



QUEENSHIP AND POWER

QUEENSHIP AND COUNSEL IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Edited by

Helen Matheson-Pollock,
Joanne Paul
and Catherine Fletcher



Queenship and Power

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Queenship and Counsel in Early Modern Europe

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

*Helen Matheson-Pollock, Joanne Paul,
and Catherine Fletcher*

Political theory and political reality were forced into an awkward encounter across the courts of Europe in the early modern period. The disjunction between a theory of political counsel predicated on male participants and a political reality of female political actors—due to an unprecedented number of Queens regnant and other powerful women in the early modern period—requires scholarly scrutiny. Although the topic has been studied with reference to individual queens, this collection represents the first attempt to study the relationship between queenship and counsel from a pan-European perspective.

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For centuries before the period in question here, counsel had been an essential part of European political thinking.¹ Medieval theory placed it into the hands of the politically disengaged philosopher—Aristotle serving as the model²—but also made it the political right of the noble class, as a means of ensuring that they were given a voice in the decisions of the state.³ When this right was not respected, monarchs could be justifiably overthrown, as was the case with Richard II—Richard the “redeless” (or adviceless)—in England in 1399.⁴ With the spread of Renaissance humanism, philosopher was married with courtier in the crafting of a new kind of counsellor, who tempered truthful advice with an awareness of *decorum*, as evidenced in Baldassare Castiglione’s *Book of the Courtier* (1528; English translation 1561). Such a figure ought to combine “knoweledge of the truth” with “Courtliness” so “In the wise maye he leade him, through the toughe way of vertue (as it were) deckyng yt aout with boowes to shadowe yt and strawinge it over wyth sightlye flouers”.⁵ A similar sentiment is expressed in Thomas More’s *Utopia* (1516), through the character of Morus, who recommends an “indirect approach” and a “more civil philosophy” (*philosophia civilior*)⁶ “that takes its cue, adapts itself to the drama in hand and acts its part neatly and appropriately” or “*cum decoro*”.⁷

By the middle of the sixteenth century, however, such a figure became the object of deep suspicion. The reason was the rise of Machiavellianism—a political perspective based on, though not always faithful to, the writings of Niccolò Machiavelli, primarily *Il Principe* (written in 1513 and published posthumously in 1532). Machiavelli reversed the humanist model of counsel, in which the prince is “led” or “instructed” by his counsellor, instead suggesting that “it is an infallible rule that a prince who is not himself wise cannot be soundly advised, unless he happens to put himself in the hands of a man who is very able and controls everything” in which case the prince “would not last long, because such a governor would soon deprive him of his state”.⁸ Rhetoric, the tool of the humanist counsellor, was especially distrusted for its ability to “move” or manipulate the emotions of the hearer. In such a case, who truly ruled: prince or counsellor? For this reason, the middle of the century onwards saw an increase in the recommendation of books of history as counsel/counsellors, as well as counsellors who simply related the lessons of such books. Hence the popular maxim “the best counsellors are the dead”, for “the penne is of a more free condition then the tongue”.⁹ In the later sixteenth century, the rise of Reason of State literature—a phenomenon first described in print by Giovanni Botero in 1589—meant that the attention shifted to the

“observations” of neighbouring states, including their geographical positions, policies and “interests” with the aim of advancing one’s own state interest over that of the others. It was, in short, a far cry from the virtuous courtiers of the humanist tradition and began to look much more like the realist political “science” of the modern period.

