's suffering further. The most significant interpretation was observed through the symbolism of the pomegranate's deep red juices which represent the blood of martyrs. This view aligns with Katherine's denial of the Oath of Succession and the divorce that demoted her to the Dowager Princess of Wales. Her fight against the separation with Rome and her suffering as a result of her opposition creates the image of Katherine as a martyr for Catholicism and her decision to maintain peace when given the opportunity to fight shows this further. Contemporary portraiture of Katherine further reflects her piety and spirituality which grew with her studies, as she is shown with covered hair and with often being in deep red costume, which further shows her to resemble a martyr. The portraits by Sittow especially link Katherine to the characterisation of a tragic martyr and portray her as an obedient servant of God. Finally, the text which described Katherine's funeral illustrated the chosen symbols erected by the standard bearers on four crimson taffeta banners, which showed the arms of Katherine, England and Prince Arthur. The symbolism and crimson colour of the taffeta banners used again show Katherine to be remembered as having saintly qualities and continue to portray her as a virtuous and faithful woman and martyr for Catholicism. The choice of presenting

Saint Katherine of Alexandria on one of the standards resonates with Katherine even more, for both Katherine and her Saintly namesake turned to their studies to progress their learning and encouraged others to study as well, but both eventually faced persecution leading to them to be remembered as martyrs for Christianity.

Katherine was highly respected amongst academics for her advanced scholarship and her unwavering devotion. Katherine would go on to patron scholars such as Erasmus and Vives who would develop guidebooks to help Christian monarchs and women, develop their educations. By drawing on her experience and education, Katherine proved to fulfil her role as a queen consort and surpass any expectations placed on her, since she was made the first female ambassador of Europe in 1507 and Regent of England in 1513. Katherine's scholarship made it fashionable for women to also pursue an advanced learning, which began to change what could be suitably taught to women, without compromising their virtuousness and chastity. This has found to be under presented in some popular histories and does not attract a great deal of scholarly attention either. Although this presentation of Katherine is shown in some historical fiction which precedes the more dramatic events of the divorce, it is largely excluded from film. In film the narrative focuses on the divorce and decline of Katherine, when she was no longer Henry's closest advisor, which prevents her intellectual and political abilities being presented.

This thesis has seen that Katherine is largely identified by her marriage and is most famous for being the first divorced wife of Henry VIII. The lack of religious context provided in Tudor historical fiction and film often restricts Katherine's characterisation. Instead, she is commonly presented as a melancholic and stubborn wife, not as a firm and devoted Catholic with a keen political understanding. These characterisations represent Katherine as a mourning mother and widow, turning into the alienated but fiery Spanish queen and lastly the peace keeping martyr which is more congruent with her contemporaneous form. This analysis has also shown Katherine to be overshadowed by the more dramatic characterisations of Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth I, and Mary Tudor

due to the romanticism developed around the divorce. This has the general effect of minimizing Katherine's presence within films, especially as her character is often reduced in order to flatter Anne's. This highlights the importance of Chapter 1 and the need for more historical support. Looking at Kathrine historically allows for her mourning and determination to be shown in a less exaggerated way. It would also portray Katherine out of the shadow of her successors and in an environment where the divorce does not immediately take precedence or cause a restricted and romanticised recreation. Instead, Katherine's political presence and activity could be better understood and her scholarly ability more appreciated.

Even in early recreations, Katherine's character has been manipulated to suit the motivations of the playwright, author or director. When Katherine was represented as Griselda from Forrest's *The History of Grisild the Second*, Forrest constructed his virtuous and obedient recreation of Katherine through the suffering of Griselda, to help accrue support for Mary and to realign Katherine as the legitimate Queen. This was because suffering was perceived to be virtuous in Catholicism before the reformation and represented his motivations for the Catholic faith under Queen Mary I. This showed Katherine to resemble a martyr and symbolize the time before the divorce. This obedient and virtuous character continued after the Tudor era, when direct recreations of Katherine were made. The play *All is True* showed Katherine to have been an unambiguous character who was devout to her religious cause. This Katherine, unlike the earlier Griselda, is shown by Shakespeare to be politically wise, but still humble, which resonates more with her contemporary form. Katherine's character is further enhanced by the play having more of a religious context, as it allows for a more detailed interpretation of Katherine's devotion. However, it is possible that Shakespeare and Fletcher may have used Katherine's more detailed and deliberately flattering characterisation to represent the upheld peace treaty between Spain and England, thus showing Katherine to again be used as a political device.

