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Why Chapuys Brought a Fool**

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Nadia T. van Pelt

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## Katherine of Aragon's Deathbed: Why Chapuys Brought a Fool

*This essay examines the presence of a fool in the retinue of Imperial Ambassador Eustace Chapuys at Katherine of Aragon's deathbed. Did this fool primarily bring comic relief or was he, as Henry VIII's servants suspected, an intelligencer or spy? Seeking to revisit current understandings of what court fools were expected to be able to do or facilitate, I observe that Chapuys used his fool to underline his own role as a representative of the emperor, and to signal that despite the king's beliefs that he was now divorced, Katherine's legal status had not changed in the eyes of Catholic Europe.*

On 9 January 1536 Imperial Ambassador Eustace Chapuys informed the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V that his aunt, Katherine of Aragon (1485–1536), had passed away 'on Friday, the day after Epiphany'.<sup>1</sup> The dispatch was written with the retrospective knowledge of the sickbed turning out to be a deathbed, and relates Chapuys's visit to Kimbolton Castle, and his final moments in Katherine's company, with a regretful undertone of his having left her side too soon:

perceiving that the Queen began little by little to recover her sleep and to get rest, — that her stomach retained food, and that she was evidently getting much better, — she herself was of opinion, as well as her physician, who now considered her out of danger, that I ought at once to return home, not only in order not to abuse the permission granted to me by the King, but also to ask for a better residence for her, as promised at my departure from London. I took, therefore, leave of the Queen on Tuesday evening; she being then, to all appearance, happy and contented, so much so that on the very evening of my departure I saw her smile two or three times, and half an hour after I had left she would still joke with one of my suite, rather inclined to a jest, who had casually remained behind.<sup>2</sup>

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The English translation of Chapuys's letter in the *Calendar of State Papers: Spain*, is rather vague in its description of the person exchanging jokes with Katherine of Aragon. The *Calendar's* editor, Pascual de Gayangos, however, offers a footnote in which he quotes directly from the original manuscript to show that Chapuys described this person as 'ung de mes gens, que fait du playsant'.<sup>3</sup> 'Playsant' was another word for 'fool', and, as Tatjana Silec reminds the reader, this word for fool can be understood as a synonym for those referred to, in French, as *artificielle* or, in English, 'counterfeit fools'.<sup>4</sup> Literally then, Chapuys referred to 'one of his people, who *played* the fool' (emphasis mine). In the footnote, de Gayangos embellishes the translation a little by noting that Chapuys brought along in his retinue 'a servant ... who played or attempted to play the part of a professional jester or fool'.<sup>5</sup> His choice of words denotes the difficulty of determining what kind of fool Chapuys refers to; the problem with the word 'professional' is that it assumes a level of permanence that the original French does not stipulate: after all, one could take on the role of *artificielle* or *plaisant*, temporarily or on a particular occasion, without necessarily having to be a 'professional jester'. By suggesting that the fool 'played or attempted to play the part', de Gayangos sought to nuance this problem, leaving the specifics of the foolery and its performer open to interpretation.

The presence of a fool at Katherine's deathbed was not unusual. Fools and jesters were a regular sight at the Tudor court, and beyond that, used to bring cheer and solace to the royal and noble sick across Europe. Within the context of this widely spread custom, it makes sense that legends could arise such as King Martin of Aragon (d. 1410) laughing himself to death when his jester Borra made rather too successful a joke at his sickbed.<sup>6</sup> While the general circumstances of Katherine of Aragon's final hours have been addressed in multiple studies, the significance of the fool in attendance has remarkably invited relatively little attention.<sup>7</sup> This is all the more surprising because the question of Chapuys's fool and the kind of entertainment he provided at Katherine of Aragon's deathbed sits at the heart of contemporary attitudes to fooling and what we know — or think we know — about court and household fools. It evokes questions regarding the expectations people had of (different type of) fools; what fools were assumed to be capable of; the kind of amusements or forms of entertainment they were expected to bring; the licence — social or political — that fools enjoyed to express themselves; but also how they were perceived to be related to their patrons, as demonstrated by fools' reception in their patrons' absence. Could a fool 'stand in' for a patron or use their comic license to make political or otherwise perilous statements on their patron's behalf? This paper places Chapuys's final moments with Katherine

in the context of fool-keeping at the Tudor and Spanish courts, and Katherine's patronage of entertainers. I also view Chapuys's visit in January 1536 in relation to an earlier attempted visit in July 1534, described in the Spanish *Chronicle of King Henry VIII*, for which Chapuys's permission had been revoked last-minute. The journey was continued by a large part of his retinue, including a fool.<sup>8</sup> That the English courtiers suspected this fool to function as an intelligencer gathering information for the ambassador or delivering messages to Katherine of Aragon can be understood in the context of royal fools and entertainers, when travelling, gathering information to further their royal masters' interests or to advance their own situations of interests. Opportunities for this type of intelligencing can be found throughout the *Records of Early English Drama (REED)*, for example, when Henry VIII's (1491–1547) jester appeared in Ludlow in 1546–47.<sup>9</sup> Edward Tudor's (1537–53) fool was recorded to have been in Southampton in 1550–51,<sup>10</sup> and in Gloucester in 1552–53 money was 'likewise gevyn in reward to a geister of the kynges maiesties & an other Commyng with hym by the Commaundement of maister maire'.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, a jester in the service of Queen Mary (1516–58) visited Lydd in 1554–55,<sup>12</sup> and New Romney in 1555–56.<sup>13</sup> One or more of her jesters, as well as her husband's, were present in Canterbury in 1554–55 ('the kyng & the quenys Iesters'),<sup>14</sup> and also in Faversham in the same year.<sup>15</sup> In 1562, 'lockye the quenys mayiesties Iester' was seen (and rewarded) in Newcastle.<sup>16</sup> Royal servants, including fools and jesters, could keep their eyes and ears open to news of different sorts; from this follows that, given the right jester, royals, courtiers, and ambassadors clearly benefitted from bringing their entertainers with them, obvious comic value aside.

The final part of this article reflects on the symbolic value of fools. I argue that aside from bringing fun, linguistic and political comfort, and companionship for the dying Katherine, the fool's presence may have expressed a symbolic value for Chapuys, who used his presence to assert Katherine's regal status as unchanged in the view of the Roman Catholic church, the emperor, and Catholic Europe, by conducting matters in a royal way. I suggest that the ambassador used his fool to comment on Katherine's treatment by king and court publicly through performance earlier, in 1534, and asserted Katherine's status by giving her the solace of a figure whom a queen would be expected to have in her retinue, or to whose entertainment she might be treated in the context of diplomatic visits between monarchs and their representatives.

