



The Politics of Counsel in England and Scotland, 1286-1707

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CHAPTER

## 9 'Jerusalem thou dydst promyse to buylde up': Kingship, Counsel and Early Elizabethan Drama

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### Abstract

Historians of counsel have mostly shied away from early Elizabethan drama, while literary critics have not fully taken on board the recent advances in the historiography. This chapter makes a case for a more holistic, interdisciplinary approach to both counsel and the drama. It argues that early Elizabethan plays, both elite and popular, constituted an important form of counsel to the monarch and the ruling classes. An overview of how the plays engaged with counsel is followed by a fresh contextual reading of a popular biblical interlude, *Kyng Daryus* (1565), which is demonstrated to have formed an integral part of the godly campaign for further reformation. Appearing at the height of the Vestiarian Controversy, *Kyng Daryus* is shown to invoke the promised restoration of the Jerusalem Temple to promote the ideal of godly counsel, effectively mobilising the wider public in its defence.

**Keywords:** early Elizabethan drama, Elizabeth I, godly counsel, languages of counsel, scripture, Vestiarian Controversy, politics of popularity, the godly

**Subject:** Early Modern History (1500 to 1700)

EARLY ELIZABETHAN DRAMA WAS AT ONCE the most powerful and the most public form of counsel. Scholars have identified a number of occasions when the nation's rulers were offered advice in entertainments performed at court or before aristocratic audiences. But the drama's contribution was not confined to elite theatre. Plays for popular audiences also represented the provision of good counsel as a *sine qua non* of a well-governed commonwealth. Like elite drama, the popular theatre professed its political loyalty. Its advice was accoutred with prayers and good wishes for queen and council. It nonetheless passed insistent and penetrating judgements on the requirements and proprieties of public counsel for the health of church and state.

The understanding of the drama's political role in the 1560s has been held back by the disciplinary divisions between history and literature. Historians who address issues of political counsel tend to steer clear of the

evidence of literature, while literary scholars, who might be expected to apply the historians' findings to the drama, tend not to keep abreast of them. Here I shall attempt a less compartmentalised approach. First, I shall survey the theatrical contribution of the 1560s and the critical literature that has addressed it. Second, I shall explore a particular instance of this contribution. This was *Kyng Daryus*, a bouncy biblical interlude of around 1565, which we shall find to have been integral to the early Elizabethan campaign for godly reformation. A popular adaptation of one of the Old Testament apocrypha, *Kyng Daryus* appeared on stage and in print at the height of the Vestiarian Controversy (1563–6), when Elizabeth's conservative policy on clerical dress and, more generally, on royal authority in ecclesiastical matters was stoutly challenged. The biblical source—the apocryphal book of Esdras—promises ↵ the building of the Second Temple in Jerusalem—the First Temple having been destroyed by the Babylonians. The restoration of the Temple was a dominant motif of the campaign of reform waged by the former Marian exiles in a number of sermons and pamphlets and biblical commentaries. Like them, *Kyng Daryus* used the theme to promote the ideal of godly counsel and to mobilise the public in its support.

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Patrick Collinson, John Guy, Stephen Alford and other historians have variously elucidated how the Elizabethan governing elites understood the purpose and proprieties of counsel to the monarch, have taught us to recognise the principal languages of counsel—the feudal-baronial, the humanist-classical and the godly-prophetic—and reconstructed the recurrent attempts made by godly members of the regime to win public support for causes they believed the queen should pursue.<sup>1</sup> Amid a wealth of textual evidence ranging from state papers to sermons, moral treatises, pamphlets, pageants and all manner of addresses in manuscript and print, the drama has not received the attention it deserves. Aside from theatrical works promoting royal marriage,<sup>2</sup> virtually the only play mentioned and occasionally explored in this body of research is *Gorboduc*, a Senecan tragedy in blank verse by Thomas Norton ↵ and Thomas Sackville performed at the Inner Temple in December 1561 and before Elizabeth at Whitehall in January 1562.

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The concentration on *Gorboduc* is understandable given that its authors were also aspiring political actors and given that it both contains advice and enacts the giving of counsel, though its exact message is elusive. In an early scene, the three lords Eubulus, Arostus and Philander give conflicting advice to the old king; later, pairs of good and bad counsellors address each of his sons; and the theme of counsel is also salient in the dumb-shows performed between the acts. Crucially, the tragedy closes with a blatantly anachronistic harangue by Eubulus which has far more to do with the current situation of England than that of fictive ancient Britain. The reception of the play too is uniquely well documented owing to an eye-witness report that came to light in the 1990s. We now know that in addition to raising the prickly question of succession, *Gorboduc* was also perceived by some, whether rightly or wrongly, as advising the queen to marry an Englishman—Lord Robert Dudley—in preference to a foreigner—King Eric XIV of Sweden.<sup>3</sup> No less important in making *Gorboduc* attractive to modern scholars of Elizabethan politics is the play's seriousness: unlike much contemporary drama which repeatedly violates what we might think of as tragic decorum with scenes of low-life mirth, vulgar jokes and slapstick comedy, or indulges in gratuitous and often grotesque violence, *Gorboduc* is at once relentlessly grave and restrained in its use of spectacle.

The only historian who has sought to bring the drama as a literary form into the discussion of counsel in the Elizabethan era, and who has looked beyond *Gorboduc* and cited a larger number of plays, is Natalie Mears. 'Though more than 160 plays were performed at court in the first thirty years of the reign,' Mears writes, 'extant evidence suggests that few of them addressed political themes or were conceived as plays of counsel.' 'Drama, sermons and art offered some courtiers the opportunity to counsel Elizabeth,' she continues, 'but they were more important either as a means of counselling *courtiers* or to explore and debate

topical issues ... before and for a courtier audience.' 'Political debate', Mears concludes, 'was thus conducted largely independently of the monarch and it did not seek primarily to influence [her] actions.'<sup>4</sup>

p. 174 In what follows, I wish to qualify these claims. While it is true that the evidence about the content of plays performed at court between 1558 and 1588 is scanty, we know a lot more about the menu of court theatre during the first decade of the reign than during the next two, so we can reconstruct the nature of the drama's political commitment in the 1560s with a fair degree of confidence.<sup>5</sup> Second, we need not restrict our discussion to plays performed at Whitehall or Greenwich. Rather, as I have argued elsewhere, we should also look to those staged before Elizabeth, her courtiers and foreign dignitaries during royal visits to the universities of Cambridge in 1564 and Oxford in 1566.<sup>6</sup> Again, although the texts of the plays have not survived, the contextual evidence and eye-witness reports are abundant and allow us to make informed guesses about their topical investment.<sup>7</sup> Third, although to broach sensitive matters such as the succession, marriage and religion before a courtier audience was undoubtedly one of the drama's aims, it does not necessarily follow that that was a more important goal than addressing and influencing the queen. Indeed it was precisely because of Elizabeth's presence that the plays selected for presentation during royal progresses to the two universities tackled pressing political concerns that were often simultaneously touched upon in sermons and academic disputations, and that would be raised in the forum of parliament. Fourth, we can gauge the scale of the drama's preoccupation with counsel by looking not only at new scripts, but also at adaptations, revivals and reprints of old ones, often with new prologues and epilogues. Such evidence, too, demonstrates both the magnitude of the theatre's obsession with the proprieties of counsel and the ubiquity of advice on specific issues, from anxious pleas for Elizabeth to marry, settle the succession and further reform the church, to calls for a firm stand against Mary Queen of Scots. Nor, finally, should we confine ourselves, as does Mears, to sifting the political valence solely of performance. For, like sermons, a cognate form intended in the first instance for oral delivery rather than reading, plays too exerted a considerable impact in print.