Katherine's use as a device is clearly observed within Hogarth's engraving of Sir Robert Walpole, which creates a negative image of Katherine. Here Katherine is used to represent Hogarth's criticism

of the wealthy and the monarchy. The image also shows the division of Catholicism with Katherine and Percy sat together and Anne leading Henry away. Importantly, this image further shows the unused potential Katherine may have had to cause riot in England, with the help Catholic factions, symbolised through Percy. This is supported by Hogarth's motivation to present the moment before a crisis, which is shown here as the time just before the divorce. However, Hogarth's main motivation was to portray the expected fall of Walpole, by linking the problems of his present into the past through Wolsey, Katherine and Percy, Hogarth suggests that politics have and will always be corrupt.

This thesis observed a change in perception of Katherine between the Georgian and Victorian eras. The Victorian view of Queenship was heavily domesticated during Victoria's rule by her being presented as the image of a middle-class woman. Where Queen Victoria found recurring sympathy for Katherine for her mistreatment by Henry, Lord Melbourne justified Henry's actions by deeming Katherine and his other wives to be inconvenient and frustrating for Henry and reminds Victoria that it is Henry who they have to thank for the reformation. This misconception of Katherine's character shows the changes in perception over time as a result of exaggerated and manipulated narratives. It also shows Katherine to be identified by her marriage and not remembered for her capabilities that were unusual for a woman of her time. This view of Katherine continues within historical film and fiction where she is often recognised by her marriage as well.

Tudor historical fiction has largely been created by female authors. These authors use female historical figures such as Katherine as to communicate their modern beliefs on the issue of marriage to their largely female readership, through a form of presentism. Katherine has been greatly used to do this, for historically the problem of marriage dominated her life. From this perspective the criticism of Katherine's shallow narrative was made evident. A large part of her life was dedicated to her religion and this, as shown by Robinson, is an element that is often underplayed in storylines, which also causes her character to be repressed. As identified by Dolan, she is often left in the shadow of Anne, or Elizabeth and is recreated to flatter them. This recreation is therefore affected by the

intentions of the creator, causing Katherine to often be exaggerated, or under appreciated. Through this perspective, the same four characterisations isolated in Chapter 2 were again used to cross examine films and two fictional texts, and Katherine's representation at her annual remembrance service.

Many of the films and both historical fiction novels that were analysed portrayed Katherine as the miserable and mourning mother or widow, whose suffering resembled that of Griselda. Within the novels *Katherine of Aragon*, *The Virgin Widow* by Jean Plaidy and *The Constant Princess* by Philippa Gregory, this suffering is portrayed through Katherine experiencing serious mental changes when adapting to the loss of Arthur, whilst trying to survive in England. In film however, Katherine mourns the loss of her children and the end of her marriage. This characterisation promotes the lively Anne and demotes Katherine as the mourning and miserable Queen. *Anne of the Thousand Days*, *Henry VIII* and *The Other Boleyn Girl* were examined alongside the aforementioned texts. All three films portray Henry's mistreatment and disinterest in Katherine after her inability to give him a son and his lust for the younger woman. In *The Other Boleyn Girl*, Anne eventually pushes both Mary and Katherine aside and it here that Katherine's rigid and mourning character contrasts with the fierce and determined Anne. By the trial however, Katherine in all three examples finds the courage to deny all authority but that of the Pope. Analysing this characterisation found similarities to the representation of Katherine as Griselda who obediently mourned for her children without blaming her husband and to Katherine's recreation in *All is True* where she defied the Cardinals.