In the middle of the century, these changes in the discourse of counsel collided with an evolving political reality: the accession of several queens regnant (including Mary and Elizabeth Tudor of England and Mary, Queen of Scots), the rising power of Catherine de’ Medici in France, and significant roles for women (Margaret of Austria and Margaret of Parma) as governors of parts of the Holy Roman Empire. The discourse of political counsel, in all of its forms, was based on the participation of men, both as counsellors and the counselled.¹⁰ Women were not only thought of as external to the political sphere, but also were not seen to have the requisite skills to give political counsel, and thus their counsel was largely feared and rejected.¹¹

In the humanist tradition, counsel was meant to impart reason, and prudence was the primary virtue associated with the counsellor. Women were almost consistently thought to lack both.¹² Partly, this was because they could not possibly have the political experience requisite for such a virtue—women end up excluded from politics because they had been excluded from politics—but it also had to do with a long-standing tradition of seeing women’s advice on many matters as irrational, self-interested and dangerous. One of the best known rejections of women’s counselling abilities and activities was provided by John Knox in 1558 as a reaction to what he saw as the failing state of Europe. According to Knox, women’s

sight in civile regiment, is but blindness: their strength, weaknes: their counsel, foolishenes ... Nature I say, doth paynt them furthe to be weake, fraile, impatient, feble and foolishhe: and experience hath declared them to be unconstant, variable, cruelle and lacking the spirit of counsel and regiment.¹³

Knox’s perspective that women lacked the spirit and discipline for counsel reflected the historical perspective that arguably dated from St Paul. As the discourse of counsel shifted across the sixteenth century from humanism to Machiavellianism to Reason of State, women’s counsel was further mistrusted and excluded, as many of the contributions to this volume will show.

Furthermore, throughout the early modern period, counsel was often presented figuratively as the female counterpart to male sovereignty.¹⁴ The most famous and explicit example of this is in the work of Francis Bacon, who in his essay on counsel writes

... they say Iupiter did marrie Metis (which signifieth Counsell.) ... shee conceiu'd by him, and was with childe, but Iupiter suffered her not to stay till shee brought fourth, but eate her vp; whereby hee became with child and was deliuered of Pallas, armed out of his head. Which montrous fable containeth a secret of Empire: How Kings are to make vse of their Counsell of state.¹⁵

Female counsel was married to male sovereignty, with sovereignty the superior, but this was all figurative; women were not meant to be any part of this process.

Yet, as this volume shows, they were participants in the complex interplay between counsel and sovereignty. This volume includes essays analyzing more than 300 years of European royal history through the lens of the relationship between queenship and counsel. The study of queens and queenship, alongside that of women and early modern politics, has been a lively field of research in recent years. Works on individual queens are too numerous to list but scholars have increasingly emphasized the importance of considering all queens—consort, regnant and dowager—as political agents with significant roles to play in governance and diplomacy.

England's queens regnant, Mary and Elizabeth Tudor, have been the focus of particular attention. In a volume celebrating the quincentenary of Mary Tudor as England's first ruling queen, Joanne Paul highlighted the "conciliar compromise" reached by Mary as she navigated her unprecedented position.¹⁶ Valerie Schutte has published on *Mary I and the Art of Book Dedications*, noting the advice given to Mary I in dedicatory epistles.¹⁷ Anna Whitelock and Alice Hunt's collection *Tudor Queenship* analyzes the dynamics of counsel in the reigns of these queens; while limited to that context, the collection as a whole offered early discussion on several topics addressed in the present volume.¹⁸ Worthy of particular note is Ralph Houlbrooke's essay asking "What happened to Mary's councillors?", which highlights Elizabeth's own attitude that a multitude of councillors "make rather discord and confusion than good counsel".¹⁹

Queens regnant, however, are far from the whole story. The *Marrying Cultures* project has turned attention to the role of foreign born consorts as "agents, instruments or catalysts of cultural and dynastic transfer in

early modern Europe (1500–1800)”.²⁰ This ongoing research seeks to explore cultural interplay across shifting political borders, in the process generating new insight into the roles consorts played. The work of the Royal Studies Network via the *Royal Studies Journal* and the *Queenship and Power* series has significantly advanced the study of queens and their queenships. Elena Woodacre’s collection on *Queenship in the Mediterranean* highlights the politicized nature of queenship in the period c. 1100–1500²¹ while Woodacre and Carey Fleiner’s volume *Royal Mothers and their Ruling Children* spans an even broader period of time and highlights the extent to which royal women could leverage their motherhood and presume to advise and influence their reigning offspring.²²