While historians have tended to underestimate the drama's potential as a vehicle of counsel, literary scholars have shied away from harnessing the cutting-edge historiography of counsel to produce a wholesale reappraisal of the politics of early Elizabethan plays. No comprehensive treatment exists  
p. 175 recognising the pervasiveness and importance of the phenomenon that is comparable to Greg Walker's bravura account of Henrician court drama, *Plays of Persuasion*.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, two critical studies published respectively forty-eight and thirty-nine years ago, David Bevington's *Tudor Drama and Politics* (1968), a broad chronological survey which anyway paid limited attention to the problem of counsel, and Marie Axton's *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (1977), which discussed Inns of Court entertainments and some later history plays, but did not deal with religion,<sup>9</sup> remain the unsurpassed guides to the politics of early Elizabethan drama. Thus, although the past thirty or so years have brought an efflorescence of historical scholarship on counsel, its findings have yet to enrich our understanding of early Elizabethan drama.

Throughout the 1560s, all manner of plays, from moral interludes and tyrant tragedies to offshoots of Seneca, tragicomedies and other generic hybrids, persisted in depicting exemplary rulers accepting good counsel and weak, overmighty or malicious ones rejecting it. Old and seemingly obsolete Henrician scripts were revised to amplify concern about counsel or else they were revived unaltered to put pressure on Elizabeth by suggesting a comparison with her father, whom many saw, or at least depicted, as open to counsel. New plays of counsel *other* than *Gorboduc* were produced in venues such as the royal court, the Inns of Court and the universities during royal visits which guaranteed that their message would reach the queen or at least the ruling elites. Replete with counsellor figures ranging from personified abstractions to full-blown characters, and imbued with distinctive languages of counsel, above all the humanist-classical, such dramas served two distinct if complementary ends. The first, broader one was to underscore the moral duty of those in power to take frank counsel and of subjects or subordinates to provide it irrespective of the personal risk involved; the second, more immediate one was to sway the regime to address the issue at stake.

p. 176 In order to do justice to the political punch of early Elizabethan drama, therefore, we need to excavate several neglected plays which placed the process of giving and receiving counsel centre-stage. Let us take the oldies first. John Bale's *King Johan* (c.1538–9), a flagship reformist manifesto figuring Henry VIII as Imperial Majesty, was updated by the author and readied for the stage between 1560 and Bale's death in 1563, possibly in anticipation of a royal visit to Ipswich in early August 1561 or else for performance in Canterbury where Bale served as canon of the cathedral from 1560.<sup>10</sup> Revealingly, in a substantial passage Bale added to the original script, *King Johan*, a proto-Protestant alter-ego of the medieval King John, seeks counsel of the Clergy, Nobility and Civil Order, who, alas, are unworthy to give it, having themselves fallen for the blandishments of the papal agent Sedition. Meanwhile, the Elizabethan epilogue, cast as a panegyric of and a prayer for the new queen, advocates a resolute crackdown on religious nonconformists, above all the papists. And the triumph of the true faith, it implies, is contingent on England's dynastic security.<sup>11</sup> If she remained unaware of the refurbished *King Johan*, Elizabeth is on record as a spectator at a memorable revival of Nicholas Udall's *Ezechias* (c.1538–9), an interlude glorifying monarch-led iconoclasm exemplified by the Old Testament King Hezekiah. Mounted before the queen and her entourage in the chapel of King's College, Cambridge on 8 August 1564, *Ezechias* was an apt choice, for, like *King Johan*, it blended eulogy and instruction to boost the evangelical cause; unlike Bale's history-cum-morality play with its stinging assault on popish seduction, however, Udall's lost biblical interlude instead exalted godly counsel.<sup>12</sup> Would the queen take heed or only bask in unctuous adulation?

p. 177 In her first decade, Elizabeth also saw a raft of new dramatic confections whose provision of counsel ranged from laughably platitudinous to trenchant if not downright insolent. Although, frustratingly, her reactions to them have not survived, the following roll-call should go some way towards illuminating their authors' diverse targets and techniques. There is evidence to suggest that Thomas Preston's blockbuster *Lamentable Tragedy mixed ful of Pleasant Mirth, conteyning the Life of Cambises King of Percia* was shown at court on 17 February 1561, a full year before *Gorboduc*.<sup>13</sup> In *Cambises*, we find a host of sycophants, the figure of Vice personifying evil counsel, the figure of Council epitomising good counsel and the honest counsellor Praxaspes, who pays a terrible price for his pains: he must watch the tyrant murder his only son. Exposing the calamitous effects of the asphyxiation of counsel, this lurid reprise of Marian despotism excoriates the all-pervasive corruption of Persian (read: English) elites: the magisterial classes are taught, if not to resist, at least to disobey tyrannical princes who shut their ears to candid rebuke. Elizabeth saw Edward Halliwell's Latin *Dido*, a tragic exemplum of queenly incontinence, at King's College, Cambridge on 7 August 1564—the day before Udall's *Ezechias*. Looking back to Queen Mary's ill-fated Spanish match, this lost adaptation of the *Aeneid* raised alarm about the prospect of a foreign spouse for Elizabeth, perhaps also

tacitly rooting for the home-born suitor Robert Dudley. During the Christmas season 1564–5 she was so delighted by the Master of the Chapel Royal Richard Edwards's *Damon and Pithias* that she asked for a repeat performance; the piece was subsequently revived at Merton College, Oxford in 1568.<sup>14</sup> In this poignant tragicomedy, Aristippus and Carisophus, the parasitical followers of Dionysius of Syracuse, vie for the tyrant's attention with the loyal counsellor Eubulus. At the play's climax, Damon's advice spoken from the scaffold effects the despot's reformation. 'Make me a third friend,' he implores, 'more shall I joy in that thing, / Than to be called as I am, "Dionysius the mighty King"'; meanwhile, the final song playfully subverts the moral of the story, urging the queen's 'friendes' not to propose difficult or unwelcome courses of action, however necessary they might be, but, rather, to ensure she always has 'her own hartes desire'.<sup>15</sup> On 17 January 1566, the boys of Westminster School acted the anonymous Latin adaptation of the German humanist Sixt Birck's *Sapientia Solomonis* before the queen and her guest, Princess Cecilia of Sweden; this fulsome tribute, possibly commemorating Elizabeth's coronation, gently nudged her to quicken the pace of reform.<sup>16</sup> Later in the year, during a visit to Oxford, the queen was due to see Tobie Matthew's Latin *Marcus Geminus*, a covert indictment of royal leniency towards the papists, but in the event decided to miss it. She did, however, see Edwards's two-part Chaucerian paean to marriage, *Palamon and Arcite*, at Christ Church on 2 and 4 September. (Neither of those scripts has survived.) Some time that autumn, gentlemen students of Gray's Inn performed George Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmersh's tragedy *Jocasta*, based on an Italian redaction of Euripides. In it, Prince Eteocles ignores his mother's plea for reconciliation and instead accepts the suspect counsel of Creon, whom he makes his heir; the tragic cycle is set to continue, for in conclusion the newly enthroned Creon rejects the forthright advice of Antigone. The production was a major cultural event, and though Elizabeth ↵ did not see it, she is bound to have heard reports from those who did.<sup>17</sup> In April 1568 at Greenwich she was regaled with a gory Italianate tragedy, *Gismond of Salerne*, another pro-marriage salvo, by five gentlemen of the Inner Temple, including a future favourite and privy councillor, Christopher Hatton.<sup>18</sup> Deaf to good counsel, Tancred, the despotic father-king, forbids his recently widowed daughter, Gismond, to remarry, a decision which leads to a bloodbath and leaves the succession in doubt.<sup>19</sup>