Historical novels have developed Katherine's identity further than film can with its confined screen time. Both *Katherine of Aragon* *the Virgin Widow* and *The Constant Princess* portray Katherine to be a lonely, isolated teenager upon her arrival in England. Between her dedication to her faith and her initial language barrier, Plaidy's Katherine finds herself growing lonelier and missing her home. Her inability to communicate with the people of her new home increases her alienation as the foreign princess. Gregory's Katherine as was seen in the *Sword and the Rose*, exudes confidence and does

not always agree with or listen to those around her. This character is so determined and headstrong to achieve her mission of becoming Queen. This determination to succeed while struggling with her homesickness and depression caused by losing Arthur, leads Katherine to often disassociate her from her household. However, although both novels recreate Kathrine's suffering and struggles, they are also portraying her early years which allows for the author's readership to see Katherine's development into the strong and intellectual Queen that defeated Scotland rather than the romanticised end of her marriage.

The analysis of the last characterisation as the peacekeeper is perhaps the most important. This characterisation develops only when Katherine's character is given a greater religious context and the narrative space to continue past the trial. In Chapter 2 Katherine was shown as a peaceful woman through her obedient representation as Griselda. However, in later recreations including *All is True*, Katherine is given the choice to maintain peace and not just remain obedient. Katherine in *Anne of the Thousand Days* actively does not want any conflict with the King who she still loves. Instead, Katherine lies bedbound in a state of self-abnegation, pitying Henry and seeing herself as his true wife. In the television series *Henry VIII*, Katherine again refuses to accept support from abroad to cause unrest in her name, which further resonates with the historic refusal from Katherine to the ambassador which was observed in Chapter 1. With *The Constant Princess* being set earlier into Katherine's life, Katherine's peacefulness is instead shown by her actions during the Scottish conflict which she led England through as Henry's regent. Gregory's Katherine initially led with the same drive her mother had against the Moors. However, after Katherine's spiritual awakening she realises that perhaps conflict is not the only answer. Instead, Gregory's Katherine showed peace and mercy to her sister-in-law, by not taking the opportunity to charge the Scots back when she had the chance. The action to maintain peace has been remembered at the annual commemoration service that was promised in the funeral description discussed in Chapter 1. Katherine's virtue of peacekeeping was emphasised by the playing of the hymn *Peace, Perfect Peace* whilst a wreath was laid on her tomb.

This was followed by a reading which gave thanks for the sustained peace between Spain and England. At the commemoration, Katherine's final virtue of forgiveness was entwined with her peacefulness. This allows Katherine to be remembered for her patience and care, all while finding peace and forgiveness for actions made against her. This shows that the characterisation of the peacemaker is attached to versions of Katherine which are recreated to experience the great pain of her struggles and mourning, but also of her fight whilst Queen. These recreations engage more with Katherine's self-presentation shown in the first chapter.

Katherine's role within recreations is often to enhance the characterisations of other individuals, or to create the conflicts of the divorce. It is common that Katherine lacks a depth in her character, as religion critically takes a minor role in the plots next to the drama of her marriage. Katherine is cast in the shadow of her successors and her life achievements regarding her scholarship and religious recognition are often misplaced for the purpose of entertainment. This misconstrued character instead exaggerates her suffering to portray Katherine as the scorned first wife of Henry and represses her political and scholarly successes earlier in her marriage. This action emphasises the tragedies of her later life and makes her characterisation as the martyr for the Catholic cause and the mournful wife and mother more common. This was likely started by Catholics like Forrest who emphasised Katherine's suffering as virtuous following her death. This thesis has shown that Katherine is largely under-appreciated historically and in the fiction that surrounds her. It has also shown that over the years re-interpretations of Katherine disregard her contemporaneous representation and make her physical appearance more ambiguous. In these recreations Katherine is also suppressed by creators choosing to portray the importance of marriage through Katherine's divorce. This results in her earlier successes in religious devotion, scholarship and politics to be not as well represented or historically remembered.