I will note from the outset that the patronage of fools and jesters by members of aristocratic and royal households in Tudor England was extensive, as is evidenced by numerous household and account books, such as those found in *REED*. Henry

VII (1457–1509) was entertained by, among others, a ‘Thomas Blackall the Kinges foule’,<sup>17</sup> and by a ‘Mr. Martyn the King’s fool’, and the latter is listed as having been present at his funeral as one of the ‘grooms’.<sup>18</sup> Henry’s queen, Elizabeth of York (1466–1503), spent ‘two shillings a month’ on her own fool, William, for ‘his board’,<sup>19</sup> and also the royal children had access to entertainment and jests. Young Henry VIII, whilst still the duke of York in 1502, already had his own fool, and his mother’s privy purse expenses provide us with the fool’s amusing name, ‘John Goose’, and mention that he was rewarded for ‘bringing a Carppe to the Quene’.<sup>20</sup> A female fool called ‘Jane’ was subsequently patronized by Henry VIII’s daughter when still the Princess Mary, whose privy purse expenses show that she paid for ‘Jane the foole for the tyme of hir seeknes’.<sup>21</sup> Jane was also patronized by queens Katherine Parr and Anne Boleyn.<sup>22</sup> For example, Katherine Parr (1512–48) treated Jane to diverse poultry: ‘3 geese for Jane Foole’ for which she paid 16d, as well as to ‘a hen for Jane Foole’ costing 6d.<sup>23</sup> The queen’s reckoning of 1536 indicates that Anne Boleyn — in what were to be the final months of her life — bought ‘25 yds. of cadace fringe, morrey color, delivered to Skutte, her tailor, for a gown for her Grace’s woman fool, and a green satin cap for her’.<sup>24</sup> Anne’s fool also features in a negative account of her coronation, sometimes attributed to Chapuys.<sup>25</sup> According to this account, the fool, ‘seeing the little honor they showed to her [Anne], cried out, “I think you have all scurvy heads, and dare not uncover”’.<sup>26</sup> The *Letters and Papers* excerpt of this account notes that the fool ‘has been to Jerusalem and speaks several languages’.<sup>27</sup> While this story is an excerpt from a ‘a catalogue of papers at Brussels, now lost’ that cannot be verified, the account is distinctly problematic. If the aim of the report had been to suggest that Anne was not generally respected, and the fool was cast in the role of her defender, why would its writer then suggest that the fool had not been foolish but learned and well-travelled? Would the author of the report not then allude to the idea that it was indeed wise to express agitation against those London citizens who were disrespectful of Anne? And what to make of the reference to ‘Jerusalem’, which implies piety and religious pilgrimage to a place at the root of Christianity, rather than for example, Rome, which in the context of Anne’s coronation would not be an innocent reference to make. The description of the fool sits ambiguously in an otherwise negative account of Anne, perhaps in itself exemplary of fools’ symbolic ambiguity and their use in the expression of political messages, as well as of the range of abilities ascribed to and expected of fools by contemporaries.

Descriptions of fools in *REED* do not always clarify whether the entertainers under patronage were professional, ‘artificial’ fools of the ‘buffoon’-variety, or ‘natural fools’ who would now be considered persons with a learning disability or

mental impairment.<sup>28</sup> In some cases we can turn to account books for clues, but these often evoke just as many questions as they are able to answer. For example, the elaborate Newcastle chamberlains' accounts, at times, but not consistently, refer to one Thomas Dodds as a 'naturall foole', and to further confusion, the other fools mentioned along with him do not receive this nomenclature although they appear to have been treated similarly.<sup>29</sup>

Sometimes an indication of natural foolery is given by fools having been given a 'keeper', such as we find in the records of the wardrobe preparation for the coronation of Henry VIII in 1509, listing the presence of 'Phyppe, keeper of Merten the King's fool'.<sup>30</sup> Unfortunately, we cannot always distinguish between a fool's 'keeper' or 'servant', as seen in the case of John Emyson, who is listed in Henry's privy purse expenses as 'sexton's man',<sup>31</sup> 'Emyson that Attends upon Sexton',<sup>32</sup> but also 'Emyson Sextons s'vnt'.<sup>33</sup> Sexton's reputation for having been a 'natural' fool is suggested by an account attributed to George Cavendish. According to this anecdote, 'Patch' was a gift from Cardinal Wolsey, who, in an attempt to return to the king's favour, had asked Henry Norris: 'But if ye would at this my request present the king with this poor Fool, I trust his highness would accept him well, for surely for a nobleman's pleasure he is worth a thousand pounds'.<sup>34</sup> One could inherit the *patronage* of a professional fool or jester, but when a fool was given as a present, their position was likened to a cherished pet rather than a salaried entertainer.

Although many fools kept under patronage in England would likely have been of the 'natural' variety, their personal skill set varied greatly.<sup>35</sup> Robert Armin's *Foole vpon Foole, or Six Sortes of Sottes* (printed 1600) labels the fools in his book 'a flat foole, a leane foole, a merry foole, a fatt foole, a cleane foole' and 'a verry foole'.<sup>36</sup> Armin's book was intended as a work of comedy, designed first and foremost to entertain, and his categorization itself is compromised by the fact that he clearly tried to get a rhyme for 'merry' and so ended up with 'very', which has no real categorizing force at all. Yet Armin's attempt to categorize fools according to their 'physical characteristics' provides valuable insight into the kind of 'humour and entertainment' that they would have been expected to provide.<sup>37</sup> Sarah Carpenter furthermore emphasizes that a 'fascination with their features' as well as 'undignified physical mishaps' were recurring sources of entertainment.<sup>38</sup> For example, the 'cleane fool' Jack Miller loses most of his facial hair, including his eyebrows, when he sticks his head in the oven to help himself to pies, to the great hilarity of those watching him who found amusement in Miller's obvious discomfort and humiliation.<sup>39</sup> Where Miller invited laughter at his own expense, the 'natural' fool Will Somer (d. 1560), who reputedly had a great influence over

the king's state of mind,<sup>40</sup> appears to have favoured reflecting on the oddities of others to entertain his master. Somer's ability to wittily play with words might make him sound more like a very clever artificial fool masquerading as a natural one, rather than a true 'innocent', thus perhaps showing how difficult it is to categorize fools with any degree of certainty. To exemplify this, we might look at a bon mot attributed to Somer by Thomas Wilson in *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553) in relation to the king's ever-diminishing funds. Somer purportedly told Henry: 'you haue so many Frauditours, so many Conueighers, and so many Deceuiers to get up your money, that they get all to themselues', cleverly punning on 'Auditours, Surueighours, and Receiuers'.<sup>41</sup> Somer's reflection on the greedy behaviour of the courtiers could inspire the king's great merriment, not only because of the clever use of words, but also because at a court where courtiers and petitioners constantly surrounded the king, several of those seeking to ask for favours or advancement would have stood in attendance with burning ears and a request frozen in their throats.

