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A Queenly Affinity? Cathrine of Aragon's Estates and Henry VIII's Great Matter[1]

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Abstract: Catherine of Aragon's support during Henry VIII's campaign to annul their marriage relied on an affinity formed through her estates, specifically through the familial and regional connections between the queen and her local officials, tenants, and councillors. Using receivers' accounts, land indentures, royal grants, and household accounts, this article traces the legal, administrative, and political activities of the men and women who served the queen. Existing scholarship of early modern queens' estates has focused on the legal status of the queen's council and the solvency of her household, but Catherine's use of her estates demonstrates that their primary importance was as a source of authority, legitimacy, and independent patronage.

Keywords: Catherine of Aragon; queenship; Tudor history; Reformation; Henry VIII; divorce

On 3 September 1533, the Imperial ambassador Eustace Chapuys reported a rumor to the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V that parliament, in its next session, would deprive Catherine of Aragon of the income assigned to her as queen consort. According to Chapuys,

> this is the thing which the Queen dreads most, and which causes her most pain and sorrow, more than any other personal annoyance she has hitherto gone through, imagining that as long as she retains the allowance and estate which queens generally enjoy she may consider herself as a queen, and not be dispossessed of her rank and dignity.

Catherine believed the "rank and dignity" of queen to be intimately connected to her independent administration of the properties she had held since her marriage in 1509. Despite the fact that she had been queen of England for over two decades, Catherine knew that her identity as queen was closely connected to her ability to continue her traditional queenly roles, including the privilege of managing her estates. The ambassador went on to claim that

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Catherine was even more worried about her servants and officials, who "will henceforward be deprived of their pensions and salaries should her marriage portion [her estates] be taken from her."[2] Catherine was well aware of her duty to provide patronage and rewards for those who had served her loyally, and she understood that nearly the whole apparatus of her queenship rested on her ability to fulfil those responsibilities.[3] In reality, Catherine had been increasingly cut off from her household and officers since 1531 and had probably not personally overseen her estates for several months, if not years.[4] Henry's action in 1533 deprived her of her last official connection to these estates. Catherine's fear and dismay over the loss of her estates and rights indicate the importance of this often-overlooked aspect of queenship to her identity and influence as queen consort.

As Catherine's remarks reveal, she was able to create connections of obligation and service throughout her household and affinity not only because she was the wife of the king, but also because she had access to patronage as both the head of her own household establishment and the holder of vast estates and properties in England. Catherine's collection of estates and legal rights was commonly referred to in England as the queen's dower or jointure, although neither of these terms is strictly accurate.[5] Unlike a noblewoman's dower or jointure, the English queen came into possession of her estates immediately, while her husband the king still lived. The queen's properties were meant to fund her household as well as support her in the event that she became a widow. Income was not the most important function of these estates, however. Instead, Catherine's estates and her position as an independent landowner gave her access to resources, authority, and local influence, all of which made up the heart of her privileges as queen.

Historians have recently begun to study Catherine of Aragon as a complex, politically shrewd queen of England whose education and early years as a widow prepared her to become a successful English queen consort and, eventually, a formidable adversary to her husband Henry

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[2] *Calendar of Letters, Despatches and State Papers Relating to the Negotiations Between England and Spain Preserved in the Archives of Simancas and Elsewhere,* ed. G.A. Bergenroth (London, 1862-1954), 4.2:1123, p. 786. Abbreviated hereafter as *CSP Spanish.*

[3] More details on Catherine's fulfillment of these roles can be found in: Michelle L. Beer, *Queenship at the Renaissance Courts of Britain Catherine of Aragon and Margaret Tudor, 1503-1533* (Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2018).

[4] The existing individual receivers' accounts for Catherine's lands do not survive past September 1531, although most of the accounts for 1531-1532 are missing, so it is unclear who was administering the queen's lands at that point, see: *List of Original Ministers' Accounts, Part 2: Henry VII and Henry VIII* (New York: Kraus Reprint Corporation, 1963), 34:296–304.

[5] Dower is the term most commonly used by medieval historians of queenship, including: Joanna L. Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens: English Queenship, 1445-1503* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 234–237; Margaret Howell, "The Resources of Eleanor of Provence as Queen Consort," *The English Historical Review* 102 (April 1987): 381; and Anne Crawford, "The Queen's Council in the Middle Ages," *The English Historical Review* 116, no. 469 (November 2001): 1193–94; some historians of Tudor queens have used both jointure and dower, see: N.R.R. Fisher, "'The Queenes Courte in Her Councell Chamber at Westminster,'" *The English Historical Review* 108, no. 427 (April 1993): 316–317; Dakota L. Hamilton, "The Learned Councils of the Tudor Queens Consort," in *State, Sovereigns and Society in Early Modern England: Essays in Honour of A.J. Slavin*, ed. Charles Carlton (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 88–89; and Eric W. Ives, *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 214. The term is somewhat misleading as dower only applied to common-law lands, and they were usually only held by women after they were widowed. When Catherine's lands were confirmed by Parliament in 1509, they were called her dower: *Statutes of the Realm* (London, 1817), 3:I Henry VIII c.18. For an excellent discussion of this complex legal issue for elite women, see: Barbara J. Harris, *English Aristocratic Women 1450-1550: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 22–23.

VIII.[6] Much work remains to be done, especially on Catherine's queenship after 1509 and how she established herself as England's first foreign-born queen since 1461. Catherine's estates were an important component of her queenship, and she used her resources to create connections and bonds of obligation and support with the English elite. While some of Catherine's household connections have been explored by scholars, particularly those created by her female attendants, the connections formed by her estate officials and tenants have been neglected.[7] Very little work has been done on how the sixteenth-century queens of England administered their estates and interacted with their subjects as lords in their own right. This is in contrast to recent studies of medieval queens, which have shown the importance of estates in forming affinities for queens such as Isabella of France or Margaret of Anjou.[8]

Studies of Tudor queens' lands in England have taken an institutional approach, concentrating on the queen's council, the group of household and estate officials who managed her estates and constituted a court of equity.[9] In conjunction with studies of the queen's council, historians have also focused on the English consort's lands in terms of their financial administration and the degree to which the queen was a financial 'burden' on the king.[10] In the case of Tudor queens consort, however, this preoccupation with the financial independence or dependence of queens does not reflect the purpose of the royal landed patrimony in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Crown lands, including the queen's estates, were not intended to be the principal source of revenue for royal finances. Instead, they were used by Henry VIII and his predecessors to provide income and privileges for members of the royal family and as a source of patronage to reward royal servants, advisors and the nobility.[11] This was doubly advantageous for their queens consort, because landowning was an important source of power and prestige in pre-modern England. As Jeri L. McIntosh's work on the pre-accession households of the Tudor

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[6] Theresa Earenfight, "Regarding Catherine of Aragon," in *Scholars and Poets Talk about Queens*, ed. Carole Levin and Christine Stewart-Nuñez (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 137–157; Theresa Earenfight, "Raising Infanta Catalina de Aragón to Be Catherine Queen of England," *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 46, no. 1 (2016): 417–443; Emma Cahill Marron, "Una Lucrecia del siglo XVI: los libros de Catalina de Aragon," in *El imperio y las Hispanias de Trajano a Carlos V: clasicismo y poder en el arte español*, ed. Sandro De Maria and Manuel Parada López de Corselas (Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2014), 419–428; and Timothy G. Elston, "Transformation or Continuity? Sixteenth-Century Education and the Legacy of Catherine of Aragon, Mary I, and Juan Luis Vives," in *"High and Mighty Queens" of Early Modern England: Realities and Representations*, ed. Carole Levin, Debra Barrett-Graves, and Jo Eldridge Carney (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 11–26.

[7] Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 216–218; and John E. Paul, *Catherine of Aragon and Her Friends* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1966).

[8] See: Hilda Johnstone, "The Queen's Exchequer under the Three Edwards," in *Historical Essays in Honour of James Tait*, ed. John Goronwy Edwards, V.H. Galbraith, and E.F. Jacob (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1933), 143–153; Howell, "The Resources of Eleanor of Provence as Queen Consort"; Helen E. Maurer, *Margaret of Anjou: Queenship and Power in Late Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003); and Anthony J. Musson, "Queenship, Lordship and Petitioning in Late Medieval England," in *Medieval Petitions: Grace and Grievance*, ed. W. Mark Ormrod, Gwilym Dodd, and Anthony Musson (York: York Medieval Press, 2009), 156–172.