Wider-ranging studies of noblewomen, political culture and the royal household offer further insights on which the present volume builds. Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben’s collection *The Politics of the Female Household* emphasizes the importance of a queen’s female attendants to all aspects of queenship but particularly the political, making reference to royal and noble women engaging in conciliar activity: Helen Graham-Matheson highlights the figure of the “counsellor” amongst Elizabeth Tudor’s female courtiers; Una McIlvenna refers to an incident of Catherine de’ Medici desiring to counsel a lieutenant general; and Katrin Keller presents a case-study of Viennese high stewardess Maria Elisabeth Wagensberg, who used her influence at the court of Empress Eleonora to place her son-in-law in a position as councillor.²³ Anne McLaren’s *Political Culture in the Reign of Elizabeth I* and Natalie Mears’s *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms* examine Elizabeth’s relationship with her advisers in terms of the dynamics of counsel noted above, although they make only passing mention of other female monarchs.²⁴ In short, there has been a growing interest in the subject of political counsel, and the acknowledgement of its awkward relationship with female rule. Article-length contributions by John Guy and Jacqueline Rose have attempted to provide surveys of counsel in the period, though, once again, solely in England.²⁵

A recent major work edited by Jacqueline Rose, *The Politics of Counsel in England and Scotland, 1286–1707*,²⁶ takes stock of an impressively wide period and breadth of sources to construct a new framework for discussions of both the council as an institution and the discipline and activity of counsel; two contributions to the volume have particularly relevance to this collection because of their focus on Elizabeth Tudor. Through an assessment of Elizabeth I’s own words, Susan Doran makes a convincing case that the Queen valued good counsel and factored it into her activity,

an argument that tallies with the findings on Elizabeth that follow below (particularly Chap. 9).²⁷ Paulina Kewes' essay²⁸ uses the concept of kingship to draw insights relating to the counsel of the Queen and the kingdom from early Elizabethan drama, findings complemented by John Walter's Chap. 10 in this volume on Spenser.

The specifically gendered dynamics of counsel have, however, received rather less attention. *Women and Tudor Tragedy: Feminizing Counsel and Representing Gender* by Allyna E. Ward examines the intersection of gender and counsel primarily within Tudor drama,²⁹ but its focus on ideas of queenship is limited and the geographical scope restricted to England. Recent work on gender and diplomacy has done much to point to the important role played by women in this sphere (which entailed, though was not restricted to, counsel). Much of this scholarship considers women of lower ranks than queen but its emphasis on informal practices offers methodological insights.³⁰ Greater work has been done on gender and counsel in the medieval period, primarily by Misty Schieberle, though often this is limited to the role female counsel plays in the private sphere, such as in the works of Rosemarie Deist and Judith Ferster.³¹

This volume offers a sampling of the rich reflections that are possible by examining the intersection between queenship and counsel in early modern Europe. Chapters consider queens as counsellors and as recipients of counsel, both from within their courts and internationally: the epilogue summarizes the findings and proposes lines for future research. The volume also places new emphasis on the nature of counsel itself. Seeking to engage with the existing scholarship, it shines a spotlight on counsel as a specific element or dimension of female rule, highlighting this key aspect of queenship and exploring the myriad ways in which queens and their counsellors engaged in the giving and receiving of counsel across the landscape of early modern Europe.

Queens enjoyed a variety of relationships of counsel. They counselled their husbands: indeed there was a certain expectation that women in dynastic marriages would act as liaison between their natal family and their husband. Queens might also counsel other rulers. This was not always as risky a position as a queen counselling her ruling husband. Francis Bacon, for instance, noted in a letter that Elizabeth I's "faithful advice, continual and earnest solicitation" to the king of France and his mother, Catherine de' Medici, "Which counsel, if it had been happily followed as it was prudently and sincerely given, France at this day had been a most flourishing kingdom, which now is a theatre of misery" (c. 1592).³² Susanna Niiranen's

Chap. 5, however, points out the risks that ensued when a queen counselled across the confessional divide. Queens, as well, were recipients of counsel, from ministers and from courtiers. Hannah Coates' chapter sets the relationship between Elizabeth I and Sir Francis Walsingham in this context, while John Walters explores the idea of the queen as the counsellor's muse.