The kind of humour that fools such as Somer could offer was brought about by a special license to speak, which, in the context of the court, was reserved to fools because of their honesty. Desiderius Erasmus in *The Praise of Folly* (printed 1511) explains that 'the princes of the earth' find themselves surrounded by courtiers who would tell a ruler what they *want* to hear rather than what they *need* to hear, and that this is further complicated by some rulers being unaccepting of the truth when offered to them by their councillors.<sup>42</sup> He continues: 'And yet a remarkable thing happens in the experience of my fools: from them not only true things, but even sharp reproaches, will be listened to; so that a statement which, if it came from a wise man's mouth, might be a capital offense, coming from a fool gives rise to incredible delight'.<sup>43</sup>

'Feigned' or 'artificial' fools or jesters employed strategies to evoke laughter similar to those that came 'naturally' to 'innocent' fools. Yet their buffoonery and the services provided to their prince or the nobles they served, were complex, as these fools were expected to provide humour and wisdom, but at the same time, did not have the same license to act as those protected by the suggestion of innocence or limited understanding. The antics of the Spanish buffoon Antoni Tallander, nicknamed 'Mossen Borra', provide insight into this careful balance. Tallander, (to whom I briefly referred to above as the royal jester who was allegedly held responsible for killing King Martin of Aragon with his wit)<sup>44</sup> continued his position at the court of Ferdinand of Antequera, king of Aragon (ca 1379–1416). Tallander's career as a comical entertainer aside, he was also, however, 'a respected grammarian and ambassador'; a man with scholarly qualities.<sup>45</sup> Due to his

reputation for learning, Tallander could hardly be seen to be overtly counselling the king, although he could use his wits to get across a point by causing laughter and self-reflection. A jester of this sort could be seen to resemble a 'lord of misrule' or a 'master of revels': a deviser as well as an actor or participant in the entertainments, and someone who acts the part of the 'natural' fool, while generally known as an artificial one. Alvar García de Santa María recorded an example of Tallander's foolery at the coronation banquet in honour of Ferdinand's queen consort, Eleonor Countess of Albuquerque (1374–1435), performed simultaneously with a representation of Death using a clever mechanical device that would have been the pinnacle of technology available to the court entertainers at that moment:

The jester was in the hall where the Queen was eating, and when Death came on the cloud ... as he had done for the King as we have said. [The jester] showed great fear on seeing Death and shouted loudly at it not to come near him. Then the Duke of Gandía sent word to the King, who was at the window watching the Queen dine, that when Death descended and the jester began to shout, he [the Duke] would take him underneath and tell Death to throw him a rope and pull the jester up to him. And this was done. When Death came out on his cloud before the table, Mossen Borra started to shout, and the Duke carried him underneath Death who threw down a rope which they tied to the body of the said Borra, and Death wound him up. Here you would have marvelled at the things Mossen Borra did and at his wailing and at the great fear which seized him, and, whilst being pulled up, he wet himself into his underclothes, and the urine ran on to the heads of those who were below. He was quite convinced he was being carried off to Hell. The King and those who watched were greatly amused.<sup>46</sup>

At first sight, the record shows Tallander's humiliating display of bodily functions to be a source of humour, and the jester appears to be tricked into a situation in which the spectators could laugh at their own knowing and at the fool's unknowing, and the latter's falling into a trap set out for him, reminiscent of the hilarity evoked by the likes of poor Jack Miller and other 'natural' fools in similar plights. Yet, as Lenke Kovács explains, the jester's display of fear does not have to be interpreted as genuine, but could in fact be seen as the action of a 'wise fool', seeking to alleviate the audiences' potential shock and horror at seeing a representation of death. Kovács writes: '[the jester] portrays people's fears so graphically that he seems to hold up a mirror in which the spectators can recognize the foolishness and uselessness of their resistance towards Death'.<sup>47</sup> Tallander's memento mori lesson to the audience then, was distributed in such a way that it was not only



made palatable, but even side-splittingly funny. Although we might wonder if those whose coiffures had been ruined had laughed quite as much as the king and the duke of Gandía.

In the context of these different traditions and types of foolery, then, we can better understand the significance of the fool at Katherine of Aragon's deathbed. Ambassador Chapuys must have been confident that the fool he brought with him was either so manifestly 'innocent' or actually so sophisticated that he would not give offence to someone in Katherine's plight. They might be trusted either to act in ways which were refreshingly devoid of formality and protocol, or could be trusted to speak the truth with decorum and always with the good of the person in mind, so that solace was brought to Katherine's sickbed. But Chapuys had other agendas apart from bringing a welcome distraction to the dying. In order to reconstruct his political goals for bringing the fool, we will first turn to Katherine's enjoyment and patronage of entertainments in her earlier years as Spanish Infanta, princess of Wales, and queen.

The *Cuentas* [account books] of Queen Isabella of Castile (1451–1504), kept by Gonzalo de Baeza, offer a treasure trove of information about the different entertainments at the Spanish court of the *Reyes Católicos*.<sup>48</sup> References to *trompetas* [trumpeters], an *atabalero* [kettle drum player], and *menestriles altos* [minstrels], some of these foreign artists, such as the Portuguese *bayladores* [dancers] who received payment in 1492,<sup>49</sup> give the impression of a court in which cultural expression was highly valued. Isabella also kept *locas* [fools] at her court. In 1491, alongside charity to provide food for the poor, a payment to a 'Teresa la Loca' is noted in the *Cuentas*.<sup>50</sup> More prominent in the account books is one 'Maria, la Loca', who is listed as a *moça de camera*, a non-noble servant in the queen's household. Although Maria is not consistently singled out, her nickname, 'La Loca', is the name by which she is known in de Baeza's *Cuentas*.<sup>51</sup> An account from 1501 refers to a specific outfit to be paid for to attire 'the maids *and* the Fool, and a girl and a boy that were in the retinue of your Highness with Violante de Albion'<sup>52</sup> (emphasis mine). Mentioning 'La Loca' separately from the other maids suggests that Maria may have had a special position: both part of the inner circle of the queen's trusted servants, as well as a special figure among them. A further indication of her social position can be found in the account recording Maria's being given '*pañó verde*' [green cloth or wool] as well as yellow fabric, together perhaps suggestive of a traditional fool's or entertainer's costume.<sup>53</sup> Green cloth of this sort had in 1484 been ordered for a green skirt for 'Juanica, *esclaua*' [slave], alongside '*pañó morado*' [cloth or wool in dull purple] and other new wardrobe items, totalling 2,648 maravedís.<sup>54</sup> Green fabric totalling 1,000 maravedís was

also bought for two slaves by the names of Maria and Ynes in 1492.<sup>55</sup> De Baeza's accounts do not tell whether this last Maria was the Maria who converted to Christianity in 1499,<sup>56</sup> nor if Ynes were the same as the 'Ynes, esclava' who in June 1504 was given 8,000 maravedís to buy a bed and other necessities.<sup>57</sup> This considerable payment indicates Ynes's importance to someone in the royal household, but if this was because she was a companion with a special status or because of other qualities, is uncertain.