[9] Fisher, "Queene's Courte"; Hamilton, "Learned Councils"; and Crawford, "Queen's Council."

[10] Anne Crawford, "The King's Burden?: The Consequences of Royal Marriage in Fifteenth-Century England," in *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England*, ed. Ralph A. Griffiths (Gloucester: Sutton, 1981), 33–46; Hilda Johnstone, "The Queen's Household," in *The English Government at Work, 1327-1336*, ed. James F. Williard and William A. Morris (Cambridge, MA: The Mediaeval Academy of America, 1940), 1:250–299; and Howell, "The Resources of Eleanor of Provence as Queen Consort."

[11] Bernard P. Wolffe, *The Crown Lands, 1461-1536* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1970), 30–31.

princesses Mary and Elizabeth has shown, royal women could benefit immensely from holding and administering lands in their own names.[12]

By shifting the focus away from royal burdens and queenly debts, we can begin to assess the role the queen's estates played in establishing her queenly identity and creating connections among her noble and gentle servants. This was especially important for Catherine of Aragon, who had no English networks of supporters to draw upon, unlike her English-born predecessors (Elizabeth Woodville and Elizabeth of York) and successors (including all of Henry's other wives, except Anne of Cleves). By tracing the connections between Catherine's estates and her household, we can see that the queen's estates were her most important independent sources of patronage and reward, and that Henry's moves in 1533 to strip her of her properties effectively cut her ties to her English household and affinity.

Landownership in pre-modern England was a source of honour, authority, and patronage, and queens could use their estates to support and maintain affinities in a similar manner to the nobility. Affinities consisted of the kinship group, tenants, clients, or neighbours of the patron who were expected to assist their leader politically and militarily.[13] Under Henry VII and Henry VIII, the king's affinity became less regionally-based than a typical noble affinity, and by the reign of Edward VI the distinction between the royal affinity and the affinities of the nobility who served the king had been effectively combined into an overlapping group of retainers and servants.[14] Catherine's affinity was hybrid; it was similar in structure to the king's but with a certain amount of regional focus that was a feature of noble affinities. It consisted primarily of lower nobility, gentlemen, and yeomanry tied to her through household service, administrative office, tenancy, or kinship with the same.[15] There was a certain amount of overlap between Catherine's affinity and her husband's. In many instances men and women in her service were intimately connected to members of the king's household through kinship or marriage.[16] While she had no kin of her own in England, many members of her household and affinity were part of the kinship networks of her royal predecessors, including Elizabeth of York's Woodville and Yorkist families and Margaret Beaufort's kin.[17] Some members of Catherine's affinity had regional connections to her estates, and they used their position with the queen to increase their own local standing.

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[12] Jeri L. McIntosh, *From Heads of Household to Heads of State: The Preaccession Households of Mary and Elizabeth Tudor, 1516-1558* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), chapter 3.

[13] McIntosh, *From Heads of Household to Heads of State*, 8.

[14] Alan Bryson, "Edward VI's 'Speciall Men': Crown and Locality in Mid Tudor England," *Historical Research* 82, no. 216 (May 2009): 231. See also: Christopher Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance in England, 1360-1413* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986), 203.

[15] Lisa Benz St. John has argued that holding estates allowed Plantagenet queens to create an "affinity," a combination of household servants and officers, estate administrators, and recipients of material rewards or annuities who looked to the queen as their patron: Lisa Benz St. John, *Three Medieval Queens: Queenship and the Crown in Fourteenth-Century England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 72–73. Elizabeth Woodville was able to use her East Anglian estates to create an affinity there that became an instrument of royal authority: Rosemary Horrox, *Richard III, A Study of Service* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 79–80; and Steven J. Gunn, "The Structures of Politics in Early Tudor England," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th ser., 5 (December 1995): 79.

[16] Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 218.

[17] Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 216; and Michael K. Jones and Malcolm G. Underwood, *The King's Mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 161.

Catherine acquired most of her properties upon her marriage to Henry VIII in 1509, when the king assigned her nearly the same crown estates that his mother, Elizabeth of York, had held until her death in 1503. Some of these estates, such as the manor of Havering-atte-Bower in Essex, had been held by queens for several centuries, while others were relatively recent additions to the queen's lands made by Edward IV and Henry VII.[18] In keeping with his predecessors, Henry VIII also assigned Catherine estates from the duchy of Lancaster, and queenly administrative practices were modelled after duchy procedure.[19] Significantly, the estates Catherine received from her predecessor had been kept together as one administrative parcel since Elizabeth of York's death. Instead of dispersing the queen's lands into grants and farms, Henry VII had allowed the estates to be accounted for separately by Elizabeth's old receiver-general, Robert Decons.[20] Thus, Henry VIII could quickly issue letters patent for Catherine in 1509 because the estates of Elizabeth of York had never been dispersed to other landowners.[21] This was an unusual situation, as Catherine's fifteenth-century predecessors had received their estates in a piecemeal fashion, and they frequently had to be granted cash when traditional queen's lands were unavailable or held by dowager queens.[22] Catherine did experience a certain amount of changeover during her reign, but on the whole the core parcel of her estates remained intact.[23] She was fortunate that she could quickly and efficiently take possession of her estates and begin to administer them from the moment she became queen.

Henry's grant to Catherine was then confirmed by parliament, and in addition to the lands and revenues, they granted a form of naturalization for the Spanish-born queen of England, allowing her to own and administer lands as if she were a native-born Englishwoman.[24] Catherine was given the right to sue in her own name for her rents and debts, a status known as *femme sole*, a legal right that greatly increased her independence.[25] She could not, however, permanently alienate any of her properties. Upon her death, the estates would return to the crown.

Catherine's double boon of being granted, in essence, English naturalization and legal independence from her husband meant that she could use her lands as a source of patronage. The combination of *femme sole* status with the immediate possession of their estates gave English queens the advantage of managing their lands and distributing offices and indentures without involving the king.[26] As *femme sole*, Catherine could pursue legal actions in her own

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18 Crawford, "Queen's Council," 1208.

19 Robert Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster* (London: Chancellor and Council of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1953), 277. For a discussion of the Duchy's development of its council procedures, see: Robert Somerville, "The Duchy of Lancaster Council and Court of Duchy Chamber," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 23 (December 1941): 159–177.

20 Wolffe, *The Crown Lands*, 46.

21 The patents were issued the day before their marriage, see: J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R.H. Brodie, eds., *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, 1509-1547* (London, 1862) 1.1: 94, no. 35, 36. Abbreviated hereafter as *LP*.

22 Crawford, "King's Burden?," 40–47.

23 Hamilton, "Learned Councils," 88.

24 *Statutes of the Realm* 3: I Henry VIII c.18.

25 All of Henry's wives received this status, and it was confirmed by statute in 1540. Hamilton, "Learned Councils," 88.

26 Queens had been given the authority to oversee their lands as if they were *femme sole* since at least the late thirteenth century. See: Crawford, "Queen's Council," 1194; St. John, *Three Medieval Queens*, 83–84; and

name without the consent of her husband. She would be represented in any legal matters as if she were a single woman or a widow. And importantly for her distribution of patronage, Catherine could enter into contracts or indentures regarding her lands without requiring her husband's consent. In declaring Catherine *femme sole*, Henry followed the established practice of other English kings towards their wives, including his father Henry VII.[27] Aside from queens consort, the only married elite woman who had been declared *femme sole* was Henry VIII's grandmother, Margaret Beaufort, countess of Richmond.[28] Upon the accession of her son Henry VII, Margaret was declared *femme sole*, despite the fact that her husband, Thomas Lord Stanley, was very much alive and in good standing with the king. Margaret's status allowed her to independently administer numerous estates and act as the head of an informal regional council on behalf of her son, much as if she were a widow (or a queen consort).[29]

In providing them with estates taken from the royal patrimony, English kings understood that opportunities for local influence and patronage similar to those of other noble and royal landholders would be passed down to their queens. Furthermore, in making their queens legally independent (by granting them *femme sole* status), English kings (including Henry VIII), clearly expected that the queen's properties would be used by her to establish her own affinity through the positions and legal rights that came with her estates. The granting of the queen's estates set in motion a host of opportunities for the queen to perform her roles as an important source of patronage and as an elite landowner with local power and authority.