No less than their elite counterparts, popular plays of unknown auspices also evince a persistent fixation with counsel. Think of John Phillip's *Patient Grissell* (1558–66), of *Apius and Virginia* (c.1564) by one 'R. B.', of the anonymous *Kyng Daryus* (c.1565), or of *Horestes* (1567), sometimes attributed to the Lincoln's Inn lawyer and future speaker of the House of Commons, John Puckering. Phillip's *Patient Grissell* has Marquis Gautier yield to the petition of his loyal followers Reason, Fidelitie and Sobrietie that he should wed and secure an heir, only to succumb to the wicked insinuations of the Vice appropriately named Politicke Persuasion, and turn against his saintly wife. Two elder counsellors, two young flatterers and the wise adviser Zorobabell make an appearance in *Kyng Daryus*. *Horestes* depicts the king of Crete, Idumeus (Elizabeth), in the company of Council, who is then charged with schooling the young Prince Horestes of Mycenae (the infant James VI of Scotland) in the importance of taking advice. On his coronation-cum-wedding day, Horestes duly asks the Nobility and Commons to instruct him in the needs of the commonwealth: 'yf that ought be now amyse', he vows, 'amendyd it shalbe'.<sup>20</sup> And the lost morality play *The Cradle of Security* mounted by travelling players in Gloucester around 1570 portrayed a king's seduction by three ladies, who drew 'him from his graver counsellors, hearing of sermons, and listning to good counsell, and admonitions'. The notion of women, conventionally associated with sensuality and lust, seducing a ruler from 'graver counsellors' could be in any morality play, but there is a novel Protestant gloss in the line about sermons. In the spectacular finale the degenerate prince suffered a humiliating transformation and providential punishment: 'a swines snout upon his face', he was 'sent for to judgement' and 'carried away by wicked spirits'.<sup>21</sup>

The lesson was hammered home again and again. Whether merely unwise or outright tyrannical, the ruler who ignores good counsel inevitably comes to a sticky end, unless, that is, he reforms in time like Dionysius. Gorboduc is murdered by his subjects; Cambises dies of a self-inflicted wound that we are invited to view as divine retribution; Apius commits suicide; Eteocles and Polynice kill one another; and the unnamed prince

in *The Cradle of Security* is unceremoniously hauled off to hell. Yet, whereas *Cambises* and *Apius* centre on the fate of the despot, *Gorboduc* and *Jocasta* anatomise the repercussions of the king's wilfulness for the country at large. After *Gorboduc*'s abdication in favour of his sons, Britain descends into a bloody civil war, becoming easy prey to foreign invaders. Eteocles's violation of the power-sharing agreement with his brother brings internecine strife and foreign invasion, and leads to a virtual extinction of the royal house of Thebes. With all the principals dead and the country left ruler-less, the end of *Gismond of Salerne* is no less bleak. If more upbeat, the updated *King Johan* draws attention to the corruption of the country's elites, the nobility, the clergy and the lawyers, who, rather than serving as props of the throne, contribute to the collapse of royal authority and England's submission to Rome, a message also conveyed in the Persian *Cambises*. But there are positive exemplars too. In stark opposition to this gallery of variously inadequate rulers, Idumeus, Horestes and Imperial Majesty emerge as model princes. However, whereas the former two are shown actively seeking counsel, the last is a providential monarch guided solely by God.

On this account, the drama's treatment of counsel might appear unexceptional and unexceptionable. What gave it edge was selfconscious deployment of figures, themes and tropes familiar from the humanist literature of counsel coupled with strategic use of topical allusion. To appreciate the significance of the former, it will be helpful to consider what the plays did *not* do and why. For instance, with the signal exception of *Gorboduc*, none ventured to depict the national past even though there were sources aplenty for it, from substantial chronicles to abridgements and ballads. Rather, dramatists chose to articulate their views on counsel by adapting episodes from the Bible or from the foreign, remote or exotic past or classical myth. In this respect, early Elizabethan plays contrast sharply with the *Mirror for Magistrates* (1559, 1563 and later editions), a best-selling collection of first-person verse complaints that mined England's medieval history for its cautionary tales of fallen governors.<sup>22</sup>

p. 180 Another thing playwrights did not do was meddle with the issue of female rule which exercised so many of their peers. Elizabeth's coronation pageantry famously figured her as the biblical judge Deborah—a comparison that became well-nigh ubiquitous—surrounded by representatives of nobility, clergy and commonalty.<sup>23</sup> Within three months of the coronation, John Aylmer's tract *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subiectes*, a refutation of John Knox's *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (1558) and classic statement of what Patrick Collinson has dubbed 'monarchical republicanism', stressed that, in England, a species of 'rule mixte', royal sovereignty is limited by parliamentary counsel. Aylmer also cited scores of worthy queens and female governors from history and the Bible to show 'that the rule of women preserueth common wealthes'.<sup>24</sup> It would seem that the time was ripe for theatrical depictions of wise, courageous and godly queens. Yet, although late 1550s' and 1560s' drama abounded in female protagonists, no new play other than the lost *Dido* featured a queen regnant, whether good, bad or indifferent.<sup>25</sup> The closest we get is in *Horestes*, where Clytemnestra, the murderous wife of Agamemnon, usurper of the throne of Mycenae and transparent alter-ego of Mary Queen of Scots, is seen cavorting with her lover Aegisthus (Bothwell) before being put to death by her avenging son.

The decision not to seek the kind of immediacy that a dramatisation of national history could offer and instead opt for plots more distant in place and time, as also to shy away from stage queens in favour of male rulers, could be taken as a simple precautionary measure. But the impact of the British *Gorboduc*, the Persian *Cambises* and *Daryus*, or the Roman *Apius* need not have been smaller, I think, than that of a putative play about an English monarch, whether male or female, or about a foreign queen. On the contrary, for the governing elites, and for many less exalted viewers, not only biblical rulers but also ancient ones such as Appius, Dionysius, Darius, Cyrus and Cambyzes, as well as mythic heroes of classical myth, epic and tragedy such as Dido, Creon, Orestes or Oedipus, were virtually household names. They had been regularly cited in humanist writings on counsel by Erasmus and Castiglione and, in England, by Sir Thomas Elyot and others.

p. 181 Some, such as Cyrus and the two Dariuses—Darius the Mede and Darius the Persian—also featured in the Bible, and as such provided regular fodder for pulpit oratory.<sup>26</sup> By the 1560s, references to these figures

cropped up regularly in addresses to the queen, parliamentary speeches, sermons, orations, polemical writings, ballads and commonplace books. We find them in political tracts such as Sir Thomas Smith's *Dialogue on the Queen's Marriage* (c.1561), in epistles to Elizabeth such as Lawrence Humphrey's dedication of his tract *The Nobles or of Nobilitye* (Latin, 1560; English, 1563), and in the preliminaries to translations from the classics such as Goddred Gilby's version of Cicero's *Epistle or Letter of Exhortation written ... to his Brother Quintus* (1561) or works loosely inspired by them such as Thomas Norton's *Orations of Arsanes* (1560?).