In the practice of counsel, women deployed a variety of strategies. Margaret of Austria, offering counsel to her father, the Emperor Maximilian, said she was prepared to give "my little opinion on this affair, not in the form of advice nor or counsel, but as some little remonstrance to render my duty as I have always done, also as a most humble daughter should do".³³ Margaret's correspondence with her father shows that she hedged her counsel around with modest allusions to her limited experience. Maximilian, however, was clear in correspondence with his son that Margaret was a good source of "advice and counsel". Other women looked to networks to support them in their counsel. The chapters by Niiranen (Chap. 5), Matheson-Pollock (Chap. 4) and Kosior (Chap. 2) emphasize the importance for queens of surrounding themselves with a group of sympathetic courtiers (male or female). These courtiers might counsel the queen and support her counsel of others by echoing it to decision-makers. Counsel might also be expressed through cultural initiatives. Whitelock shows how Anna of Denmark's masques provided the queen with a mechanism for political expression alongside counsel provided through the more traditional means of meetings with foreign ambassadors. For Mary, Queen of Scots, as Johnson shows, careful configuration of palace space helped establish her status in relation to former rebels turned counsellors. Gifts and hospitality were also important aspects of queenly counsel, as Beer shows in the case of Catherine of Aragon. Understanding political action in this broad sense, rather than only in the narrow confines of institutions, helps appreciate the full extent of queens' influence.

The extent to which queenly counsel was necessarily different from the counsel of men is a question underlying a number of the chapters. Anyone engaged in counselling a king necessarily did so from a position of inferiority: in this sense queens were no different from any other sort of counsellor. Women might lack the experience to counsel prudently on certain topics, but then so did many men. That said, a number of chapters highlight gendered strategies of counsel: the use of female networks at court, the employment of particular spaces, the privileged access that a queen enjoyed. There are a number of challenges in recovering evidence of counsel. Much advice was provided orally and survives in the written record

only at second hand or through fragmentary references. Letters provide a key source for many of the chapters but it is often necessary to read between the lines to infer when counsel may have taken place, or to rely on second-hand accounts from, for example, foreign diplomatic observers. There is a more substantive challenge, too. As Matheson-Pollock's chapter shows, the better a queen was at giving counsel, the less notice was paid to it—the less it registered as counsel—and thus the more difficult it is to recover it. Yet the chapters in this volume demonstrate that through consideration of a wider variety of sources, including literary texts, material culture and architecture, and by exploring topics such as rhetoric, relationships and performance, it is possible to infer more about the ways that queens counselled and were counselled.

This volume has been organized chronologically, while also taking into account thematic elements, including the role of queenly counsel in diplomacy, queen regents as counsellors and the performance of counsel. It opens with Katarzyna Kosior's chapter (Chap. 2) on Bona Sforza's role as counsellor in Poland, which challenges the historiographical assumption that Bona was a manipulating counsellor. Despite creating a network of courtiers and diplomats to support her political agenda, her counsel succeeded only so far as it suited the interests of her husband, Sigismund the Old. Perhaps the most famous example of a sixteenth-century queen whose interests drifted apart from those of her king was Catherine of Aragon. Her early career, however, notably her entry into England, and her delicate role as wife to first Arthur and then Henry VIII of England, as well as being a member of a powerful Spanish family is often neglected in more popular accounts. Michelle L. Beer, in Chap. 3 notes the ways in which Catherine was unusually experienced as a counsellor and diplomat, taking on the official position of ambassador on behalf of her father, Ferdinand of Aragon, in 1507, and offering him advice on relations with England. The next chapter (Chap. 4) also considers the conciliar role of a queen adrift in a foreign country along with the crucial role of female courtiers in counselling a queen; Helen Matheson-Pollock's analysis of Mary Tudor's correspondence during her brief time as Queen of France reveals her role as counsellor to Louis and his court on dealings with Mary's brother, Henry VIII. Matheson-Pollock places such a role in the context of Mary's upbringing, noting particularly the influence of Mary's mother, Elizabeth of York, and grandmother, Margaret of Beaufort, as well as the crucial role of her female household. Also responsible for diplomatic counsel was Catherine Jagiellon, Queen of Sweden, considered by