It is worth commenting here that the financial position of pre-modern queens varied across Europe. While the queens of England had long enjoyed considerable power over their estates, in the sixteenth century their position was quite different from queens in neighboring Scotland or France, who did not control their estates until they were widowed.[30] Queens on the Iberian Peninsula, however, had similar rights over properties assigned to them for the maintenance of their households. These estates, which were inalienable parts of the royal patrimony, provided queens in Portugal and Aragon with patronage opportunities and the ability, in theory, to independently fund their households.[31] Like English queens, Portuguese

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Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens*, 237–238.

[27] Edward Coke, *The First Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England, or, A Commentary upon Littleton : Not the Name of the Author Only, but of the Law Itself*, ed. Charles Butler (London, 1832), 1:133a.

[28] Other than the peculiar case of English queens consort, designating a married woman *femme sole* had been used largely as an economic device by pre-modern urban married women to allow them to manage their own trades independently from their husbands. See: Marjorie K. McIntosh, "The Benefits and Drawbacks of *Femme Sole* Status in England, 1300–1630," *The Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 3 (July 2005): 410–438.

[29] Jones and Underwood, *The King's Mother,* 98–99.

[30] Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scots and Catherine's sister-in-law, did not administer her dower properties until she was widowed in 1513 (Michelle L. Beer, "Practices and Performances of Queenship: Catherine of Aragon and Margaret Tudor, 1503-1533" (PhD diss., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014), 54–55). Medieval French queens, for example, received funds that were assigned to them out of the king's revenues. They possessed the bureaucracy necessary to collect and account for their funds from the king's officials, but they did not administer their dower estates as landlords until they were widowed. See: Colleen Lily Mooney, "Queenship in Fifteenth-Century France" (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, 1977), 75–76. Italian ducal consorts in the sixteenth century faced similar situations, see: Sarah Bercusson, "The Duchess' Court in Sixteenth-Century Italy: A Comparison of Female Experience," in *Moving Elites: Women and Cultural Transfers in the European Court System*, ed. Giulia Calvi and Isabelle Chabot (San Domenico di Fiesole: European University Institute, 2010), 133–135.

[31] In practice, the queen's household was often underfunded, or the king could take properties away from the queen. See: Theresa Earenfight, "Royal Finances in the Reign of Maria of Castile, Queen-Lieutenant of the Crown

and Aragonese queens consort appointed officials and oversaw the administration of their lands, which increased the scope for their authority and patronage.[32] It is even possible that Catherine, whose sisters Isabel and Maria both became queens of Portugal and whose father was king of Aragon, was aware of these Iberian traditions or received training in estate management. While noblewomen in the pre-modern period were expected to administer their husband's estates and may have learned such skills from observing their betters, it is difficult to determine if princesses like Catherine were given tutoring in estate management.[33] One indication that she did receive some training comes from her mother Isabel's attitude towards education. Isabel was known not only for educating her daughters in humanist subjects, but also for requiring them to learn practical womanly skills, such as spinning and sewing.[34] It seems distinctly possible, therefore, that Catherine's upbringing in Spain would have included some exposure to estate and household management, although it is difficult to determine how useful any knowledge of Iberian practices would have been to an English queen consort.

What we do know of Catherine's education in Spain indicates that she would have had significant advantages in dealing with her officials and conducting the business of queenship. In particular, Catherine's knowledge of Latin would have been enormously helpful. Catherine's Latin learning was well-documented by her contemporaries, and she earned praise from humanists in England and Spain for her Latinity.[35] Latin was by no means a standard accomplishment for royal women: Catherine's predecessor Elizabeth of York spoke and read French and English but no Latin.[36] Knowledge of Latin in the sixteenth century was a practical asset; in addition to being the language of diplomacy, many of the documents concerning Catherine's lands, including a large portion of the indentures and petitions to her council, were in Latin. Catherine's ability to read Latin undoubtedly would have been a useful skill that was nevertheless unusual for a queen consort.[37]

Catherine's administration was large and complex in part because her estates were scattered across her new country; in the 1509 grant, her lordships and manors stretched across twenty counties in the south and east of England.[38] Her properties were generally concentrated in Dorset, Essex, Wiltshire, and Gloucestershire, but she held a range of properties that stretched from Devon in the south-west, Herefordshire along the Welsh borders, and

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of Aragon, 1432-53," in *Women and Wealth in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. Theresa Earenfight (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 238–239.

32 Ana Maria S.A. Rodrigues and Manuela Santos Silva, "Private Properties, Seignorial Tributes, and Jurisdictional Rents: The Income of the Queens of Portugal in the Late Middle Ages," in *Women and Wealth in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. Theresa Earenfight (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 211–212; Earenfight, "Royal Finances," 230.

33 Rowena E. Archer, "'How Ladies ... Who Live on Their Manors Ought to Manage Their Households and Estates': Women as Landholders and Administrators in the Later Middle Ages," in *Woman Is a Worthy Wight: Women in English Society c.1200-1500*, ed. P.J.P. Goldberg (Wolfeboro Falls, NH: Alan Sutton, 1992), 151–152.

34 Juan Luis Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman: A Sixteenth-Century Manual*, ed. Charles Fantazzi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 61.

35 Earenfight, "Raising Infanta Catalina," 424; Maria Dowling, "A Woman's Place? Learning and the Wives of Henry VIII," *History Today* 41, no. 6 (June 1991): 38; and Maria Dowling, *Humanism in the Age of Henry VIII* (London: Croom Helm, 1986), 16–17.

36 Arlene Okerlund, *Elizabeth of York* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 9.

37 On the advantage of Latin in administering lands, see: McIntosh, *Heads of Household,* 121.

38 *LP,* 1.1:94.

Lincolnshire in the north. She held manors in nearly all the counties surrounding London, and her official London residence was Baynard's Castle, located on the Thames close to St. Paul's. The breadth of Catherine's lands meant that she needed a number of officials to administer her properties, from receivers, surveyors, and auditors to stewards and bailiffs, and a queen's council to oversee her administration.[39] This is where the real significance of the administration of estates for queens such as Catherine begins to emerge. As Anne Crawford has observed, "the immediate holding of land by the queen led to important administrative developments as her household expanded to meet the additional responsibilities."[40] It was not just the income from her properties that provided Catherine with the opportunity to bring noblemen and gentlemen into her affinity, but rather the positions she had to appoint in order to administer her far-flung estates.

Catherine's estates made her one of the largest landowners in the kingdom, equal in wealth to the greatest of noble magnates, and she had opportunities to assert her authority over these properties through her officials and personal management.[41] Because she needed to administer her estates in order to receive revenues, Catherine had officials who either managed her lands directly or leased them out and a council that oversaw their activities and dealt with legal matters. A 1534 list of fees and annuities from the queen's lands, drawn up in preparation for the new queen, Anne Boleyn, shows that Catherine paid out £778 19*s* in fees to over ninety different people. These men and one woman were stewards, keepers and bailiffs on her estates, and many of them also held leases from the queen or were members of her household. Some were important landholders or courtiers in their own right. For example, Margaret Grey, dowager marchioness of Dorset, received fees of £9 2*s* 4*d* as Catherine's keeper of Lytley and Donmore parks and as bailiff of Donmore. John Lord Hussey was Catherine's steward in Lincolnshire and Rutland.[42] By appointing the nobility to positions on her estates, Catherine gained the interest and goodwill of members of the Tudor elite, and these stewards could become potential sources of support for the queen.[43]

Queens could appoint an estate official only when the position became vacant, but because of her long tenure as queen Catherine was probably able to make a number of appointments over the years.[44] A letter from Sir Thomas Henneage to Cardinal Wolsey in July 1528 reveals the freedom with which Catherine could act concerning these vacancies. Sir William Compton, groom of the stool and close friend of the king, had died in June 1528. In

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[39] For more on Catherine's council, see: Beer, "Practices and Performances of Queenship," 67–81.