Appendix

Fig.1 The Coat of Arms of Spain

Whitney Smith, *Flag of Spain*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, URL:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/flag-of-Spain> [Last Accessed: 07/02/2021]

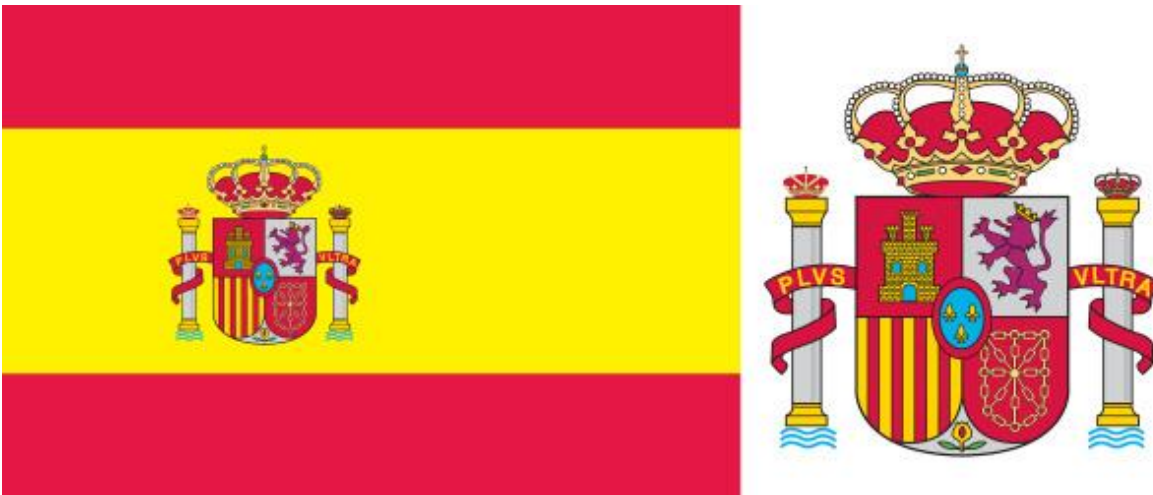


Fig.2 Coat of Arms of Granada Province, Wikipedia Commons, URL:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Coat_of_Arms_of_Granada_Province.svg [Last

Accessed: 07/02/2021]



Fig.3 Armour - Silvered and engraved armour (c.1515), object II.5, Royal Armouries Collection, Tower of London, [Last accessed 07/02/21], URL: https://collections.royalarmouries.org/object/rac-object-18.html?fbclid=IwAR1StUsKQOWMNFMNxL2WxIoiArsJf5e8frACMb7r9bz4s_v1vqXffjTCzWU



Fig.4 Stephen Hawes, *A Joyfull Medytacvon to All Englande*. (Woodcut; London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1509; Cambridge University Library)