Before sending their daughter, the princess of Wales, off to England to marry Prince Arthur (1486–1502), Ferdinand and Isabella bargained with Henry VII about the size of Katherine's household and gave instructions to their ambassador, González de Puebla, to see to it that her attendants would obtain their salaries.<sup>58</sup> In an earlier dispatch the royal couple had already told de Puebla, that 'It also seems good to us that the Princess should take the majority of them with her, and the remainder she may send for afterwards as the King of England may wish'.<sup>59</sup> The list with attendants to remain with the princess in England ranges from the highest in rank, Doña Elvira Manuel, the 'first lady of honour and first lady of the bedchamber' to the laundress, and her male staff ranged from the major domo to the lowly sweeper, and the two squires who looked after 'Doña Elvira and the ladies'.<sup>60</sup> The list names many of the functionaries, but also refers to individuals who are not named, such as the 'two slaves to attend on the maids of honour', and the 'servants in the rooms of the Princess'.<sup>61</sup>

Theresa Earenfight notes that Katherine kept 'a female dwarf who was first part of infanta María's court at Lisbon, then came to Catalina's court in Spain, and moved with her to England where she was known as the *Spanish fool*'.<sup>62</sup> Indeed, evidence from *La Casa de Isabel la Católica* — the overview of offices of the queen's royal household — shows a payment made to a porter by the name of Francisco Muñoz, who in 1504 received a portion of an annual salary of 4,000 maravedís '*para mantenimiento de la enana*' ['for keeping the female dwarf'] in the household of '*la Princesa de Galez*'.<sup>63</sup> The *Casa* records also show that same Muñoz went to Portugal in the 1490s, presumably with '*la enana quel tiene en su casa*'.<sup>64</sup> The use of '*su*' here may at first glance suggest that the '*enana*' lived at the porter's house (*his* house). This makes the comparison of the keeper of the '*enana*' to the keeper of the fool at the Tudor court an interesting one, especially in the discussion whether keepers of fools were servants or caretakers. After all, this suggests that the Spanish office of looking after the '*enana*' would have been quite practical: housing and, supposedly, feeding the '*enana*'. The rest of the entry, however, uses '*su*' to refer to '*la Reyna, nuestra Señora*' ['the queen, our lady'],<sup>65</sup> so that the word should here be understood as the second person singular form

'your', as the account keeper addressed the queen in writing. This interpretation significantly changes the meaning of the account and the housing arrangements of the '*enana*' who would then have lived at court in the royal household. In any case, the '*mantenimiento de la enana*' was a formal office; that the porter in the household were to be granted this job is unlikely to have been a coincidence, suggesting an important aspect of his task was protecting the '*enana*'. She was after all a woman in a court context in which the '*damas*' were also fiercely guarded by the '*guarda damas*' who controlled access to the ladies.

Unfortunately, the records do not provide the '*enana*'s name, so that when looking for her presence in the instructions given to de Puebla we can only guess whether she was one of the 'servants' or 'slaves', or one of the ladies addressed with the honorary 'doña', here perhaps used as a comic nickname. Given the position of intimacy of the *loca* and female slaves in the inner circle of Isabella's household, it seems likely that also Katherine's 'dwarf' was a highly valued companion, which may have merited her being one of the princess's retinue in the first cohort. When mooring at Plymouth Harbour in October 1501, the princess of Wales entered her new country followed by a train that reflected her royal blood, her religious devotion, the pomp and splendour that was to underline the wealth of her family, and the traditions of her country. The presence of the female slaves reminded spectators watching Katherine's arrival of the capitulation of Islamic Granada at the hands of Katherine's parents, the *Reyes Católicos*, and thus of the strength and power of the military force supporting the young princess.

Katherine and Arthur's wedding comprised a many-day stretch of celebrations, and Garrett Mattingly observed that as part of these festivities, 'Catherine contributed the antics of the Spanish fool who performed on a high platform grotesquely dexterous feats of tumbling and balancing which kept the onlookers gasping with alternate apprehension and laughter'.<sup>66</sup> Mattingly did not specify the source for this claim in a footnote; instead, he generally noted that he had turned to John Leland's *Collectanea*, which records the festivities surrounding the wedding of the young Tudor prince and the new princess of Wales. It appears that Mattingly was rather free with his interpretation, however, as Leland only writes: 'Upon the Frame and Table ascended and went up a Spanyard, the which shewed there many woondrous and delicious Points of Tumbling, Dauncing, and other Sleights'.<sup>67</sup> *The Receyt of the Ladie Katheryne* offers a more elaborate account of the tumbling and the 'Hispaynyard' skills:

First, he went upp unto the frame, and a certayn stay in his / hand, to the nombre of xlti fote, summwhat aslope, and when he cam to the hight left his stay and went

upon the cabill — sumtyme on patens, sumtyme with tenes ballys, sumtyme with ‘feters of’ iron, dauncyng with belles, and lepyng many leapys upon the seid cabill bothe forward and bakward. He played sumtyme with a sword and bukler. Eftson he cast himsilf sodenly from the rope and hang by the tooes, summtyme by the teethe moost marvelously, and with grettest sleighte and cunnying that eny man cowde possibly excercise or do.<sup>68</sup>

Who was this Spanish tumbler? As early as 1492, Henry VII was entertained by a ‘Spaynarde that pleyed the fole’.<sup>69</sup> John Southworth, in his influential study, presented other references that mentioned a — perhaps this — Spanish fool: ‘at the end of July, the Spaniard, then named as “Degeo, the Spanish fole”, was supplied with a saddle, bridle and spurs to accompany Henry to Dover. On 2 October he embarked with the king for France, where a large English army was assembling to oppose the French usurpation of Brittany’.<sup>70</sup> Southworth continues: ‘Degeo’s last recorded performance at court was on 11 March of the following year (1493). Among other Spanish performers rewarded by Henry in the years that followed were a “Spaynyard that tumbled” in 1494, and, in June 1501, a “Spaynyard that pleyed on the corde” (a rope-dancer), who pocketed the munificent sum of £10’.<sup>71</sup> Considering the performances of Spanish entertainers at the Tudor court predating Katherine’s arrival, the Spanish tumbler mentioned by Leland to have performed at Arthur’s and Katherine’s wedding festivities could possibly be the same tumbler who had previously entertained King Henry VII, instead of, as Mattingly suggested, a member of Katherine’s retinue. One complicating matter is that payments made in the king’s record books do not always give a straightforward idea of whose retinue a retainer belonged to, as the monarch paid expenses for members of his family. But one can, it seems, claim a tradition of Spanish funambulists who were sought to entertain the English monarch, and either royal court — English or Spanish — might have thought this an appropriate entertainer at the festivities, by whichever route he arrived there.