[40] Crawford, "Queen's Council," 1194.

[41] The traditional income for English queens was around £4,500 in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries: Laynesmith, *Last Medieval Queens*, 234–236. Wealthy magnates' incomes, like Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, ranged around £2,000 annually: Hazel Pierce, *Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, 1473-1541: Loyalty, Lineage and Leadership* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003), 37. Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, had an income of £3,000 when he died in 1545: Steven J. Gunn, *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, c.1484-1545* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), 208. Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, had an estimated income of around £5,000 before he died in 1521, although his real income was significantly lower: Barbara J. Harris, *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham, 1478-1521* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1986), 104.

[42] *LP,* 7:352.

[43] For a more detailed analysis of the phenomenon of noble stewards and the creation of affinities, see: Catherine Kelly, "The Noble Steward and Late-Feudal Lordship," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 49, no. 2 (Spring 1986): 133–148.

[44] Laynesmith, *Last Medieval Queens*, 234.

July, Henneage wrote to Wolsey concerning the offices Compton had held from the queen. Henneage wrote that "the King will not speak to the Queen for such offices as Compton had of her, but leave her to bestow them at her pleasure, except the keepership of Odyam [Odiham] park," which was to go to the sergeant of the king's cellar.[45] Although it is difficult to tell from one incident whether this degree of freedom for her own patronage was normal, in this instance, Catherine was clearly the person making decisions about the administration of her lands, and crucially, the distribution of patronage.[46]

The officials who oversaw Catherine's estates often had close connections to her household and owed their positions to her specific patronage. A partial list of receivers in Catherine's receiver-general's accounts includes men who had positions in her household, such as George Frances, John Glynn, Francisco Felipez (anglicized as Francis Phillips), Richard Justice and George Sutton, all of whom served Catherine in her chambers.[47] Other members of Catherine's household had responsibilities on her estates: her lord chamberlain, William Blount Lord Mountjoy, who had married one of Catherine's favorite Spanish ladies-in-waiting and whose daughter would become a staunch ally during the divorce crisis, was steward of her manor of Havering-atte-Bower.[48] John Baker, groom of the queen's chamber, was Mountjoy's deputy steward.[49] John Verney, Catherine's sewer, was her steward for King's Langley, Hertfordshire.[50]

The career of John Poyntz best illustrates how members of Catherine's household benefited from the patronage she could offer through her estates. John Poyntz was the second son of Sir Robert Poyntz, chancellor to Elizabeth of York and then Catherine until 1521. Sir Robert Poyntz was descended from a Bristol family and held lands in Gloucestershire, one of the principal counties of Catherine's estates. He was also married to Margaret, illegitimate daughter of Anthony Earl Rivers, and thus a distant kinswoman to Elizabeth of York and Henry VIII.[51] At least two of Poyntz's sons, including his second son John, served Catherine, beginning in her first household as princess of Wales in 1501.[52] Almost certainly due to his father's position as the queen's chancellor, and thus head of the queen's council, John Poyntz became one of Catherine's receivers, responsible for overseeing many of her properties in

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[45] *LP,* 4.2:4449. Odiham was a crumbling royal castle that had been part of queens' dowers since the 13th century; its park had been a royal hunting ground but was probably also in ruin by the sixteenth century. See: Patricia MacGregor, *Odiham Castle, 1200-1500: Castle and Community*, ed. Barry Stapleton (Gloucester: A. Sutton, 1983), 76, 116, 125.

[46] This is perhaps all the more remarkable given that in 1528 tensions between the king and queen were mounting over his infatuation with Anne Boleyn.

[47] British Library, Cotton MS. Appendix LXV, fols. 44, 46–47, 65. Frances, Sutton, Glynn, and Phillips were all yeomen or gentlemen of the chamber (see, for example, the 1523 subsidy in T[he] N[ational] A[rchives], London, E 179/69/15). Richard Justice was her groom of the wardrobe (see, for example, John Rylands Library, Manchester, Latin MS. 239, fol. 8).

[48] *CSP Spanish,* 2:20.

[49] *LP,* 4.3:6121.

[50] TNA, MS E 298/28.

[51] Alisdair Hawkyard, "Poyntz, Sir Robert (*b.* late 1440s, *d.* 1520)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/70796.

[52] At the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520, John Poyntz was named Catherine's sewer of the chamber, one of those gentlemen responsible for overseeing the queen's table at meals. He paid the lay subsidy tax as part of the queen's household in the 1520s. Hawkyard, "Poyntz, Sir Robert"; TNA, MS E 179/69/15; *LP,* 3.2:491.

Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex.[53]

In addition to his position as a receiver for Catherine's estates, John Poyntz became a tenant of the queen. Catherine did not hold all of her estates directly; she leased a great many of them to a wide range of tenants, and these leases served to create another source of connection and potential reward among her affinity.[54] In March 1521, John Poyntz entered into a seven-year lease for the park of Hunden, Suffolk. The following July, he also signed an indenture, jointly with Humphrey Wingfield, for property within the queen's manor of Stratford, Suffolk.[55] Both of his leases centred on the queen's estates in Suffolk, associated with or near the town of Clare, which Catherine also held according to the 1509 grant.[56] As both a tenant and receiver of the queen's estates in Suffolk, Poyntz was probably the most important member of her affinity there. His connections to both her household and administration would have served as useful points of contact between Catherine, her council, and her Suffolk tenants. In 1529 Poyntz was elected Member of Parliament for Devizes, one of Catherine's boroughs, and his election was almost certainly due to her influence.[57] Poyntz's career, which spanned Catherine's household, her lands and her administration, is illustrative of the connections of family and patronage that crossed her household, council and lands, creating a complex picture of how her estates, household service and regional affinity were interdependent.

John Poyntz was only one of many men and women who were tied to Catherine through multiple forms of service and reward. Around ninety indentures between Catherine and her tenants have survived from 1510 to 1531, revealing a wide network of courtiers and ordinary landholders who owed obligations to the queen as her tenants.[58] Catherine's tenants came from a variety of backgrounds and consequently had different relationships with the queen. Many were yeomen and husbandmen, leasing lands, meadows or mills for a few shillings or a couple of pounds. Others were clearly more connected with the court generally or the queen personally. High-ranking courtiers, such as Sir Henry Wyatt, Sir William Kingston and Sir Thomas Boleyn, leased lands from the queen.[59] Members of Catherine's household and council, and their families, were also her tenants. Lord Mountjoy leased her manor of Standen, Hertfordshire for £60 annually. Other servants of the queen's household, such as Anthony Carleton, clerk of the avery, and John Glynn, yeoman of the chamber, leased lands together in the manor of Havering-atte-Bower.[60]

Members of Catherine's household could use their association with the queen to gain positions or leases for their families. For example, Catherine's vice-chamberlain from 1517–27 was Sir Edward Darrell, whose lands in Wiltshire were near many of her properties. In addition to his responsibilities overseeing the running of the queen's chamber as a deputy for her lord chamberlain, Darrell was extensively involved in the queen's parliamentary patronage. Like Sir

[53] BL Cotton MS Appendix LXV, fol. 47r.
[54] TNA, MS E 316/176, E 329/73.
[55] TNA, MS E 315/176, nos. 60 and 72.
[56] *LP,* 1.1:94, p. 48.
[57] "Poyntz, John (c1485-1522), of Alderley, Glos," in Edward Miller, ed., *The History of Parliament* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and The History of Parliament Trust, 1998).
[58] TNA, MS E 316/176, E 329/73.
[59] TNA, MS E 315/176, nos. 1, 47; *LP,* 3.1:834.
[60] TNA, MS E 315/176, no. 9.