In bringing those ancient rulers to the stage, the playwrights were thus relying on the audience's knowledge of their exemplary status as good or bad princes. By flagging up in the prologues and elsewhere classical authorities such as Plato, Aristotle, Sophocles, Isocrates, Demosthenes, Cicero and Seneca, they announced a commitment to providing a practical application of humanist learning and literature of counsel. The predominantly Greek and Roman frame of reference had been popularised by that much-reprinted sourcebook of ideas about counsel and governance, Elyot's *The Governour* (1531). And, in fact, two of our plays, Edwards's *Damon and Pithias* and Matthew's *Marcus Geminus*, were based on Elyot's writings: the former drew on the *Governour* and *Of that Knowledge, whiche maketh a Wise Man* (1538), the latter on *The Image of Governance* (1541). Or take Preston's *Cambises*. Its plot derives not from Herodotus, whom Smith cites as the principal source for the king's life in his *Dialogue*, but from a compilation by Elyot's contemporary, the zealous reformer and translator of Erasmus and the Bible, Richard Taverner. In Taverner's *The Second Booke of the Garden of Wyse dome* (1539), the story of Cambyse was related alongside those of Cyrus, Artaxerxes, Orontes, Darius the Persian, Semiramis, Xerxes, Cato and Demosthenes.<sup>27</sup> All in all, the audience was regularly reminded that the stories they saw had a strong didactic aim, the prologue to *Cambises* being characteristically upfront: 'Agathon he whose counsaile wise, to princes wele exteded: / by good aduice vnto a Prince iij. things he hath comended.'<sup>28</sup>

p. 182 How topical then were these plays? To what extent was the depiction of counsel designed to influence the queen or invite spectators to think about the here and now? In each case, even when the play is lost, it is possible to infer a ready contemporary application, whether to do with the urgency of royal marriage and settlement of succession (*Gorboduc*, *Gismond*, *Jocasta*, ↪ *Patient Grissell*) or the inadvisability of a foreign match (*Dido*) or need to purge the church of vestiges of popery (*King Johan*, *Ezechias*, *Kyng Daryus*, *Sapientia Solomonis*) or necessary prosecution of the captive Catholic pretender, Mary Queen of Scots (*Horestes*). Corrupt counsellors, moreover, are often explicitly equated with the figure of Vice—Sedition in *King Johan*, Ambidexter in *Cambises*, Haphazard in *Apius and Virginia*, Politicke Persuasion in *Patient Grissell*—hinting at the association of evil counsel with popery. There are, it is true, a variety of distancing elements: the plays have temporally and spatially remote settings (Old Testament Israel, ancient Britain, Persia, Sicily, Rome, mythic Thebes and Mycenae) and, with the exception of *Dido*, the rulers are all male. But there are also devices that bring the matter closer to home, from rampant anachronism (the low plots in *Cambises*, *Kyng Daryus* and *Apius and Virginia* unfold in unmistakably English surroundings) to teasing disclaimers of topicality ('talking of courtly toys, we do protest this flat, / We talk of Dionysius' court, we mean no court but that', prologue to *Damon and Pithias*<sup>29</sup>) and direct addresses to the audience. Epilogues containing prayers for the queen, her privy council and other members of the political nation are especially suggestive of the changing perception of counsel: by the early 1570s, references to the privy council vanish and the focus is squarely on the queen. This may suggest that Elizabeth had come of age as a ruler, but could also be related to the escalating threat to her authority and life posed by Catholics both at home and abroad in the wake of the Northern Rebellion (1569), papal bull of excommunication (1570) and Ridolfi Plot (1571), which in turn triggered fervent Protestant defences of her sovereignty and title, and a renewed polemical assault by Catholics spectacularly embodied by the anonymous *Treatise of Treasons* (1572), a libellous portrayal of Elizabeth as a marionette in the hands of her atheistic Machiavellian councillors.



The earliest Elizabethan regulatory measure aimed at the theatre, the royal proclamation of 16 May 1559, prohibited plays intended for popular consumption from broaching 'either matters of religion or of the governance of the estate of the commonweal'. Yet it also conceded that such matters were 'meet ... to be written or treated upon ... by men of authority, learning and, wisdom', provided they 'be handled' before an audience 'of grave and discreet persons'.<sup>30</sup> Rather than banning political involvement of plays *tout court*, the proclamation tried to restrict it and make the audiences for political drama more exclusive, but in the end only succeeded in fostering ambiguity and indirection.

p. 183 With considerable ingenuity, playwrights went on to circumvent, or perhaps creatively exploit, the terms of this and subsequent government regulations. Responding to the political and religious challenges of its time, the drama returned again and again to the issue of counsel. In the remainder of this chapter, I illustrate the fruitfulness of early Elizabethan theatre as a genre for discussions of kingship and counsel by looking closely at the interface between plays and other forms of advice-giving.

### III

My focus is on the discourse of godly counsel which dominated efforts to persuade Elizabeth of the need to improve the religious settlement, and, more generally, to secure the survival of the Protestant state. Among the staples of this idiom were: repeated recourse to scripture, especially the Old Testament, and to patristic examples; a prophetic tone that could range from encomiastic to admonitory and occasionally threatening; and persistent reminders of the debt she owed to God for her miraculous rescue from Marian tyranny. Its underlying conception of kingship entailed, if not open endorsement of resistance to ungodly princes, at least robust insistence on royal accountability—nominally to God but implicitly also to man. Those addressing the queen in this vein, principally though not exclusively the clerics, considered themselves qualified to instruct, and the more tactless also to rebuke her.

While the discourse informed rebarbative texts such as Edward Dering's court sermon of 1570, Archbishop Edmund Grindal's letter to the queen of 1576 and John Stubbes's tract *Discovery of a Gaping Gulf* (1579), and while it would survive into the later 1580s—consider, for example, the Puritan MP Peter Wentworth's *Pithie Exhortation* (c.1587) calling upon Elizabeth to sort out the succession or else risk damnation and public obloquy—it had had its heyday in the first decade of the reign. Thereafter the mounting Catholic challenge triggered a forceful absolutist reaction in defence of the godly queen, with the themes and tropes previously used to counsel or even reprimand now deployed to glorify and exalt her. Historians have variously delineated the vocabulary and grammar of godly counsel, and illustrated its prevalence in sermons, addresses, pamphlets and the monumental ecclesiastical history-*cum*-martyrology, John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* (1563 and later editions). What, if any, was the impact and function of the godly idiom in early Elizabethan drama?

p. 184 My case study is *A Pretie new Enterlude of ... Kyng Daryus* (1565), which tells the story of the ruler of ancient Persia Darius I (d. 486 BCE). Because he permitted the Jews returning from Babylonian captivity to rebuild the Temple, ♪ King Darius was a fixture in humanist writings on counsel, religious polemic and Tudor royal iconography.<sup>31</sup> The interlude drew on the third book of Esdras in setting forth the moment its eponymous hero agrees that the Temple should be restored, and the title page proudly touts its biblical foundation. The main interest of the high plot centres on a contest among three royal followers. In the semi-public setting of the court, two sycophantic attendants or bodyguards, in Latin 'stipators', and the honest Zorobabell compete to prove who or what is most powerful in the world. (Although the play does not identify Zorobabell as the leader of Jews in Babylon, we can safely assume that the audience would have recognised him as such.)<sup>32</sup> Stipator Primus propounds a case for wine, Stipator Secundus for the king, while Zorobabell, who at first suggests the answer is woman, suddenly changes tack and instead passionately extols truth and



God. The upshot is a humiliating rejection for the sycophants and victory for Zorobabell, whom the king invites to become his 'familyer freind' or, in the humanist-classical idiom of counsel, close royal adviser (the source calls him 'the kinges kinsman').<sup>33</sup> So impressed is Daryus with Zorobabell's performance that, in addition to the promised reward, he encourages the winner to ask for any prize. That is when Zorobabell makes his crucial pitch, demanding that the king honour the promise he made at his accession and allow the Jerusalem Temple to rise again. To this the king instantly accedes, heaping yet more praise on his new friend. Thus Zorobabell's godly counsel triumphs partly because it is truthful, but also because it necessitates sufficient eloquence to persuade the king. This, though, problematises any simple division between plain honesty and dishonest flattery. Indeed, the play warns of the pitfalls of rhetoric not just by exposing the two toadies but also by having Zorobabell deliver a faux, and flowery, encomium of female power. His subsequent exaltation of truth and admonition of the king may be simple and unadorned but that does not make it artless.

p. 185 What, if any, is the topical resonance of this little parable? On the face of it, Daryus is a 'good and vertuous' prince:<sup>34</sup> he acts on blunt advice and advances the man who supplied it. But we should be wary of taking Daryus ↵ for a paragon of kingly virtue, not least given the play's barbed use of biblical typology. *Au courant* with the latest confessional polemic, *Kyng Daryus* taps the ubiquitous parallel between the rebuilding of the Temple and the Reformation, implicitly equating Babylonian captivity with the darkness of Marian rule. The analogy, which prompts us to see Daryus as a type for Elizabeth, might have been purely celebratory but, as in other contemporary applications, is not.