Susanna Niiranen in Chap. 5. A Catholic queen married to a Lutheran king, Catherine faced the delicate task of counselling across the confessional divide in the later sixteenth century. Like many of the queens discussed in this volume, she was less than successful, but like that of Bona Sforza her case reveals much about the role of courtiers and diplomats in supporting queenly counsel.

Catherine Fletcher and Susan Broomhall turn to the role of regents as counsellors. Fletcher revisits the “Ladies’ Peace” of 1529, unique in its status as a treaty negotiated by two women, as a starting point to explore the counselling roles of its protagonists, Louise of Savoy and Margaret of Austria. Exploring Margaret’s self-representation in correspondence, in Chap. 6, Fletcher argues that while the rhetoric of her counsel needs to be understood with reference to her gender, these female diplomats were in fact assessed by contemporaries in strikingly similar ways to men. Broomhall takes up the case of a later regent of France, Catherine de’ Medici, in the chapter that follows (Chap. 7). She opposes existing scholarship which maintains that Catherine de’ Medici wielded little power in these periods, instead mounting an argument for Catherine’s increasing political involvement at this time, both giving and receiving counsel.

The final chapters examine counsel and queenship in the British Isles, focusing particularly on how counsel was framed and performed in contexts of female power. Alexandra Johnson’s Chap. 8 brings reflection on the spatial to a consideration of counsel-giving, by examining the ways in which Mary, Queen of Scots created a space, Holyrood Palace, that supported her authority over unruly counsellors. It expands studies of counsel-giving to include this notion of “conciliar space”, which is often overlooked. Hannah Coates in Chap. 9 examines the relationship between Elizabeth and Francis Walsingham, her principal secretary. Challenging the prevailing interpretation of their relationship as infamously stormy and unsettled, Coates suggests that it was only tempestuous when Walsingham failed to frame his advice according to established expectations of counsel, highlighting the powerful role such performative frameworks had on the realities of political processes and decision-making. Also assessing counsel in the reign of Elizabeth I, John Walters’ contribution (Chap. 10) examines the way in which counsel was offered to Elizabeth through the paratexts of Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*. Walters suggests that the nature of Spenser’s advice changes throughout the text, as he grapples with challenges to the efficacy of counsel as he writes. The volume ends with a consideration of Anna of Denmark in her role of Queen of England, and

the performance of political counsel through her court masques. Challenging a view that sees such performances as frivolity, Anna Whitelock (Chap. 11) suggests that they were instead sites of meaningful political counsel that had an influence on James I and his court. The volume ends with a short epilogue, considering the encoded and hidden nature of much of the counsel related to queenship, by Joanne Paul. Paul examines the visual tradition of counsel and queenship, and especially a frontispiece by John Dee, to think about how gendered power altered traditional expectations of good political counsel. The message of this epilogue, and perhaps this volume as a whole, is that the apparently non-political nature of much of the counsel surrounding queenship should not discount it as political counsel, but instead generate an expansion of that category.

The chapters in this collection have been gathered together with the aim of beginning to address the major lacuna in scholarship that is the neglect of women's roles in delivering and receiving counsel at early modern European courts. Queenship and counsel is a complex and nuanced subject worthy of significant critical attention and analysis. Drawing together the narratives and activity of a variety of women across the courts of Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this volume highlights the intersection between female rule and political discourse, beginning a conversation that is long overdue about the value of the relationship of queenship and counsel.