Robert Poyntz and his sons, Darrell used his access to the queen to obtain the rights to 'all her game of coneys and warrens' on her lordship of Chilton Foliat in Wiltshire for his second son, Edmund, as well as election to parliament for Edmund as M.P. for Marlborough, which was part of the queen's gift and close to Darrell's own estates in Wiltshire.[61]

Darrell's success in obtaining positions for his son highlights how an official's regional affiliations complemented his service to the queen. Two of Catherine's most important officials, Poyntz and Darrell, were based in counties (Gloucestershire and Wiltshire) where she held significant numbers of manors. Other household members settled in the communities where they held the queen's lands. They, therefore, had the potential to acquire influence in the local community and act as liaisons between Catherine's administration and local leaders. For example, John Glynn was a member of Catherine's household with long-lasting ties to her holdings in the Essex manor and village of Havering-atte-Bower, which he probably obtained because of his connection to the queen.[62] Glynn was a yeoman in Catherine's chamber from 1509 until at least 1524, a position that granted him access to the queen and required his attendance at court for a portion of the year. In addition to the fees and liveries Glynn received from the queen, he was also able to secure several positions administering crown lands. In October 1511, for example, he was granted a bailiffship in the marches of Wales by the king.[63] In May of that same year, Glynn and another servant of the queen's, Anthony Carleton, signed an indenture to lease fields within the queen's manor of Havering-atte-Bower.[64] John Glynn was also keeper of the south gate and the pale of Havering Park.[65]

Glynn's association with Havering, possibly begun through his connections to the queen, would continue for the rest of his life. In his will, dated February 1534, Glynn made several bequests that indicate a lasting relationship with the manor. Glynn requested to be buried in the chapel of Romford, Havering's market town. Glynn left bequests to the chapel at Havering-atte-Bower, and one of his executors was the curate of Romford. Glynn had substantial interests in land surrounding Havering, holding leases on the chantry lands of Havering that he left to his wife Jane and her brother Gilbert, in addition to a tenement in Havering that he left to his wife for life. Glynn's will indicates that he was deeply involved in the life of Havering, and he had personal connections to the local chapels in addition to owning and leasing lands in the manor.[66]

In at least one instance, it was Catherine's gentlewoman who formed a connection between the queen's household and her estates, providing both the queen and the local residents with further channels of communication and influence. Margaret Pennington first

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[61] TNA E315/176 no. 87; "Darrell, Sir Edward" and "Darrell, Edmund" in Miller, *The History of Parliament*.

[62] Havering was an ancient royal desmesne with a long and complicated relationship with the queens of England. For more on the evolution of its legal status, see: Marjorie K. McIntosh, *A Community Transformed: The Manor and Liberty of Havering, 1500-1620* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[63] *LP,* 1.1:1898.

[64] TNA, MS E315/176, no. 9.

[65] *LP*, 7:352.

[66] TNA, MS PROB 11/25/359. Glynn left bequests to a few other properties located in Kent, but most of his activities and wealth were focused on Havering. References to "my house" in his will do not specify if Glynn was living in Havering, though it seems likely based on references to local landmarks such as "Chase Cross," that he did.

served Catherine as a chamberer, receiving liveries in October 1511 and May 1512.[67] Sometime shortly after the 1512 livery, she married John Cook, a widower and one of the chief landowners of Havering. His younger brother, Richard Cook, was active in the households of both Catherine and her sister-in-law Mary Tudor.[68] John Cook died in 1516, and left his wife Margaret two manors for life, as well as entrusting her with the raising of his heir, Anthony Cook, his son by his first wife.[69] After she was widowed (and possibly during her marriage) Margaret returned to serve Catherine as a gentlewoman in her household, participating in New Year's gift exchanges, receiving clothing from the king's wardrobe, and attending the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520.[70] After Catherine's death, Margaret Cook served in Princess Mary's household, and in her will left bequests to ladies in Princess Mary's household who were her 'fellows in service,' including one of her step-granddaughters, Anne Cook.[71]

Throughout her career at court Margaret Cook maintained close links to Havering and the community there. As one of the only women to be named overseer of an important Havering man's will, she was clearly well-regarded by her husband and the community at large.[72] She had a good working relationship with her brother-in-law, who oversaw her stepson's education. Margaret also had a close, warm relationship with her stepson Anthony and was godmother to two of his children, Margaret and Edward.[73] She sought Anthony's help, while he was still a minor, when she went to court to recover documents relating to one of her properties. Margaret Cook was an active and competent landowner, successfully retaining her life interest in the manors granted to her by her late husband, which were within the liberty of Havering. She continued to expand her holdings, renting a manor in Havering from New College, Oxford in 1527.[74]

Margaret Cook's career at court and her involvement in the community of Havering were informal connections between the queen's household and the lands which made up her estates. Without further evidence, it is impossible to tell how Margaret's connections might have influenced the development of Catherine's affinity around Havering. For example, she may have played a special role in helping to organize the king's and queen's visit to the manor

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[67] TNA MS E101/417/6; *LP,* 1.1:1218.

[68] Richard Cook became a trusted messenger between Catherine and Charles V in 1520s and 1530s, which may have been facilitated through his brother's match to the queen's gentlewoman. Marjorie K. McIntosh, "The Cooke Family of Gidea Hall, Essex 1460-1661" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1967), 132.

[69] Marjorie K. McIntosh, "Some New Gentry in Early Tudor Essex: The Cookes of Gidea Hall, 1480-1550," *Essex Archaeology and History* 9 (1977): 131, 133.

[70] *LP,* 5:1711; BL MS Harley 2284, fol. 3r; *LP,* 3.1:704. In 1527, Mistress Cook, as she was commonly called, paid taxes as part of the queen's household. *LP,* 4.2:2972.

[71] Anne Cook later married Sir Nicholas Bacon, but remained in Mary's privy chamber when Mary became queen in 1553, despite Anne's reforming sympathies. Anne was one of the few reformers who maintained their standing at Mary's court after the Catholic queen's accession. It is likely that the long relationship between Margaret Cook and the new queen played a part in protecting Lady Anne Bacon in Mary's reign. Although Lady Bacon's survival at court is well-documented, the role Margaret Cook played in continuing the connection between the younger generation of Cook women and Mary I have not been noted by historians. For a discussion of Mary's household including Lady Anne Bacon, see: Charlotte Merton, "Women, Friendship, and Memory," in *Tudor Queenship: The Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth*, ed. Anna Whitelock and Alice Hunt (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 246.

[72] McIntosh, "The Cookes of Gidea Hall," 134.

[73] Sheridan Harvey, "The Cooke Sisters: A Study of Tudor Gentlewomen" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 1981), 30.

[74] McIntosh, "The Cooke family," 134.

in 1519; she may have even hosted members of the queen's household at one of her properties. On the whole, she seems to have had a relatively close relationship with the queen, which could have translated into access and influence for herself and her family.[75] It seems likely that she would have been a point of contact in the queen's household for her brother-in-law and her stepson with any business regarding Havering. In the later years of the reign of Henry VIII, Margaret's stepson Anthony Cook would use his position as both a justice of the peace for the liberty of Havering and a gentleman of the privy chamber to protest against actions taken by the steward of Havering, Sir John Gates.[76] Margaret, who also held a place at court as well as status within the local community, could have performed similar interventions, although any such interventions would have been on a personal, private level leaving little trace in the historical records. Margaret Cook's close proximity to the queen over the course of several years would have made her a valuable person to cultivate for the local community at Havering. It is not evident in the surviving sources whether or not they did so.[77]

Catherine's estates were clearly an important source of patronage for the queen, but it is difficult to determine the extent to which Catherine herself was involved in the decision-making regarding her properties. Officially, her name was invoked in documents and requests submitted to her council, and the indentures that leased her lands all followed the standard form of an agreement between the tenant and the queen. All of these practices would have served to establish the idea of her authority in the minds of her tenants, but they are largely standardized documents that could have been presented to the queen to be signed without her active involvement. With no official records of council meetings, we can have very little idea of how much participation Catherine had in the daily affairs surrounding her estates, but this should not lead us to dismiss outright her involvement in administering her lands. Garrett Mattingly, Catherine's greatest biographer, claimed that she "regularly presided in person" over her council sessions.[78] The degree of a queen's involvement in her administration could vary over the course of their queenship. Joanna L. Laynesmith, in her seminal study of fifteenth-century queens consort, argued that "there is no particular foundation for assuming that queens did not behave like lords or kings in taking active involvement with their councils."[79] Just as noblemen relied on their officials and councillors to oversee their estates, so the queen used her officials to administer her estates and act in her name.[80] During Catherine's twenty-four years as queen, ambassadors, tenants, and officials did not discount her interest in her own affairs, and nor should we.