In the years following Prince Arthur’s early death on 2 April 1502, Katherine did not have the means, nor the space at Durham House, to keep the whole of her original retinue, stuck as she was between Ferdinand II of Aragon, her tight-fisted father, and her father-in-law Henry VII who continued bargaining about the final payments of her dowry as well as her dower portion. Some of her more intimate companions and attendants remained,<sup>72</sup> but most of her earlier household returned to Spain. John de Cecil, a Spanish trumpeter who may have accompanied Katherine on her journey to England and possibly played at her wedding, found himself a position at Henry VII’s court.<sup>73</sup> In 1509, de Cecil appears in the

record detailing the coronation of Henry VIII as ‘the King’s trumpets’,<sup>74</sup> and he is last seen in the court records in 1514.<sup>75</sup>

The *REED* volumes do not record Katherine having ever patronized jesters or fools, but they do register her patronage of minstrels on her arrival in Plymouth in 1501,<sup>76</sup> and, significantly, at Furnival’s Inn in London when she was already widowed.<sup>77</sup>

James Forse suggests that in the years before her marriage to Henry VIII, Katherine patronized entertainers in order to ‘advertise or assert [her] status’ as a royal princess and as an influence to reckon with.<sup>78</sup> Forse importantly notes that ‘Katherine’s and Prince Henry’s musicians were visiting Canterbury together in 1507’, which he interprets as ‘a way to link her with Henry in a year when Katherine’s status and chances of marrying Prince Henry seemed especially bleak’.<sup>79</sup> It appears that Katherine was very much aware of the political benefits of entertainments that contributed an element of festivity and royal splendour to an entourage, and used this to her advantage.

On 11 June 1509 Henry VIII married Katherine at Greenwich, framed as, to borrow John Edward’s words, ‘fulfilling a deathbed command from his father’.<sup>80</sup> This brought an end to Spanish-English tensions about Katherine’s dowry payments, and, for Katherine, signalled the beginning of a period of renewed affluence as Henry’s queen, as well as increased patronage of entertainers befitting her new social position. The King’s Book of Payments from 1510 records a fee paid to the ‘Queen’s minstrels’ of 40 s,<sup>81</sup> and the same payment occurs in 1519, made out to ‘the minstrels of the Queen’s chamber’, this time mentioning the musicians’ names: ‘Baltazar, Jaques, Evans and another’.<sup>82</sup> The queen’s minstrels are also referred to in the Winchester chamberlains’ accounts in 1512–13.<sup>83</sup> Katherine appears as a generous host and organizer of court events, such as the elaborate revels held on Epiphany night in ‘the Queen’s grace in her chamber’ in the second year of Henry’s reign.<sup>84</sup> We furthermore see her in the role of honoured spectator at numerous jousts, revels, masques and disguisings, sports, banquets, and diplomatic events, such as, for example, at the Field of Cloth of Gold (1520), where her adoring gaze was to complement the king’s royal image-making. Additionally, many a musical evening of singing and dancing relied on the involvement of the queen’s ladies, such as on the occasion reported by the Venetian ambassador Sebastian Giustinian, when the company, including Margaret Tudor, queen of Scots, was entertained by a well-known and celebrated musician.<sup>85</sup> As queen, Katherine seems to have enjoyed Henry’s entertainments at his side, listening to musicians whom he paid for, watching spectacles devised in his honour, and perhaps, laughing at his fools. When on progress, Katherine appears to have had her

own minstrels work together with those patronized by her husband the king, as can be seen in the example of the sheriff of Bristol's 'revised estimates of expenses incurred for others, as corrected by mayor' which list a payment 'to the Kyng and Quene is mynstrellis'.<sup>86</sup> Forse explains:

Henry and Katherine were together on progresses in 1517 and 1518, and the period from about 1510 to 1525 marks a time when Katherine was being presented with her husband as almost a co-ruler. The joint appearance in provincial records of the king's and the queen's minstrels in 1517 and 1518, while the pregnant queen was on progress with her king, may be an outward manifestation of that status.<sup>87</sup>

Shared patronage of entertainment, then, could be used to indicate marital harmony within the royal couple, and allowed Katherine to assert herself as queen of England. As the years progressed and Katherine did not give birth to any more living heirs, having given her husband 'only' the Princess Mary as legal offspring, however, Henry gradually cooled towards Katherine.<sup>88</sup> During the years Henry was trying to divorce Katherine, the king physically distanced himself from his consort and had her moved to increasingly less comfortable homes where she was to also relinquish part of her staff. Already at the More in 1531 she no longer had the entourage that she had been accustomed to in her heydays at Henry's side, and complained about her diminished position. After the Venetian ambassador visited her at the More, he reported the following: 'In the morning we saw her Majesty dine: she had some 30 maids of honour (*donzelle*) standing round the table, and about 50 who performed its service. Her Court consists of about 200 persons, but she is not so much visited as heretofore, on account of the King'.<sup>89</sup> Although Katherine did not live in the splendour to which she had once been accustomed, her lifestyle could hardly be described as financial hardship. Yet, this was the beginning of a gradual diminishing of status and means.

In May 1533, Thomas Cranmer, as archbishop of Canterbury, annulled the king's marriage to Katherine, and in July of the same year, a proclamation was issued that took Katherine's title of 'queen' from her, naming her princess dowager of Wales, and forbidding subjects from addressing her with her former title.<sup>90</sup> Katherine's change in status can be seen reflected in her patronage of performers; while the mayor's own accounts<sup>91</sup> and the Steward's Accounts<sup>92</sup> both clearly state that Katherine still patronized players who performed in Southampton in 1530–32, and the queen's players also performed in 1531 in Magdalen College, Oxford, in 1533 all performances by groups of players patronized by Katherine had been cancelled.<sup>93</sup> From the same year onwards, we see Queen Anne Boleyn's

players and minstrels performing in various places.<sup>94</sup> The patronage of players was not an exclusive right of queens, as can be seen, for example, in the Lady Anne Percy's (1485–1552) patronage of a troupe called the 'Lady Mautravers' Performers' ('Mimis *domine* Matervers').<sup>95</sup> Yet, the queen's players would, by the time of the annulment, no longer be at Katherine's disposal. For Katherine, who did not accept the removal of her title, nor the king's understanding that he was not married to her, patronizing a group named anything but the queen's would have been unthinkable. In a letter to the emperor, Chapuys complains that Katherine had so far coped with the distress caused by the king's divorce matter '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'.<sup>96</sup> When Henry, however, divested her of her title and the dignities normally reserved for the queen, even including her jewels and her barge, this fell heavy on her. Even more disconcerting to Katherine, however, was the loss of her marriage portion from which she had meant to pay the 'pensions and salaries' of 'her servants and domestics, besides other people whose fidelity she has rewarded with sundry offices in her household'.<sup>97</sup> Having no way to pay for their services, Katherine would have been honour-bound to let go of most of what was left of her trusted entourage.