NOTES

1. For a more detailed account of the changing discourse of counsel in the Early Modern period see Joanne Paul, "Counsel and Command in Anglophone Political Thought, 1485–1651" (PhD diss., Queen Mary University of London, 2013), forthcoming as a monograph with Cambridge University Press.
2. See M. A. Manzalaoui, *Secretum Secretorum: Nine English Versions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977).
3. See John Guy, "The Rhetoric of Counsel in Early Modern England," in *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 292–310.
4. See *Richard the Redeless*, in *Richard the Redeless and Mum the Sothsegger*, ed. James M. Dean (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000).
5. Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. Thomas Hoby, ed. Virginia Cox (London: Everyman, 1994), 338, 299. Notably, Castiglione still holds Aristotle (as well as Plato) to be an example of such a counsellor. They both "practiced the deedes of Courtiershippe and gave them selves to

- this ende, the one with the great Alexander, the other with the kynges of Sicilia” (337). This is opposed to Calisthenes, “who bicause he was a right philosopher and so sharpe a minister of the bare truth without mynglinge it with Courtlinesse, he lost his lief and profited not, but rather gave a scaundler to Alexander” (338).
6. Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. Edward Surtz and J. H. Hexter (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), 99. Our translation.
 7. Thomas More, *Utopia*, ed. George M. Logan and Robert M. Adams (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 34–5. Latin from Yale (1977) edition.
 8. Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, eds. Quentin Skinner and Russell Price, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 82.
 9. Matthew Coignet, *Politique discourses upon trueth and lying*, trans. Edward Hoby (London, 1586), 69–70. See Joanne Paul “The best counsellors are the dead: counsel and Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*,” *Renaissance Studies*, 30, no. 5 (2016): 646–665, online at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/rest.12157/full>.
 10. The consistent use of the male pronoun in the paragraphs above was, thus, conscious and intentional.
 11. Personal counsel, on the other hand, could be seen as being the purview of women; see Rosemarie Deist, *Gender and power: counsellors and their masters in antiquity and medieval courtly romance* (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2003), 171, 229, 231. For female counsel in medieval literature see Deist, *Gender and power*; Misty Schieberle, *Feminized Counsel and the Literature of Advice in England, 1380–1500* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014). For the counsel of Pisan and Dowriche see Cary J. Nederman, “The Mirror Crack’d: The *Speculum Principum* as Political and Social Criticism in the Late Middle Ages,” *The European Legacy: Toward New Paradigms* 3.3 (2008): 28–9; Mihoko Suzuki, “Warning Elizabeth with Catherine de’ Medici’s Example: Anne Dowriche’s French Historie and the Politics of Counsel,” in *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Anne J. Cruz, and Mihoko Suzuki (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 174–93.
 12. Leah Bradshaw, “Political Rule, Prudence and the ‘Woman Question’ in Aristotle,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 24, no. 3 (1991): 563–70.
 13. John Knox, *The first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women*, (Geneva: J. Poullain and A. Rebul, 1558), 9–10.
 14. Schieberle, *Feminized Counsel*, 58 points out that this “marriage metaphor” had been utilized in by Ricardian poets in order to speak submissively and persuasively through female personae.
 15. Francis Bacon, *Essayes* (London, 1612), 59–60.