As with any important personage, it is difficult to tell how closely Catherine inquired

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[75] Sometime after 1528, Catherine gave Margaret Cook a printed Book of Hours, an intimate present that was not part of the usual distribution of liveries or plate to the household. Eamon Duffy, *Marking the Hours: English People and Their Prayers, 1240-1570* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 24.

[76] Marjorie K. McIntosh, "Sir Anthony Cooke: Tudor Humanist, Educator, and Religious Reformer," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 119, no. 3 (June 1975): 242.

[77] For more on how Catherine's ladies could benefit from or exert influence at court, see: Harris, *English Aristocratic Women*, 227.

[78] Garrett Mattingly, *Catherine of Aragon* (New York: Random House, 1960), 168. I have not found a source that specifically corroborates this claim.

[79] Laynesmith, *Last Medieval Queens*, 232–233.

[80] For more on the nobility's use of council and officials on their estates, see: Carole Rawcliffe and Susan Flower, "English Noblemen and Their Advisers: Consultation and Collaboration in the Later Middle Ages," *Journal of British Studies* 25, no. 2 (April 1986): 157–177.

about the documents she signed, but given her education and reputation for intelligence, it is difficult to dismiss her close involvement in at least some estate business. Her remarks to Chapuys in 1533, which began this article, certainly indicate that she understood the importance of her estates, making it likely that she would have taken an interest in their administration. Moreover, Catherine was not averse to involving herself in the labour of monarchy. Before her marriage to Henry, she was an accredited Spanish ambassador to England. This was not merely a ceremonial position, as she maintained an active correspondence on diplomatic matters with her father. Many of the letters she sent to Spain were written in her own hand, painstakingly rendered in a difficult cipher.[81] When Catherine was named Queen Regent and Governess of the realm by Henry VIII in 1513, she threw herself wholeheartedly into the work of governance and the defence of the kingdom. She raised troops to defend against a Scottish invasion and reprimanded quarrelling churchmen, all while maintaining a loving and somewhat anxious correspondence with Henry in France.[82] Looking at her history of documented administrative activities reveals that Catherine had the experience, inclination, and education to be a very active queenly landlord indeed.

Although Catherine certainly had the work ethic to be a keen administrator, it is unlikely that she attended every session of her council, especially given the court's movements and her numerous other activities. Certainly, frequent confinement for pregnancies as well as a host of other duties could prevent a queen from attending her council sessions, but this would not always have been the case. After her final pregnancy in 1518 Catherine would have had thirteen years to oversee her estates before the divorce crisis isolated her from her administration. Moreover, because officials on Catherine's estates, such as her chancellor Sir Robert Poyntz or her receivers-general, were also members of her household and had access to her chambers, Catherine did not have to be at council sessions to be aware of their actions and voice her own wishes and opinions.

The clearest evidence showing Catherine's involvement in her estates can be found in the few surviving orders regarding estate matters that Catherine issued in her own name. In the warrants and letters from Catherine that concern her estates, the queen lent her personal touch to suits and cases that were routine business, suggesting that she may have been actively involved in estate governance on a detailed level. For example, in a warrant signed by the queen and issued under her signet, Catherine dealt sharply with the mayor and burgesses of Bridgewater.[83] Catherine claimed that officials in Bridgewater had been unlawfully taking tolls from the tenants of the queen's castle there, "whiche have been tolle free tyme oute of mynde."[84] Furthermore, the mayor and burgesses of Bridgewater had chosen officers "among yourself" within the liberty of the castle, despite the fact that the castle was not part of their jurisdiction. In defending her rights to the castle, Catherine ordered the Bridgewater town officials to cease their activities, or else give legal proof before her council that they had the authority to continue. The warrant itself is strongly worded, ending with a firm commitment to

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[81] *CSP Spanish,* 1:516, 527, 541.

[82] Henry Ellis, ed., *Original Letters, Illustrative of English History; Including Numerous Royal Letters; from Autographs in the British Museum, and One or Two Other Collections* (London, 1824), 1:82–84; M.A.E. Green, ed., *Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies of Great Britain, from the Commencement of the Twelfth Century to the Close of the Reign of Queen Mary* (London, 1846), 1:163–165; *LP,* 1.2: 2098, 2163.

[83] TNA, MS E 298/19. There is no indication of the date on the warrant.

[84] TNA, MS E 298/19.

see the matter through if the mayor and burgesses did not comply: "[j]ustifie your doinges whiche if ye do not we entende to attempt the lawe agaynst you for your mysedemeanors."[85] This warrant, dealing with an important but not unusual matter of legal business concerning the queen's rights, indicates that Catherine was actively involved in business concerning her estates.

Catherine was willing to protect and preserve the presentation rights that were attached to her lands, and she had the personnel and organization to pre-empt attempts to encroach upon her authority, even when it included church patronage. Catherine has a reputation as a loyal daughter of the church, but like any sixteenth-century landlord, she viewed the religious foundations associated with her lands as part of her property and responsibility. This extended to intervening in the internal administration of at least one of her dependent institutions, the wealthy college of Stoke-by-Clare in Suffolk. Sometime between 1521 and 1526, Catherine ordered her secretary and receiver-general, Griffith Richards, to confiscate all of the most important statutes and muniments from the college, including the founding bull from Pope John XXII (r. 1316–34) and charters from King Henry V. We know about Richards's activities because the canons informed their bishop about the removal during his visitation in 1526.[86] This confiscation was possibly linked to previous complaints by the canons that some of their members had been tampering with the original statute books–Catherine may have wanted to preserve the original statutes to prevent the canons from altering them.[87] The institution itself was clearly troubled, and both Catherine and Cardinal Wolsey, in his position of papal legate, seem to have attempted to reform it before it deteriorated completely.[88]

Catherine's motivations for intervening at Stoke and possibly even reforming the college are closely related to its potential as a source of queenly patronage. Over the years, at least two if not more of the positions at the college were held by officials who actually served the queen, and thus constituted a form of reward that she could distribute. Stoke was a small but wealthy religious institution, and it had traditionally been under the patronage of the queens of England. It was the richest of the Suffolk colleges, and over the years it had become a "country retreat for Cambridge dons."[89] Additionally, the college at Stoke was specifically associated with the Cambridge colleges of Queens' and St. John's, and it housed an impressive library bequeathed by Dean Ednam in 1517. It thus had links to foundations and causes already within Catherine's interests as a patron of learning.[90] Since 1497, the deanery of Stoke had been held by a royal almoner from either the king's or queen's households. Dr John Ednam had been almoner to Henry VII, and upon his death in 1517, Robert Bekinsall, Catherine's almoner and president of Queens' College, became dean. From 1525 to 1529 the position was held by Dr William Greene, who appears to have been a client of Wolsey, but his

[85] TNA, MS E 298/19. This wording could be simply a legal formula used in most disputes, but without similar letters or warrants from Catherine it is impossible to say how formulaic this letter is.
[86] A. Jessopp, ed., *Visitations of the Diocese of Norwich, 1492-1532* (Westminster, 1888), 227.
[87] This confiscation was possibly linked to previous complaints by the canons that some of their members had been tampering with the original statute books—Catherine may have wanted to preserve the original statutes to prevent the canons from altering them.
[88] Peter Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal: The Rise and Fall of Thomas Wolsey* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1990), 335.
[89] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County, 1500-1600* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 138.
[90] MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors*, 146.

successor, Dean Robert Shorton, had links to both Catherine's and Wolsey's patronage.[91] The college continued to be a source of patronage for Henry's other wives, including Catherine's immediate successor, Anne Boleyn, until the final dissolution of church property in Henry VIII's Reformation.[92]

The college of Stoke was not the only church institution that Catherine took a personal interest in as a royal patron and landowner. In 1515 the queen wrote to Anglesey Priory in Cambridgeshire, which was part of the lordship of Clare that also included the college at Stoke. The prior of Anglesey, John Barton, had resigned in early 1515, and the queen wrote to ensure that the canons would not elect a new prior until she had given them leave to do so. In writing to the canons, she reminded the brethren at Anglesey of their dependence on her and of their need for her support: "[n]ot failing thus do, as you intend to have us your good and gracious lady hereafter."[93] As with her attention to the Stoke affair, the queen was clearly aware of her own rights and responsibilities regarding her estates. Catherine's efforts to ensure that she oversaw the election of the new prior at Anglesey were part of a pattern of using churches within her lands as avenues of patronage.