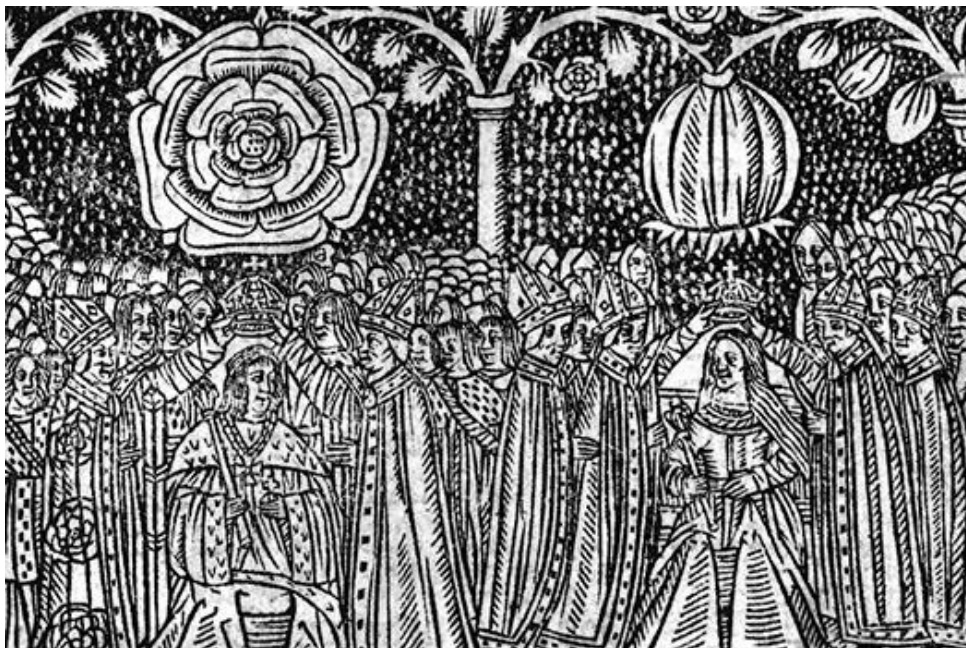


Fig.5 Silver-gilt belt chape of Ralph Felmingham (c.1530; Medieval London gallery, Museum of London)

Jackie Keily, “Pomegranate and rose: Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon”, *Museum of London*, (20th April 2016), <https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/discover/pomegranate-and-rose-henry-viii-and-katharine-aragon> [Last Accessed 26.09.19]



Fig.6 Small pewter livery badge of Katherine’s emblem, the pomegranate dimidiated with the Tudor rose emblem of Henry, (c.1509-1533; Medieval London gallery, Museum of London)

Jackie Keily, “Pomegranate and rose: Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon”, *Museum of London*, (20th April 2016), <https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/discover/pomegranate-and-rose-henry-viii-and-katharine-aragon> [Last Accessed 26.09.19]



Fig. 7 Pedro Marcuello, *Escudo de Isabel y Fernando* (Shield of Isabel and Fernando), Cancionero (Badges within the text Cancionero which was dedicated to Juana following her confirmation as the successor princess of the Spanish monarchs; c.1482-1502; Wikipedia Commons URL https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Escudo_de_Isabel_y_Fernando.jpg)



Fig.8 *Katherine of Aragon*, (oil on oak panel; London: c.1520; National Portrait Gallery Primary collection, NPG L246)



Fig.9 Lucas Horenbout (or Hornebolte), *Katherine of Aragon* (watercolour on vellum; London: c.1525-1526; National Portrait Gallery Primary Collection NPG L244)



Fig.10 Lucas Horenbout (or Hornebolte), *Katherine of Aragon* (watercolour on vellum; London: c.1525; National Portrait Gallery Primary collection NPG 4682)



Fig.11 Juan de Flandes, *Portrait of an Infanta. Catherine of Aragon ca. 1496*, (oil on panel: Madrid; c.1496; Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, Inv. no. 141 (1930.36))



Fig.12 Michel Sittow, *Mary Rose Tudor (1496-1533), Sister of Henry VIII of England*, (oil on panel: Vienna; c. 1514; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie, Picture gallery, 5612)



Fig.13 Michael Sittow, *Catherine of Aragon as the Mary Magdalene*, (oil on oak panel: c.15-16th Century; Detroit; Detroit institute of Arts, Accession Number 40.50)



Fig.14 Michael Sittow, *Virgin Mary and Child*, (oil on oak panel: Netherlands;1515; Kaiser Friedrich Museum Association Collection: Gemäldegalerie ID No. 1722)



Fig.15 Robert White, *Katherine of Aragon*, (a print of a line engraving for Richard Chiswell; London: 1681; National Portrait Gallery Reference Collection NPG D24935)



Fig.17 *Katherine of Aragon*, (oil on panel; London, c.18th century; National Portrait Gallery Primary Collection NPG 163)



Fig.18 William Hogarth, *Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn*, (print of an engraving; London: c.1728-1729; Royal Academy of Arts, object number 17/3694)



Fig.19 William Hogarth, *Gin Lane*, (Etching and engraving on paper; London:1751; Tate Collection T01799)



Fig.20 George Henry Harlow, *The Trial of Queen Catherine, 'Henry VIII', Act II Scene V*, performed by the Kemble Family, (oil painting on canvas; London: c.1817; RSC Theatre Collection accession number STRPG:A: 1993.58)



Fig. 21 Henry Nelson O'Neil, *The Trial of Queen Catherine of Aragon*, (oil painting on canvas; London:1846–48; Birmingham Museums Trust, accession number 1885P2540)



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