We can thus interpret Chapuys's first attempt to visit Katherine at Kimbolton, in July 1534, in this light. On this occasion, Chapuys brought a large entourage in the form of a train of Spanish merchants and 'nearly a hundred' horses, and 'minstrels and trumpeters', so that 'when they rode into the places on the road it was like the entrance of a prince'.<sup>98</sup> Henry VIII, no doubt fearful of the visual impact this procession would make — not only on the former queen and her household, but also on the subjects spectating along the route — had a messenger intercept the visitors while they were on their way, prohibiting the ambassador from speaking with Katherine. As a result, thirty of the horsemen continued to Kimbolton, but without Chapuys. The horsemen, so the *Chronicle* says, 'took with them a very funny young fellow who had been brought by the ambassador, and who was dressed as a fool, and had a padlock dangling from his hood'.<sup>99</sup> The report significantly does not say that they brought a *fool*, but rather a man who was *dressed* as one. He was clearly fashioned to make apparent his jesting *role*, even from a distance, but that did not exclude the possibility that he could have also acted as a political messenger or a spy. But what sort of fool was he? As Katherine's ladies presented the visitors with an elaborate breakfast, the fool did not partake in this meal, but made a song and dance about suffering from toothache:

so he clapped his hands to one of his cheeks and began to cry, and went to the place where the barber was, and made signs that he had the toothache. The barber out of pity for him made him sit in a chair and put his finger in his mouth, and the fool began to clench his teeth and scream out, and made the poor barber scream out too with pain of the bitten finger, so that the noise they both made brought all the ladies and gentlemen to them, and they mightily enjoyed the joke.<sup>100</sup>

Where the fool's act might first remind us of the Jack Miller-type joke in which the fool draws attention to his own physicality and the limitations of the body, as well as giving his spectators the fun of his bodily unease and pain, the joke quickly turned against the barber, who was tricked into believing the fool, and thus himself 'fooled'. That is, unless the barber was part of a 'managed' performance, and cooperated in a pre-organized joke. In either case the fool showed himself capable of a cunning trick of 'making a scene' on his 'victim', and he demonstrated that he was aware of the powers of attracting spectatorship. After all, the ladies and gentlemen watching the 'spectacle' had arrived to the scene attracted by the fool's fake crying, assuming to be about to watch a performance in which the fool debases himself, only to find out that the joke was to be made much better when the fool turned out to be a 'clever' fool.

The fool's ability to attract an audience and turn his visibility to advantage was not only used to cause hilarity, but also took on a political form. The *Chronicle* reports that on his arrival Chapuys's fool artfully commented on Katherine's imprisonment by overtly attempting to swim the moat surrounding Kimbolton castle to reach Katherine and her ladies. This action brought comic attention to a protection mechanism that was of course an actual barrier against unwanted visitors, as well as a means to keep the former queen from fleeing from the castle in which she was perhaps not officially kept prisoner,<sup>101</sup> but where in practice, she was very much detained. The fool is said to have made a show of fearing to be drowned, and was pulled out by 'two or three of the gentlemen on horseback'.<sup>102</sup> The fool then removed the padlock from his hood and 'threw it at the windows', shouting in Spanish: 'Take this, and the next time I will bring the key'.<sup>103</sup>

The *Chronicle* notes that the padlock was confiscated by Henry's servants who suspected that it carried a secret message to Katherine. The thought that they entertained the possibility that the fool might actually be a secret agent is interesting as a comment on current thoughts about fools' functions and capacities. Contrary to their expectations, however, Henry's servants found that the lock did not contain a letter. Indeed, the message was more likely to have been the fool's performance itself. Criticizing the former queen's imprisonment through



burlesquing his desire to visit her no doubt drew attention to his patron's inability to visit due to the king's orders. Furthermore, conveying the message in Spanish rather than English was significant, not only because it gave Katherine the pleasure of hearing her own language spoken by people who were, both through their background, and by inclination, on her side, and indeed made a great show of it, but also because it excluded the English people present at Kimbolton who could not understand what the fool said, but only heard him shout something incomprehensible whilst throwing an unknown missile (which later turned out to be the padlock) at the windows. The fool's action can be seen to have created an 'us' and 'them' and drew Katherine — who had tried so hard to be an English princess and queen, but who had been let down by her husband the king — in with Chapuys's Spanish train of people who technically were not the king's subjects, and reminded her of the culture and language of her youth when she had been the Infanta Catalina.

The English were clearly suspicious of the Spanish fool considering his apt political commentary through play and his hurling of the mysterious padlock. The thought of him smuggling something in the manner of a spy or a foreign threat was not far off the reality of the situation, and indeed, not unique, as later examples of suspicions directed at foreign fools show. For example, when in 1546 Henry Howard, the earl of Surrey, was suspected of treason against King Henry and Prince Edward, evidence was sought both in the earl's living above his station such as in the bearing a coat of arms which was too regal ('My lord of Surrey's pryde and his gowne of gold. Departure of the Kinges apparel'<sup>104</sup>) but also in the keeping of 'one Pasquil an Italian as a jester, but more likely a Spy, and so reputed'.<sup>105</sup> Similar suspicions can be found in a later letter by the earl of Salisbury, who in 1605 wrote to Sir John Ogle to inform him of a potential gathering of intelligence. He wrote, 'I know that wolves do often walk under sheep's clothing, and how usual it is for buffoons to be used as spies', before hurriedly disclaiming that he held it 'a weakness in wise men to believe that all sheep are wolves'. Yet his message urges Sir John to watch out for: 'a Spanish jester, in whom the King and Queen of Spain take great delight, the rather because he is of such a humour of ranging abroad as he becomes delightful at his return to those that hear his foolish discourses of his adventures'.<sup>106</sup> Assuming that the jester would 'hereafter ... talk of his usage', Sir John Ogle was advised to see to his 'lodging and diet' and 'not to bring him within shot or danger' so that the jester could be back on his way to Spain as soon as possible.<sup>107</sup> The English, and also likely the Spanish, would have assumed Chapuys's fool was keeping his eyes and ears open to report back to Chapuys, aside from teasing the barber, entertaining the ladies,

taking a dive in the moat, and brightening Katherine's spirits by conveying an implicit political message.

Besides the advantages of an extra pair of eyes for intelligence-gathering, and his using play as political commentary that would have both entertained and brought solace to Katherine, the fool in Chapuys's retinue also had a ceremonial function. When in December 1535 the ambassador learned that Katherine's health had deteriorated, he rushed to Kimbolton, 'followed by a numerous suite of my own servants and friends'.<sup>108</sup> At such short notice, however, he could hardly have gathered all the Spanish merchants in London as he had earlier in the year, and there was no time for an elaborate procession with pomp and splendour. Chapuys then, did not have the opportunity to make the 'entrance of a prince' as he had on the earlier occasion, had he been permitted to reach Kimbolton.<sup>109</sup> Yet despite the limitations of his entourage, he attempted to conduct the visit in as royal a manner as possible. In his letter to Charles V, Chapuys reports that after formally greeting Katherine and kissing her hand, he was thanked for his services rendered over the years, and, so he claims, for visiting her during her final hours. Chapuys describes their ceremonial meeting as witnessed by 'a friend of Cromwell's whom that secretary had sent to accompany me, or rather to act as a spy on my movements and report what I might say or do during my visit', 'the principal officers of her household, such as her own chamberlain', and 'many others', all of whom he did not trust.<sup>110</sup> It was of paramount importance to Chapuys that these 'spies of Cromwell's' witnessed his actions, and the manner of his conduct, so that when they reported back to their master, they would be likely to report something that Chapuys wanted them to see and remember. The ceremonial display of strong affection between the representative of Charles V and the former queen, for example, would have been duly noted, and even Katherine's supposed claim recorded by Chapuys in his letter, that 'if it should please God to take her to Himself, it would at least be a consolation to die as it were in my arms, and not all alone like a beast',<sup>111</sup> was far from innocent.