By examining in detail the location of Catherine's estates and the connections formed by her household with those properties, we can see the significant patronage prospects that the queen's estates provided to her and her household. The management of these properties, moreover, created legal relationships between Catherine and her tenants that affirmed her authority as landlord. This gave her legitimate authority in her own right, without reference to her husband, both in practice as an active landlord and legally because of her status as *femme sole*. The connections formed between Catherine, her tenants and officials, provided an important point of contact between the queen and her subjects that, like many noble affinities during this period, would have provided a source of support and sense of allegiance during uncertain times.[94] Of course, Henry could interfere with Catherine's business if he wanted to, but most of the time, across many years and properties, estate officials owed their positions and influence to Catherine's patronage and authority, thus creating a queenly affinity connected to her estates and household.

When Henry VIII officially deprived Catherine of her estates in November 1533, she lost her last source of support, patronage, and legitimacy. This act was a culmination of Henry's personal campaign against Catherine during the divorce crisis. Since he had separated from Catherine in April 1531, she had experienced a gradual reduction in circumstances.[95] Forced to live in ever smaller and more remote royal manors, she became more isolated from the court and cut off from her administration and affinity. In April 1533 she was informed by a delegation that included the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk that she must renounce the title of queen and live in a private house. When she refused to comply, Lord Mountjoy was forced to tell her that her allowance and household would be severely reduced.[96] However, Catherine

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[91] "Colleges: Stoke by Clare," in *A History of the County of Suffolk: Volume 2*, ed. William Page (London: Victoria County History, 1975), 145–150.
[92] Page, "Colleges: Stoke by Clare," 145–150.
[93] Ellis, *Original Letters*, 1:207.
[94] Noblemen's councils and officials created connections in a similar fashion. See: Rawcliffe and Flower, "English Noblemen and Their Advisers," 176.
[95] *CSP Spanish,* 4:778, 786, 788.
[96] *CSP Spanish,* 4.2:1061.

and her officials continued to hold the deeds and indentures to her estates, indicating that a transfer of ownership and administration had not yet occurred. It was not until September 1533 that Catherine expressed her fears about losing her estates, and it was only in November that Cromwell confiscated council records and land deeds from her chancellor and receiver.[97] Finally, in December, her officers, including her lord chamberlain and chancellor, were dismissed, and her servants and ladies replaced with new people "from the North," according to imperial ambassador Chapuys.[98] For Henry, diminishing Catherine's estates and household was the final act in their divorce. For Catherine, it was a catastrophic loss of support and perhaps the first realization that her defiance would have an impact on the lives of more people than just herself and her daughter.

Catherine definitively lost control of her estates by March 1534, when her officials began making preparations for the unusual transfer of ownership to Anne Boleyn. Catherine's former receiver-general, Griffith Richards, drew up a memorandum of questions for the new queen regarding the status of Catherine's former tenants now that Anne's lands had been confirmed by an act of parliament.[99] Richards's memorandum implies that it was not until 1534 that Anne could begin administering her queenly estates, thus indicating that the estates were, at least nominally, still under Catherine's control up until that point. Transferring estates to a new queen had always been a complex process, although the crown had not dealt with the annulment of a royal marriage since the thirteenth century.[100] At the same time that Anne gained possession of her estates, Henry issued Catherine a jointure under her new (and old) title of dowager princess of Wales.[101] If she was truly 'merely' the dowager princess of Wales, Catherine should have been allowed to administer her Welsh properties as an independent royal widow. However, she was not allowed to do so or to receive the money from them.[102] Henry was certainly punishing Catherine for refusing to acquiesce to her new status as princess dowager, but he was also preventing her from using her Welsh estates to distribute rewards and patronage and thus renew ties to her affinity. In doing so, Henry treated Catherine less as the 'royal widow' he claimed that she was and more like a recalcitrant wife.[103] Separated from Henry, isolated and denied access to her Welsh estates, Catherine's situation bore a striking resemblance to other wives who had been put aside in favour of mistresses.[104]

Before the loss of her estates in 1533, there was the potential for Catherine's affinity to

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[97] *LP,* 6:1445.
[98] *LP,* 6:1558.
[99] *LP,* 6:1188. Eric Ives states that the document has been misdated and was drawn up in March 1534. Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 215n74.
[100] In 1200 King John had his marriage to Isabella of Gloucester annulled on the grounds of consanguinity so he could marry Isabella of Angoulême. Queens could outlive their husbands and continue to hold their estates as their dower properties. In those circumstances, the new queen was usually given a different set of estates. Crawford, "King's Burden?," 41. The wholesale transfer of properties between Catherine and Anne is more akin to the changes of regime and queens during the Wars of the Roses than a regular act of succession.
[101] *Statutes of the Realm*, 3: 25 Hen VIII c.28.
[102] *LP,* 7: 1294, p.496.
[103] Timothy G. Elston, "Widow Princess or Neglected Queen? Catherine of Aragon, Henry VIII and English Public Opinion 1533-1536," in *Queens and Power in Medieval and Early Modern England*, ed. Carole Levin and Robert O. Bucholz (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009), 19.
[104] Barbara J. Harris, "Marriage Sixteenth-Century Style: Elizabeth Stafford and the Third Duke of Norfolk," *Journal of Social History* 15 (February 1981): 375–276.

become a source of military support for the embattled queen, and this may explain why Henry was anxious to keep her isolated from her affinity and estates. Certainly, Chapuys believed that if Catherine raised her standard against the king she would find support throughout the countryside.[105] Henry and Cromwell certainly seemed concerned that Catherine might do such a thing, perhaps nervously recalling the martial exploits of Catherine's mother, Isabel of Castile.[106] However, Catherine never called upon her affinity to oppose the king directly. Even at the urging of Chapuys, she refused to consider any action that might result in war or violence on behalf of her and her daughter's cause.[107] This attitude has caused some historians to accuse Catherine of being passive, yet her responses to Henry's impositions clearly show that she was acting according to the dictates of her conscience and her own sense of duty as a wife.[108] She consistently put her faith in God and the pope to save her marriage, and this never wavered, much to the annoyance of her husband.[109] Catherine's daughter Mary appeared to have learned from her mother's fate and did not hesitate to call upon on her own affinity to secure the crown in 1553.[110]

It is likely that any attempted coup in 1533 would have failed, in part because the actions of those members of Catherine's affinity who, as outlined above, were deeply connected to the queen through service and office during and after the divorce yield inconclusive verdicts on their loyalties. Their lives after 1533 are varied and prevent the formation of any firm conclusions on the cohesiveness of her affinity. Quite a few of Catherine's officials had served her for many years, and many seem to have retired from court life after 1533, perhaps as a graceful way to avoid questions surrounding their loyalty. A few continued to serve the new queen with no trouble, and most of her tenants were confirmed in their leases.[111] Griffith Richards, Catherine's receiver-general who had served her since 1509, was responsible for transitioning much of Catherine's administration over to Anne Boleyn in 1534.[112] However, he did not serve his new mistress long, because by 1535 he had been replaced as receiver-general by George Tailor.[113] Others remained loyal to Catherine and later found places in the household of her daughter Princess Mary. Margaret Cook, for example, served in Princess Mary's household and remained a Catholic for the rest of her life.[114]