The two plots are united by broadly similar thematic concerns. Epitomised by the prospect of the Temple rising up, the triumph of true faith in the main plot mirrors the victory of Protestant Virtues over Catholic Vices in the rambunctious subplot which occupies the bulk of the play.<sup>35</sup> While the former unfolds, at least nominally, at the Persian court, the latter is set in England, a fact interjections like the following, 'Yea, truly thou art an holy man / As is betweene this and Buckingham',<sup>36</sup> never permit us to forget. The difference in setting in turn dictates a contrast in tone. Sharply opposed to both the stately banquet at which Daryus is joined by Ethiopia, Persia, Judah and Media, and the stylised contest with the three formal orations, are the boisterous and at times violent exchanges between the unholy trinity Iniquity, Importunity and Partiality and the virtuous trio Equity, Constancy and Charity. Their protracted struggle for theatrical space charts the ongoing battle between popery and the forces of reform for the souls of the English.

If the high plot maps out the conduct for a godly subject who must stand up for the truth despite potential royal displeasure, the subplot affirms the urgency of instruction, vigilance and tough action, though it does so with a great deal of delicious fun along the way. Remarkably resilient and jealously protective of his 'domynion',<sup>37</sup> Iniquity twice manages to drive the Virtues off the stage. For all their sermonising—the Virtues are continually quoting scripture—Charity, Equity and Constancy fail to make the reprobate see the error of his ways. By his own admission son of the pope and the Whore of Babylon, the Vice stands for the ignorant and the popish-leaning—'people dume / Without knowledge and vnderstandynge / And yet so deceytfull in wycked workynge'.<sup>38</sup> Iniquity finally gets his comeuppance, as Charity and his brethren predicted he would. In a preacher's dream-come-true, the very Virtues who tried to convert the Vice now act as agents of divine wrath: 'O thou false Iniquytie / We must distroy thee / God hath put vs in mynde.' The Vice is set alight and packed off to the Devil—'*Here sombody must cast fyre ↵ to Iniquytie*'—and, to round it all off, the Virtues sing a ditty gleefully exulting in their triumph.<sup>39</sup>

While to associate the reformation of the Church with the restoration of the Temple was nothing if not commonplace, the cast of heroes and villains could vary a good deal. Should the credit go to the Persian Darius for giving the Jews licence to proceed or to Zorobabel, Prince of Judah who obtained it? Or perhaps to the prophets who admonished the Jews? Were the Jewish people remiss in not resuming work on the Temple when commanded to do so by the Lord even though they still lacked the royal warrant, or should they only be scolded for dragging their feet later, when nothing stood in the way? Naturally, the answer depended in

part on which place in scripture was marshalled in support, whether Ezra, or Haggai, or the apocryphal Esdras, though we often find mutually contradictory readings of one and the same passage.<sup>40</sup> Ultimately, the author's immediate circumstances and aims determined whether he chose to berate the fickle and pusillanimous Jews or the Persian tyrant who forbade restoration of the Temple (usually assumed to be Cambyses), or to glorify Darius or Zorobabel who made it happen, or both.

Early in Mary's reign, Protestants compared her to Darius the Mede, whom enemies of the Jews had tried to abuse with false reports that led to his throwing Daniel into the lions' den. The aim of this rather improbable instance of *laudando praecipere* was to suggest that the English queen too must have been misled or else she would not acquiesce in the undoing of her saintly brother's work.<sup>41</sup> Their hopes dashed that, like the Median king, she would see the traducers for what they were, the evangelicals changed tack. They now likened the Catholic Mary's rule to Nebuchadnezzar's, foretelling England's liberation from Babylonian captivity and return to the true faith by analogy with the rise of the Second Temple.

The prophetic writings left behind by the first Marian martyr John Rogers, which Foxe included in the *Actes and Monuments*, confidently predicted that

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Spite of Nabucodonosors beard, and maugre his hart, the captiue, thrall and miserable Iewes must come home again, and haue their citie and temple builded vp again by Zorobabell, Esdras, & Nehemias &c. ... So shall the disperpled Englishe flock of Christe be brought againe into their former estate, or to a better I trust in the lord God, thā it was in innocent king Edwardes dayes, and our bloudy Babylonical bishops, & the whole crownshoren cōpany brought to vtter shame, rebuke, ruine decaye, and destruction ...<sup>42</sup>

Here the emphasis is very much on the agency of the political and ecclesiastical leaders of the Jews.

Foxe also printed a valedictory letter which another martyr, one Nicholas Sheterden (burned on 12 July 1555), had sent to his brother, seeking solace in the very passage from Esdras recycled in *Kyng Daryus*. '[L]et nothing dismaye you, for my cause', writes Sheterden,

but bee ye sure I shall haue the victorie in the truthe, Whiche truthe is stronger then kings, wine, or wom. For as zorobabell sayeth, wine is vnryghteous, the king is vnryghteous, women are vnryghteous, yea all the children of menne are vnryghetous, but the truthe endureth, and is alwaies strong, and conquereth for euer without ende.<sup>43</sup>

Sheterden's letter brings out the powerfully anti-authoritarian and misogynist bent of Zorobabel's words—never more so than under a female monarch, something our play does too.

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From the moment of her accession, Elizabeth was urged to take on the mantle alternatively of Zorobabel and of Darius. 'God hath made [you] as our Zerubbabell for the erectyng of this moste excellent Temple, and to plant and maynteyn his holy worde to the aduancement of his glorie,' declared the dedication of the Geneva Bible (1560).<sup>44</sup> Humphrey's epistle to *The Nobles or of Nobilitye* similarly lectured the queen that God's 'wil it is, that his temple ... be raysed, the walles of Hierusalem repaired'.<sup>45</sup> In his commentary on the book of Haggai or Aggeus (1560, revised and extended 1562), James Pilkington, like Humphrey and Foxe a Marian exile, subsequently Master of St John's College, Cambridge, and as of February 1561 bishop of Durham, used the image of the rebuilding of the Temple as a metaphor for the restoration of the English Church in the wake of Marian Counter-Reformation.<sup>46</sup> Pilkington subtly upbraided the queen for her lack of zeal, invoking Darius and Zorobabel to delineate the relationship between godly magistrate and semi-godly king. In a sermon delivered at Paul's Cross in the early 1560s, John Jewel, one of the leading anti-Catholic figures in the Church and another former exile (who had recanted his Protestantism in 1554 before fleeing to the continent where he would in turn recant his recantation), author of the legendary 'Challenge' sermon, and