The ceremonial part of the visit aside, Katherine and Chapuys also had long, private conversations during which they discussed matters both personal and political.<sup>112</sup> Unfortunately, what was exchanged between Katherine and the fool has not been recorded. We only know that Katherine 'laughed' (*rire deus ou troys fois*) and that it was her wish to relax with (*soy recreer avec*) the fool, suggesting a situation in which the fool was a distributor of fun rather than an object of ridicule. If this fool was the same as the fool who had visited Kimbolton earlier, as Mattingly and Hume have suggested,<sup>113</sup> the likelihood is high that the fool would have again comforted the former queen with the language of her

childhood, the pleasure of witticisms and fun antics, and political remarks dressed as play. Importantly, if this fool was the same jester who had delighted Katherine at an earlier time, then he was likely again ‘dressed as a fool’,<sup>114</sup> making his role apparent to anyone watching Chapuys’s retinue enter Kimbolton Castle. Clearly marked as a figure of entertainment, the fool’s presence placed extra emphasis on Chapuys’s status as a representative of the emperor, and reminded spectators watching his arrival that this was not the visit of a courtier to a dowager princess, who could be expected to live away from the splendour and bustle of worldly entertainment, but that of an ambassador paying homage to a queen.

Similar diplomatic use of entertainment can also be found in Henry VIII’s privy purse expenses, which offer insights into the honours that monarchs bestowed on one another in the form of entertainment, whilst also underlining their status and evidencing good taste. For example, when in 1532 in Calais, Henry consolidated his friendship with the king of France, the king of Navarre, and the cardinal of Lorraine, the different parties treated the other leaders to entertainments whilst the entertained parties rewarded the amusement-providing servants. Thus we see that Henry paid for ‘douplets for the garde to wrestle in bifore the king and the frenche king’, suggesting an entertainment sponsored by himself, and that he showed gratitude to entertainments received when he ‘paied to the frenche kings Jester in Rewarde ix. li. vj s. viij d.,’<sup>115</sup> and 20 crowns to the ‘singers of the Cardynalls de larena.’<sup>116</sup> The reciprocity in offering entertainment and the largesse of the steep rewards are suggestive of the equally honorary nature of providing amusement to the other leaders and taking the role of the entertained party. Similarly, by bringing his fool for Katherine’s entertainment, Chapuys treated her just as the French king had Henry VIII in 1532: showing respect whilst emphasizing that it was in his gift to provide such diversion. But just as camaraderie between Francis I and Henry VIII placed a superficial layer of ‘fun’ over what was clearly a politically driven encounter, the outward appearances of Chapuys’s visit to Katherine, performed in plain view of ‘Cromwell’s spies’, simultaneously concealed and revealed a clear political message. Chapuys pointedly left room for interpreters to see a politically innocent act during which an old friend treated a dying lady to foolery, whilst displaying to those who could, or permitted themselves to see the symbolic ritual and what is now understood as cultural diplomatic conduct with which a statesperson or their representative would dignify royalty. Thus, while at Kimbolton in 1534 the fool’s actions themselves could be seen as an outwardly made political comment, in January 1536, the fool’s actions were likely mostly ‘just’ fun, and if political, made for Katherine’s benefit. Chapuys’s actions, however, in providing the fool’s entertainment, can be seen as a separate layer of

action, using the visit to express a political statement that undermined Henry's view on the divorce, by implying that not only Chapuys considered Katherine to still be queen of England, but that Charles V, and with him, the rest of Catholic Europe, did not, and would never, accept Katherine's change of status; not during her lifetime, nor afterwards.

## Notes

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- 1 G.A. Bergenroth and Pascual de Gayangos, et al., eds, *Calendar of State Papers, Spain, 1485–1558*, 19 vols (London, 1862–1954), 5.2no3, hereafter *CSPS*.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid, n8.
- 4 Tatjana Silec, 'Le Fou du Roi: Un Hors-la-Loi d'un Genre Particulier', *Camenuiae* 2 (2008), 1: 'En effet il y a toujours eu deux variétés de bouffon: celle dite «naturelle» (*natural fool* en anglais, ou *fol naïs* en ancien français) ... et celle dite «artificielle», l'expression la plus souvent employée en anglais étant «counterfeit fool», tandis qu'en français on lui préfère parfois à la Renaissance l'expression plus vague de «plaisant», inspirée de l'italien'. [In effect, there have always been two varieties of fool: those referred to as 'natural' ('natural fool' in English, or *fol naïs* in old French) ... and those referred to as 'artificial', the expression most often used in English was 'counterfeit fool', while in French during the Renaissance the vaguer expression '*plaisant*' was sometimes preferred, inspired by the Italian.]
- 5 Bergenroth and de Gayangos, et al., eds, *CSPS*, 5.2no3.
- 6 Beatrice K. Otto, *Fools are Everywhere: The Court Jester Around the World* (Chicago, 2001), 94; Paul N. Morris, 'Patronage and Piety: Montserrat and the Royal House of Medieval Catalonia-Aragon', *Mirator* (2000), 8.
- 7 Martin A. Sharp Hume and Garrett Mattingly only refer to the fool at Katherine's deathbed to establish the likelihood of him having been the same fool as the one in the anonymous *Chronicle of King Henry VIII*, ed. Martin A. Sharp Hume (London, 1889), 50; Garrett Mattingly, *Catherine of Aragon* (London, 1963), 307. Chapuys's earlier attempt to visit Kimbolton received brief scholarly attention in Antonia