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105 *CSP Spanish,* 4.2:1058 (compare with 5.1:109).
106 *CSP Spanish,* 5.1:142.
107 *CSP Spanish,* 4.2:1063; Mattingly, *Catherine of Aragon*, 344–345; G.W. Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 81–82.
108 Sharon L. Jansen, *The Monstrous Regiment of Women: Female Rulers in Early Modern Europe* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 120. For Catherine's defiance, see for example her response to the Duke of Suffolk: *LP*, 6:1541. Philippa Woodcock has argued that Catherine used her reduced circumstances and poverty as a political tool in her struggle against Henry. See: Philippa Woodcock "Queenly Poverty: The Justified Impoverishment of Elizabeth Woodville and Katherine of Aragon," in *Envisioning Poverty*, ed. William Dow (Paris: Université Paris Est, 2016), https://lisaa.u-pem.fr/fileadmin/Fichiers/LISAA/LISAA_editeur/Memoire_et_territoire/La_Pauvrete/4_Woodcock.pdf
109 Bernard, *King's Reformation*, 84–85.
110 Anna Whitelock and Diarmaid Macculloch, "Princess Mary's Household and the Succession Crisis, July 1553," *The Historical Journal* 50, no. 2 (June 2007): 265–287; McIntosh, *From Heads of Household to Heads of State*, chap. 4.
111 Ives, *Anne Boleyn*, 215.
112 *LP,* 6:1188, 1189; 7:352.
113 *LP,* 9:156. Richards may have retired from court life after 1535, although he received an annuity from the king in 1541. See: *LP*, 16:745.
114 McIntosh, "The Cookes of Gidea Hall," 134.

Catherine's lord chamberlain, Lord Mountjoy, gave voice to the difficult position many of her officials and servants must have found themselves in as the divorce crisis continued. Mountjoy was one of the delegation in April 1533 who initially informed Catherine that she was no longer queen. Although he continued to carry out Henry's wishes, Mountjoy was conflicted about his divided loyalties between his mistress and his king. A surprisingly frank letter to Cromwell reveals that Mountjoy believed that the queen's servants, despite their loyalty to Catherine, "bere their trewe hertes service and allegyaunce to the Kynges Grace."[115] Mountjoy had clearly tired of acting as the king's messenger and go-between, baldly stating that he would rather serve the king in any other way, however dangerous it might be, than continue to 'meddle' in this affair. Mountjoy requested that he be relieved of his position and seems to have retired from court.[116] His daughter Gertrude Courtenay, marchioness of Exeter, remained an opponent of Anne Boleyn and a loyal supporter of Princess Mary.[117]

Other officials walked a fine line between serving their mistress and preserving their loyalty to the king. John Poyntz, one of Catherine's most connected receivers and MP for her borough of Devizes, supported the queen in parliament and was aligned with the opposition to Anne. His support for Catherine did not prevent him from acquiring monastic lands, and he seems to have accepted the religious and political status quo after 1533.[118] After the divorce, Poyntz continued to expand his influence in Gloucestershire and fought for Henry in the 1544 French campaign.[119] He died in 1544, possibly while serving the king in France.

In addition to providing positions and rewards for members of her affinity, Catherine's estates provided her with the authority and legitimacy that came from being a landowner in the sixteenth century, which contributed to her public image as Henry's legitimate wife. Historians have long commented on Catherine's popularity and visibility as queen, and one of the ways she could assert her personal authority was through her estates.[120] There is no doubt that a substantial number of Catherine's subjects regarded her as Henry's true queen, despite both her foreignness and her failure to provide an heir. Chronicler Edward Hall, who was emphatically in favor of the king's arguments against his first marriage, had to acknowledge that the divorce caused much murmuring and discontent among the people.[121] This is in addition to the (potentially biased) reports of the imperial ambassador, which support Hall's claims that Catherine continued to be popular. The ambassador wrote that Henry and Anne faced hostile crowds when they went out hunting; conversely, Catherine was greeted by

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115 *State Papers: Published Under the Authority of His Majesty's Commission, King Henry the Eighth* (London, 1830), 1:409.
116 *State Papers*, 1:409.
117 James P. Carley, "Blount, William, fourth Baron Mountjoy (*c.* 1478–1534)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/2702.
118 Baker, "Poyntz, John."
119 Hawkyard, "Poyntz, Sir Robert."
120 Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal*, 578; Sharon L. Jansen, *Dangerous Talk and Strange Behavior: Women and Popular Resistance to the Reforms of Henry VIII* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 84–85; Judith M. Richards, "Public Identity and Public Memory: Case Studies of Two Tudor Women," in *Women, Identities and Communities in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Susan Broomhall and Stephanie Tarbin (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 203, 207–208; and Bernard, *King's Reformation*, 212.
121 Edward Hall, *Hall's Chronicle; Containing the History of England, during the Reign of Henry the Fourth, and the Succeeding Monarchs, to the End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth, in Which Are Particularly Described the Manners and Customs of Those Periods.* (London, 1809), 754, 759, 782, 796.

supportive throngs when she was forced to move from Ampthill to Buckden in 1533.[122] The reaction of the countryside could be indirectly tied to Catherine's activities as a landlord. As we have seen, Catherine held estates in counties near the traditional routes of the Tudor court, and she had probably visited her manors or interacted with her officials and tenants during the constant travelling of the royal court.[123] Catherine also made several pilgrimages to the shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham over the course of her queenship, following different routes thorough East Anglia, some of which passed through areas where she held manors.[124] At least some of her tenants would have seen at first hand the queen as a local landholder and lord of the manor. Catherine's estates and affinity, which for decades had given her opportunities to publicly and independently exercise her authority as royal landowner and queen, were an important component in maintaining her legitimacy in the face of Henry's opposition.

Until the eventual and wholesale loss of her estates in 1533 and 1534, Catherine's lands unified her household servants, officials, administrators, and tenants under an affinity that had a vested interest in supporting the queen. The seemingly minor acts of defiance by Catherine's council officers and household servitors–for example, their refusal to call her princess dowager and to take a new oath to her as princess dowager–indicate a strong sense of loyalty and corporate identity.[125] These are probably only a few of the instances of sustained support that Catherine received from her affinity during the crisis. The loss of Catherine's estates, her house arrest and her isolation from court seems to have broken the coherence of her supporters, although many continued to support her daughter Mary.

Ultimately, the divorce crisis demonstrates that the queen's lands and patronage were just as vulnerable to the king's predations, if not more so, as the estates of the great Tudor magnates. Like the patrimony of the Howards, Poles or Staffords, Catherine's estates and her officers were easy prey once the king had decided they were no longer rightfully hers. Despite this vulnerability, Catherine's estates were an important resource, and becoming a landowner allowed her to build up a long-standing affinity of officers, tenants and household servants who looked on Catherine not just as their queen, but also as their lord. Moreover, if Henry had died while Catherine was still queen, then her affinity would have been crucial in supporting her underage daughter's accession, just as the adult Mary's affinity was crucial to her eventual accession in 1553. It is suggestive that in 1553 Mary found support in areas of the kingdom—East Anglia and the Thames Valley—where her mother had been a landholder for decades, and where she had been most active and visible as a queen, travelling to royal estates and on pilgrimage.[126] Catherine's honorable reputation as a legitimate queen appears to have survived through oral culture and popular memory, no doubt in part because of her longevity as queen

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[122] *CSP Spanish,* 4.2:980, 1107.

[123] Neil Samman, "The Progresses of Henry VIII, 1509-1529," in *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety*, ed. Diarmaid MacCulloch (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 61–64.

[124] TNA, MS SP 1/15, fol. 33; *LP,* 2.2:3018; Beer, "Practices and Performances of Queenship," 278.

[125] *LP, 6*:1252, 1253. Her household reasoned that because they had already sworn an oath to her as queen, they would be forsworn if they swore a new one to her as princess dowager. Jonathan Gray has speculated that the 1534 Oath of Succession was meant to nullify previous oaths of loyalty that conflicted with royal authority, specifically because of the problems posed by Catherine's household in 1533. Jonathan Gray, *Oaths and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 111.

[126] Whitelock and Macculloch, "Princess Mary's Household and the Succession Crisis, July 1553," 280, 283–284.

and the scandal of Henry's treatment of her in the last years of her life.[127] For her affinity, the memory of Catherine's legitimacy and authority as queen would have been concretely bound to her authority as a landholder, both of which may have been an unacknowledged source of support for her daughter's bid for the throne in 1553.

[127] Richards, "Public Identity and Public Memory," 207–208.