now bishop of Salisbury, outlined a programme of reform of which royal supremacy was the cornerstone, 'for the Prince is keeper of the Lawe of GOD'. Calling on his congregation to get behind their queen, Jewel rehearsed the benefits they had already received: 'And, as then God mollified & softened the heart of the king *Darius* for the deliury of his people, euen so of his great mercie hath he nowe stirred vp a most noble & vertuous Ladie our soueraigne Queene *Elizabeth*, for the same purpose.'<sup>47</sup> Jewel also painted a picture of a brave reforming prince: 'But all this discouraged not the good Prince *Zorobabel*, hee armed himselfe with Gods promise against all impossibilities, and so called the people to the buylding of the temple.' Both here and in a roughly coterminous court sermon, Jewel appealed to the queen for more effective support of the ministry.<sup>48</sup>

p. 189 So by the time the story was brought to the stage, admonitory comparisons of Elizabeth to both King Darius and Zorobabel had been well entrenched, not least in works by people high up in the Church. Drawing on Esdras, who nowhere mentions Zorobabel's princely status, rather than on Aggeus or Ezra who do, the play automatically blocks the association of the queen with Zorobabell. By transforming competition among young royal ↳ attendants into a contest between sugared flattery, unmasked as a distinctively popish failing in the subplot, and bold defence of true religion, *Kyng Daryus* highlights the urgent need for godly counsel at court. Zorobabell pointedly reproaches King Daryus for not fulfilling the vow he made at his accession: 'When thou camest into thy kingdome ... Ierusalem thou dydst promyse / To buylde vp euery whyt, / And all that therein were amysse / Restore agayne to it,' a none-too-subtle reminder of Elizabeth's coronation oath and the pledges she gave (or was understood to have given) during her inaugural progress through the City of London.<sup>49</sup> Zorobabell's hectoring tone—'That o kynge I do desyre / And with my whole harte do it requyre / Performe thy vowe therfore / Whych thou hast promysed heretofore'<sup>50</sup>—is not the less significant for being strictly faithful to the scriptural original. And his holding forth on the 'unrighteousness' of wine, woman and king comes across as a blistering rebuff to the secular idolatry of earthly rulers espoused by Stipator Secundus.<sup>51</sup> Meanwhile, Zorobabell's evident misogyny would not have impressed a female prince. What, though, of the wider public?

p. 190 In 1565, when *Kyng Daryus* was first performed and printed—indeed, the unusually prompt publication may signify a conscious effort further to disseminate its message—it might have seemed fairly innocuous. After all, the interlude shuns brash allusions to contemporary figures and events. Besides, though coming at the peak of the Vestiarian Controversy,<sup>52</sup> it wisely stays aloof from contentious issues such as the royally mandated wearing of the surplice that were rending the clerical community apart. Putative application to Elizabeth rests solely on the persistence of the Old Testament parallel in pulpit oratory and print, an indirection affording a high degree of plausible deniability to the author. But where preachers and pamphleteers typically set up King Darius as a model to follow, the anonymous playwright, *pace* the prologue's protestations to the contrary, makes plain that the Persian's rule ↳ leaves something to be desired. Rather than stressing, as did Jewel, that God has moved Daryus's heart to show benevolence to his chosen people, our author emphasises the efficacy of a merely human reprimand. If anyone here has been inspired by God, it is Zorobabell, not Daryus.

Nor does the play shrink from attacking those about the king. Older critics dismissed its use of allegory as a throwback to the morality tradition,<sup>53</sup> but the names of Daryus's yes-men councillors—Curiosity (carefulness, attentiveness and exactitude, though the bearer is anything but) and Perplexity (inability to decide)—cleverly reveal their shortcomings. Ultimately, although the king proves himself susceptible to good counsel, the credit for his newfound resolve goes to Zorobabell, whose faith and constancy are extravagantly (if rather tiresomely) lauded in the epilogue. We sense here a lingering disaffection with Elizabeth's unwillingness to heed the advice of her prophets and complete the work to which they felt she had committed herself at her inauguration. In 1563, the queen famously thwarted Convocation's proposals for further reform, and she continued adamant that strict conformity to the 1559 Settlement be enforced. Nor did she take well to the nagging of self-styled Zorobabels. Alexander Nowell, dean of St Paul's, suffered

the indignity of a brusque interruption when delivering a 1565 Lent sermon at court, his iconoclastic riff dismissed by the royal auditor as 'threadbare'.<sup>54</sup>

Praise was a safer if not always a more successful mode. Consider *Sapientia Solomonis*, the one play that actually dramatised the building of the Temple—the First, not the Second—which Elizabeth did see, and that in the company of her privy councillors and Princess Cecilia of Sweden, on 17 January 1566, possibly to mark the seventh anniversary of her coronation. As if in partial fulfilment of the scenario posited at her accession by another exile, John Hales—'And as the Queene of Saba came from farre of to see the glory of K. Salomon, a woman to a man: Euen so shall the Princes of our tyme, come men to a woman, and Kinges maruell at the vertue of Queene Elizabeth'<sup>55</sup>—here she is unequivocally Solomon, her guest, Queen of Sheba, individual correspondences painstakingly enumerated in the epilogue. It is in the final lines that the hyperbole momentarily doubles up on itself: 'Solomon built a holy temple to God; our Queen held nothing more important than to renew quickly the ritual of holy worship which had been overthrown.'<sup>56</sup> Celebrating the pace of religious change at the precise time the government was gunning for nonconformists may have struck some of those present as a tad forced. Meanwhile, Elizabeth could simply take the compliment at face value.

p. 191 We do not know under what auspices *Daryus* was produced, so it would be difficult to argue that the play was designed to influence the queen other than perhaps by encouraging those around her to articulate the concerns of the godly. The Prolocutor's apostrophising of 'Good people' seems to bill it as popular fare. However, both in performance—whatever its venue—and in print, the piece gave vent to growing disappointment that the expected (promised?) crackdown against the dregs of popery was not happening. As Tom Freeman has observed of the mid-1560s, 'Now ... the godly began to see Elizabeth herself as one of the chief obstacles to the cleansing of the Church.'<sup>57</sup> And they remembered with dismay the conformist past of the queen and her key civil and ecclesiastical officers, Cecil, Bacon, Smith and Parker.<sup>58</sup> At such a fraught time, the 'Pithie & Pleasaunt' interlude could well have been perceived as an oblique reproof of Elizabeth's religious policy, and a rallying cry to reformists, its insistence on the binding nature of the royal promise (coronation oath?) evocative of a quasi-contractual view of kingship. Given its humanist background, the play provides intriguing evidence of how the older insistence on good kings keeping their promises transitions to a more sharply critical sense of conditional monarchy.

Back in 1560, the compilers of the Geneva Bible lamented sluggish progress with the building of the Temple, even Zorobabel and Jehoshue having 'to be stirred up and admonished of their duties', and they wondered what to 'thinke of other governours whose doings are ether against God, or very colde in his cause?'<sup>59</sup> Equally concerned, the author of *Kyng Daryus* prodded his audience (and readers) to do what lay in their power to 'stir up' their own 'colde' governor. As such, the play emerges as a hitherto unrecognised contribution to the godly campaign for reform.

*Kyng Daryus* echoes the discourse of godly counsel in its themes, register and use of scripture. Keen to win public support for perfecting the 1559 Settlement, it demonstrates that a godly counsellor is bound to remind the prince of what needs to be done for the faith. Naturally, the portrayal of this kind of intervention in a raucous interlude staged before a paying audience is worlds apart from, say, Grindal's private letter to Elizabeth. The theatre offered a more accessible and potentially a safer, if also more ambiguous, medium to rally popular backing for reform.

p. 192 Although no evidence survives of the play's reception, the interface between *Kyng Daryus* and the various non-dramatic instances of godly counsel suggests that the intended recipients of the advice were the general public, and that the purpose was not merely to popularise the image of godly rule, but also to encourage anyone with access to the queen to convey the concerns of the reformers. So the question of *who* was being advised in *Kyng Daryus* has a simple answer: the Protestant political nation. It is not so much that the play expands or departs from the existing language of godly counsel, although, like other works, it

cross-pollinates it with the humanist-classical idiom, but, rather, that its use of such discourse points to the ideological convergence of early Elizabethan drama and other forms of godly polemic.