- Fraser, *The Six Wives of Henry VIII* (London, 1992), 222–3; and Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon* (London, 2010), 405.
- 8 Chapuys also refers to this occasion in a letter to Charles V, but he does not explicitly mention the fool. Bergenroth and de Gayangos, et al., eds, *CSPS*, 5.1no75.
- 9 J. Alan B. Somerset, ed., *REED: Shropshire* (Toronto, 1994), 1.79.
- 10 Peter Greenfield and Jane Cowling, eds, *REED: Hampshire* (2020), Book of Fines, Southampton City Archives: SC5/3/1 (1550–51), <https://ereed.library.utoronto.ca/collections/hamps/>.
- 11 Audrey Douglas and Peter Greenfield, eds, *REED: Cumberland/ Westmorland/ Gloucestershire* (Toronto, 1986), 1.297.
- 12 James M. Gibson, ed., *REED: Kent* (Toronto, 2002), 2.694.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 2.779.
- 14 *Ibid.*, 1.174.
- 15 *Ibid.*, 2.545.
- 16 J.J. Anderson, ed., *REED: Newcastle upon Tyne* (Toronto, 1982), 1.31.
- 17 A.F. Pollard, ed., *The Reign of Henry VII from Contemporary Sources*, 3 vols (London, 1913–14), 2.231.
- 18 J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R.H. Brodie, eds, *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, 1509–47*, 21 vols (London, 1862–1932), 1no20.
- 19 Nicholas Harris Nicolas, ed., *Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York* (London, 1830), 196.
- 20 *Ibid.*, 2.
- 21 Frederick Madden, ed., *Privy Purse Expenses of the Princess Mary* (London, 1831), 123.
- 22 Susan James, ‘Jane, the Queen’s Fool (fl. 1535–1558)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (DNB)*, <https://doi.org/10.1093/odnb/9780198614128.013.112276>.
- 23 Brewer, Gairdner, and Brodie, *Letters and Papers*, 19.2no688.
- 24 *Ibid.*, 10no913.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 6no585, n3, for example.
- 26 *Ibid.*, 6no585.
- 27 *Ibid.*
- 28 The distinctions between ‘artificial’ and ‘natural’ fools have been studied, in among others, Sandra Billington, *A Social History of the Fool* (Brighton, 1984); Sarah Carpenter, ‘Laughing at Natural Fools’, *Theta, Théâtre Tudor* 11 (2013), 3–22; Carpenter, ‘The Places of Foolery: Robert Armin and fooling in Edinburgh’, *Medieval English Theatre* 37 (2015), 11–26; John J. McGavin, ‘Close Kin to a Clean Fool: Robert Armin’s Account of Jack Miller’, *Theta, Théâtre Tudor* 12 (2016), 39–56; Irina Metzler, *Fools and Idiots? Intellectual Disability in the Middle Ages* (Manchester,

- 2016), <http://dx.doi.org/10.7765/9781784996802>; John Southworth, *Fools and Jest-ers at the English Court* (Stroud, 2011); and Enid Welsford, *The Fool* (London, 1935).
- 29 Anderson, ed., *REED: Newcastle*, 1.104.
- 30 Brewer, Gairdner, and Brodie, *Letters and Papers*, 1no82.
- 31 Nicolas, ed., *The Privy Purse Expenses of King Henry VIII* (London, 1827), 193.
- 32 *Ibid.*, 120.
- 33 *Ibid.*, 138.
- 34 George Cavendish, *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey*, ed. Samuel Weller Singer (London, 1827), 257. Although Singer's edition of Cavendish's *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey* shares this anecdote, the anecdote does not seem to appear in any of the following: George Cavendish, *The Negotiations of Thomas Woolsey, the Great Cardinall of England, Containing His Life and Death* (London, 1641; Wing: C1619aA), *Early English Books Online (EEBO)*; George Cavendish, *The Negotiations of Thomas Woolsey, the Great Cardinall of England Containing his Life and Death* (London, 1650; Wing: C1619A), *EEBO*; George Cavendish, *The Life and Death of Thomas Woolsey, Cardinal, Once Arch Bishop of York and Lord Chancellour of England* (London, 1667; Wing: 1618), *EEBO*. Singer probably took the abovementioned anecdote from (any of) two manuscripts in his possession, rather than an editorial addition, as his preface criticizes the 1641 printed edition as being 'in such a garbled form as to be hardly recognized for the same work, abridgment and interpolation having been used with an unsparing hand' (xi), and details that in order to produce his 1827 edition he acquired and relied on two manuscripts: one 'from among the duplicates of the late Duke of Norfolk's library', and a 'more recent' manuscript (xiii).
- 35 Zoe Screti, "A Motley to the View": The Clothing of Court Fools in Tudor England', *Midlands Historical Review* 2 (2018), 2–3.
- 36 Robert Armin, *Foole vpon Foole, or Six Sortes of Sottes* (London, 1600; STC (2nd edn): 772.3), *EEBO*, A1r.
- 37 Carpenter, 'Laughing at Natural Fools', 8.
- 38 *Ibid.*
- 39 *Ibid.*; McGavin, 'Close Kin to a Clean Fool', 43.
- 40 Carpenter, 'Laughing at Natural Fools', 15.
- 41 Thomas Wilson, *The Arte of Rhetorike for the Vse of All Suche as are Studious of Eloquence, Sette Foorthe in Englishbe, by Thomas Wilson. 1553* (London, 1584; STC (2nd edn): 25805), *EEBO*, 204.
- 42 Desiderius Erasmus, *The Praise of Folly*, ed. Anthony Grafton (Princeton, 2015), 49, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1515/9781400866083>.
- 43 *Ibid.*, 50.

- 44 This story smacks of the stuff of legends; after all, Martin of Aragon's death caused a major succession crisis, and any individual held responsible for the king's death would have faced execution rather than a continuation of one's career as court entertainer.
- 45 Francesc Massip, 'The Cloud: A Medieval Aerial Device, Its Origins, and Its Use in Spain Today', in *The Dramatic Tradition of the Middle Ages*, ed. Clifford Davidson (New York, 2005), 265.
- 46 William Tydeman, ed., *The Medieval European Stage, 500–1550* (Cambridge, 2001), 597.
- 47 Lenke Kovács, 'Frightened or Fearless: Different Ways of Facing Death in the Sixteenth Century Majorcan Play Representacio de la Mort', in *Mixed Metaphors: The Danse Macabre in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Sophie Oosterwijk and Stefanie A. Knöll (Cambridge, 2011), 212.
- 48 Antonio de la Torre and E.A. de la Torre, eds, *Cuentas de Gonzalo de Baeza, Tesorero de Isabel la Católica*, 2 vols (Madrid, 1955–56).
- 49 Ibid, 1.393.
- 50 Ibid, 1.397.
- 51 Ibid, 2.490.
- 52 Ibid, 2.532: 'las moças e a Loca, e a vna mochacha e a vn mochacho, que estavan en el rretrete de su Alteza con Violante de Aluion' (emphasis mine).
- 53 Ibid, 2.401.
- 54 Ibid, 1.67.
- 55 Ibid, 2.49.
- 56 Ibid, 2.450.
- 57 Ibid, 2.630.
- 58 Bergenroth and de Gayangos, et al., eds, *CSPS*, 1no301.
- 59 Ibid, no287.
- 60 Ibid, no288.
- 61 Ibid.
- 62 Theresa Earenfight, 'Raising Infanta Catalina de Aragón to be Catherine, Queen of England', *Anuario de Estudios Medievales* 46.1 (2016), 427, <https://doi.org/10.3989/aem.2016.46.1.13>.
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- 73 Michelle Beer, 'Practices and Performances of Queenship: Catherine of Aragon and Margaret Tudor, 1503–1533', PhD thesis (University of Illinois, 2014), 197.
- 74 Brewer, Gairdner, and Brodie, *Letters and Papers*, 1no82.
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