## IV

Seldom other than opaque and allusive, early Elizabethan plays obsessively invoke counsel as the panacea for all the ills and political and religious exigencies of their time. That is the ideal. Yet, anatomising the conduct of imaginary princes and their servants, many nevertheless stage the failure of counsel, challenge its efficacy or else probe its limits. Conflict, tension and misfortune make for better drama, and, more to the point, tragic ends of monarchs and crises of states furnish a more effective warning for the present. Shielded by the protective layer of fiction, the drama does not shrink from issuing candid, occasionally astringent advice which the concluding prayer for the queen and those around her does little to palliate. So, in assessing the place of counsel in contemporary political culture we need to cast our net more widely and consider not only plays intended for royal or elite consumption but also those such as *Kyng Daryus* written for a popular audience. We also need to pay more attention to the formal and thematic affinities between plays and other forms of counsel: parliamentary speeches and petitions, polemical pamphlets, sermons, academic disputations and numerous published and unpublished addresses to the queen, especially given the performative elements of some of these activities. For, like them, the drama sought not only to give specific advice but also to engage the public in rethinking the relationship between monarchy and counsel.<sup>60</sup>

## Notes

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- 2 S. Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony: The Courtships of Elizabeth I* (London and New York, Routledge, 1996); P. Collinson, 'Pulling the Strings: Religion and Politics in the Progress of 1578', in J. E. Archer, E. Goldring and S. Knight (eds), *The Progresses, Pageants, and Entertainments of Queen Elizabeth I* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007); and, most recently, N. Younger, 'Drama, Politics and News in the Earl of Sussex's Entertainment of Elizabeth I at New Hall, 1579', *Historical Journal*, 58 (2015), 343–66.
- 3 H. James and G. Walker, 'The Politics of *Gorboduc*', *English Historical Review*, 110 (1995), 109–21; N. Jones and P. W. White, '*Gorboduc* and Royal Marriage Politics: An Elizabethan Playgoer's Report of the Premiere Performance', *English Literary Renaissance*, 26 (1996), 3–17. For the place of printed editions of *Gorboduc* amid other kinds of succession polemic, see S. Doran and P. Kewes, 'The Earlier Elizabethan Succession Question Revisited', in Doran and Kewes (eds), *Doubtful and Dangerous: The Question of Succession in Late Elizabethan England* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2014).
- 4 N. Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 106, 133, 134.
- 5 J. Astington, *English Court Theatre, 1558–1642* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999). See also K. Butler, *Music in Elizabethan Court Politics* (Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 2015).
- 6 P. Kewes, '"Plesures in Lernyng" and the Politics of Counsel in Early Elizabethan England: Royal Visits to Cambridge and

- Oxford', *English Literary Renaissance*, 46 (2016).
- 7 See John Nichols's *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth I: A New Edition of the Early Modern Sources*, ed. E. Goldring, F. Eales, E. Clarke and J. E. Archer, 5 vols (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2014).
  - 8 G. Walker, *Plays of Persuasion: Drama and Politics at the Court of Henry VIII* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1991). See also part 1 of Walker's *Reading Literature Historically: Drama and Poetry from Chaucer to the Reformation* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2013).
  - 9 D. Bevington, *Tudor Drama and Politics: A Critical Approach to Topical Meaning* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1968); M. Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London, Royal Historical Society, 1977).
  - 10 On the process of revision, see *King Johan* in *The Complete Plays of John Bale*, ed. Peter Happé, 2 vols (Cambridge, D. S. Brewer, 1985), I, 10–11. Canterbury Cathedral Library's deposition books of c.1561–2 provide evidence of opposition to the performance of Bale's plays. See P. Collinson, 'The Protestant Cathedral, 1541–1660', in P. Collinson, N. Ramsay and M. Sparks (eds), *A History of Canterbury Cathedral* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995, rev. edn, 2002). I owe this suggestion to the late Professor Collinson.
  - 11 Bale, *Complete Works*, I, lines 1666–704.
  - 12 Nichols's *Progresses*, I, 413; Kewes, "'Plesures in Lerynyng'".
  - 13 Astington, *English Court Theatre*, appx, p. 222.
  - 14 *The Works of Richard Edwards: Politics, Poetry and Performance in Sixteenth-Century England*, ed. R. King (Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 2001), pp. 32–3, 92.
  - 15 *Ibid.*, scene 15, lines 231–2.
  - 16 *Sapientia Solomonis*, ed. E. R. Payne (New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 1938).
  - 17 G. Austen, *George Gascoigne* (Cambridge, Boydell and Brewer, 2008), pp. 54–5.
  - 18 The exact dates are disputed: see Astington, *Court Theatre*, pp. 224–5; M. Wiggins and C. Richardson, *British Drama, 1533–1642: A Catalogue*, vol. II: 1567–1589 (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012), 9, 21–3.
  - 19 J. Kingsley-Smith, 'Gismond of Salerne: An Elizabethan and Cupidean Tragedy', *Yearbook of English Studies*, 38 (2008), 199–215.
  - 20 J. Puckering, *A Newe Enterlude of Uice Conteyninge, the Historye of Horestes* (London, 1567), sig. E3v.
  - 21 R. Willis, *Mount Tabor, or Private Exercises of a Penitent Sinner* (London, 1639), pp. 110–14; *Records of Early English Drama: Cumberland, Westmorland, Gloucester*, ed. A. Douglas and P. Greenfield (Toronto, Toronto University Press, 1986), pp. 362–4.
  - 22 S. Lucas, "'Let None Such Office Take, Save He that Can for Right his Prince Forsake': A Mirror for Magistrates, Resistance Theory and the Elizabethan Monarchical Republic", in McDiarmid (ed.), *Monarchical Republic*; S. C. Lucas, *A Mirror for Magistrates and the Politics of the English Reformation* (Amherst, MA, University of Massachusetts Press, 2009).
  - 23 P. Kewes, 'Godly Queens: The Royal Iconographies of Mary and Elizabeth', in A. Whitelock and A. Hunt (eds), *Tudor Queenship: The Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2010); A. Walsham, "'A Very Deborah?' The Myth of Elizabeth as a Providential Monarch", in S. Doran and T. S. Freeman (eds), *The Myth of Elizabeth* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).
  - 24 J. Aylmer, *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subiectes* (Strasbourg, [1559]), sigs H3r, D2r.
  - 25 The eponymous Jocasta has no political clout, and merely tries unsuccessfully to counsel her sons by Oedipus who compete for power.
  - 26 For an overview of such literature, see G. Walker, *Writing under Tyranny: English Literature and the Henrician Reformation* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005).
  - 27 R. Taverner, *The Second Booke of the Garden of Wysedome* (London, 1539), sigs C1r–C5v.
  - 28 T. Preston, *A Lamentable Tragedy mixed Ful of Pleasant Mirth, conteyning the Life of Cambises King of Percia* (London, [c.1569]), sig. A2r.
  - 29 In *Works of Richard Edwards*, ed. King, lines 39–40.
  - 30 'Prohibiting Unlicensed Interludes and Plays, Especially on Religion or Policy', in *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, ed. P. L. Hughes and J. F. Larkin, 3 vols (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1964–9), II, 115–16, at 115.
  - 31 Sixteenth-century commentators were divided about the identity of the Darius who authorised restoration of the Temple: the Geneva Bible tentatively identified him as Darius the Great 'the sonne of Hystaspis, and the third King of the Persians, as some thinke' (marginal gloss 'a' to Haggai, 1:1, fo. 379v); according to John Jewel, bishop of Salisbury, 'This king *Darius* (as the *Rabbines*, or Doctors of the *lewes*, and most parte of learned men coniecture) was sonne vnto the king *Assuerus*, begotten of the good Ladie Queene *Hester*.' See Jewel's sermon on Aggaeus delivered in the early 1560s at Paul's Cross, in *Certaine Sermons Preached before the Queenes Maiestie, and at Paules Crosse* (London, 1583), sig. D7v.
  - 32 In this chapter, 'Zorobabel' will be used for the biblical figure and 'Zorobabell' for the dramatic character.
  - 33 *A Pretie New Enterlude both Pithie & Pleasaunt of the Story of Kyng Daryus* (London, 1565), sig. H2v; *The Bible in Englishe* (London, 1562), fo. ii.v.

- 34 *Kyng Daryus*, prologue, sig. A2r.
- 35 Much the best formal analysis of the play is Bernard Spivack's in *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil: The History of a Metaphor in Relation to his Major Villains* (New York, Columbia University Press; London, Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 259–61.
- 36 *Kyng Daryus*, sig. A3r.
- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid., sig. B4r.
- 39 Ibid., sigs F2r, F4r–G1v.
- 40 On contrary interpretations of Haggai by Calvin, Jewel and Pilkington, see K. Gunther, 'Rebuilding the Temple: James Pilkington, Aggeus and Early Elizabethan Puritanism', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 60 (2009), 689–707, expanded in Gunther's *Reformation Unbound: Protestant Visions of Reform in England, 1525–1590* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- 41 See 'A certain Godly supplication, exhibited by a Norfolkeman, to the Cõmissioners comming downe to Norfolk and Suffolke, fruitfull to be redde & marked of all men', in J. Foxe, *Actes and Monuments of these Latter and Perillous Dayes, Touching Matters of the Church* (London, 1563), p. 1575, available at [www.hrionline.ac.uk/johnfoxe/](http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/johnfoxe/), accessed 13 March 2016.<sup>21</sup> The distinction between the two Dariuses would not have been obvious to most readers. While the exiles who became increasingly radicalised did move away from the idea of a badly counselled Mary, the notion was revived in works printed under Elizabeth such as Aylmer's *Harborowe*, probably to avoid giving offence to the current incumbent.
- 42 Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (1563), p. 1105. As Tom Betteridge points out, the Rogers material was cut from the second edition of 1570, presumably to ensure that its questioning of the temporal authority of the Marian parliaments would not be used to underwrite criticism of, and opposition to, their Elizabethan counterparts. T. Betteridge, 'From Prophetic to Apocalyptic: John Foxe and the Writing of History', in D. Loades (ed.), *John Foxe and the English Reformation* (Aldershot, Scolar Press, 1997), pp. 223–4.
- 43 Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (1563), p. 1306.
- 44 *The Bible and Holy Scriptures* (Geneva, 1560), sig. \*\*\*ii.r. Cf. a reaction to the passage of the Act of Uniformity: 'Now is the time for the walls of Jerusalem to be built again in that kingdom, that the blood of so many martyrs, so largely shed, may not be in vain' (*Zurich Letters*, ed. H. Robinson, 2 vols (Cambridge, Parker Society, 1842–5), II, 4; J. Strype, *Ecclesiastical Memorials of the Reformation of Religion under ... Henry VIII ... Edward VI ... and Mary*, 6 vols (Oxford, 1822), III, ii, 163).
- 45 L. Humphrey, *The Nobles or of Nobilitye* (London, 1563), sig. A12r. Calling her 'our Cirus, our anyoynted', Humphrey presented Elizabeth with a list of exemplars to follow, from Deborah and Judith to David and Josiah.
- 46 J. Pilkington, *Aggeus the Prophete Declared by a Large Commentary* (London, 1560); J. Pilkington, *Aggeus and Abdias Prophetes the One Corrected, the Other Newly Added, and Both at Large Declared* (London, 1562). See R. Bauckham, 'Marian Exiles and Cambridge Puritanism: James Pilkington's "Halfe a Score"', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 26 (1975), 137–48, at 139–40; Gunther, 'Rebuilding the Temple'. Pilkington's later commentary on Nehemiah, left unfinished at the time of his death in 1576 and printed in 1585 with a preface by Foxe, deals with the magistrates' and the citizens' need to rebuild the Temple even if the monarch is not helping.
- 47 Jewel, *Certaine Sermons*, sig. D8v.
- 48 Ibid., sigs K3r, G3r; John Craig, 'Jewel, John (1522–1571)', *ODNB*; J. E. Booty, 'The Bishop Confronts the Queen: John Jewel and the Failure of the English Reformation', in F. F. Church and T. George (eds), *Continuity and Discontinuity in Church History* (Leiden, Brill, 1979), p. 221; P. McCullough, *Sermons at Court: Politics and Religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean Preaching* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 90–1.
- 49 *Kyng Daryus*, sigs H2v–H3r. On the changes to the coronation oath, see D. Hoak, 'The Coronations of Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I, and the Transformation of the Tudor Monarchy', in C. S. Knighton and R. Mortimer (eds), *Westminster Abbey Reformed, 1540–1640* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2003). For an account of Elizabeth's coronation entry, see *The Queen's Majesty's Passage and Related Documents*, ed. G. Warkentin (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2004); on the significance of its imagery, see Kewes, 'Godly Queens'.
- 50 *Kyng Daryus*, sig. H3r.
- 51 The play relies on a recension of the Great Bible of 1539; in the Geneva version the three are dubbed 'wicked', in Taverner 'fautie': see Geneva Bible, Esdras 4:37–8, fo. 388.
- 52 Elizabeth's letter to Matthew Parker, archbishop of Canterbury, ordering him to investigate and police disregard for ceremonies, in particular non-compliance with the prescribed clerical dress, dates from January 1565; the title page uncharacteristically specifies that the play was published in October. Not much is known about the printer, Thomas Colwell, except that he specialised in ephemeral literature, and, from the late 1560s, enthusiastically purveyed anti-Catholic propaganda. See D. G. Hale, 'Thomas Colwell: Elizabethan Printer', *The Library*, 5th ser., 19 (1964), 223–6.
- 53 Spivack, *Shakespeare and the Allegory of Evil*, p. 261.
- 54 *Calendar of State Papers, Spanish, 1558–1567*, 405, quoted in McCullough, *Sermons at Court*, p. 47.



- 55 John Hales, *Oration*, in Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (London, 1583), p. 2141.
- 56 *Sapientia Solomonis*, p. 129.
- 57 T. S. Freeman, 'Providence and Prescription: The Account of Elizabeth in Foxe's "Book of Martyrs"', in S. Doran and T. S. Freeman (eds), *The Myth of Elizabeth* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 37.
- 58 Robert Harkins, 'Elizabethan Puritanism and the Politics of Memory in Post-Marian England', *Historical Journal*, 57 (2014), 899–919.
- 59 *The Bible and Holy Scriptures*, marginal gloss 'b' to Haggai, 1:1, fo. 379v.
- 60 The argument of this chapter will be developed in my monograph *Kingship, Counsel, and Earlier Elizabethan Drama* (in preparation).
- \* I have benefited from the conversation and advice of the late Patrick Collinson, Sue Doran, Tom Freeman, Felicity Heal, Noel O'Sullivan, Arthur Williamson and Blair Worden, and the comments of the editor and the anonymous reader.