16. Joanne Paul, "Sovereign Council or Counseled Sovereign: The Marian Conciliar Compromise," in *The Birth of a Queen: Essays on the Quincentenary of Mary I*, eds. Sarah Duncan and Valerie Schutte (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 135–53.
17. Valerie Schutte, *Mary I and the Art of Book Dedications* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).
18. Alice Hunt and Anna Whitelock, eds. *Tudor Queenship: The Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth* (New York: Palgrave, 2010).
19. Ralph Houlbrooke, "What happened to Mary's councillors?" in Hunt and Whitelock, *Tudor Queenship*, 210.
20. For further details see the project website: <http://www.marryingcultures.eu/about>.
21. Elena Woodacre, ed. *Queenship in the Mediterranean* (New York: Palgrave, 2013).
22. Elena Woodacre and Carey Fleiner, eds., *Royal Mothers and their Ruling Children: Wielding Political Authority from Antiquity to the Early Modern Era* (London: Palgrave, 2015).
23. Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben, eds., *The Politics of the Female Households: Ladies-in-Waiting Across Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Helen Graham-Matheson (now Matheson-Pollock), "Petticoats and Politics: Elisabeth Parr and Female Agency at the Early Elizabethan Court," 31–50; Una McIlvenna, "'A Stable of Whores': The 'Flying Squadron' of Cathrine de Medici," 181–208 and Katrin Keller, "Ladies-in-Waiting at the Imperial Court of Vienna from 1550 to 1700: Structures, Responsibilities and Career Patterns," 77–98.
24. A. N. McLaren, *Political Culture in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Natalie Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
25. Guy, "Rhetoric of Counsel," 292–310; Jacqueline Rose, 'Kingship and Counsel in Early Modern England', *The Historical Journal* 54, no. 1 (2011), 47–71.

Notably, the vast majority of items on this list of scholarship focuses on England, including those which look at counsel as distinct from queenship. Although the prevalence of minor and female monarchs during the sixteenth century may have placed more importance on the role of counsel in England, the discourse was by no means specific to it, and there is need for more work on its expression on the continent and, indeed, beyond. The editors are aware that this volume too exhibits a certain Anglocentric bias and is limited to Europe, though there was an effort to expand this scope. We hope that the studies presented here provide foundation for examinations of the topic in other geographical areas.

26. Jacqueline Rose, ed., *The Politics of Counsel in England and Scotland, 1286–1707* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

27. Susan Doran, “Elizabeth I and Counsel,” in *The Politics of Counsel*, ed. Rose, 151–161.
28. Paulina Kewes, “Godly Queens: The Royal iconographies of Mary and Elizabeth,” in *Tudor Queenship: the Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth*, eds. Alice Hunt and Anna Whitelock (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 47–62.
29. Allyn E. Ward, *Women and Tudor Tragedy: Feminizing Counsel and Representing Gender* (Plymouth: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2013).
30. Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James, eds. *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics since 1500* (London: Routledge, 2016). Robyn Adams and Rosanna Cox, eds. *Diplomacy and Early Modern Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). Tracey Sowerby and Jan Hemmings, eds. *Practices of Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe, c. 1410–1800* (London: Routledge, 2017).
31. Schieberle, *Feminized Counsel*; Deist, *Gender and Power*; Judith Ferster, *Fictions of Advice: The Literature and Politics of Counsel in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).
32. Francis Bacon, “Mr. Bacon’s Discourse in the Praise of his Sovereign,” in *The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon*, ed. James Spedding (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts), 134.
33. See below, Fletcher, Chap. 6.

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Bona Sforza and the Realpolitik of Queenly Counsel in Sixteenth-Century Poland-Lithuania

Katarzyna Kosior

Women of early modern Italy are famous for being clever and devious political players on the European political scene. Catherine de' Medici, who effectively ruled France for decades, and Lucrezia Borgia, who exerted influence by marrying into the Sforza, Aragon and d'Este families, are perhaps the most famous examples. Other familiar names include Caterina Sforza, who occupied Castel Sant'Angelo after Pope Sixtus IV's death in 1484, and Isabella d'Este, known for her patronage of art and effective regency of Mantua. There is substantial English-language literature about these women, but their close relative, Bona Sforza (b. 1494–d. 1557), whose counsel and actions influenced the fate of the largest composite monarchy on the continent, remains largely obscure in English literature.¹ The only surviving child of Duke Gian Galeazzo Sforza of Milan and Duchess Isabella d'Aragona of Bari and Rossano, Bona lived with her mother under the protection of the Neapolitan Aragons following her

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father's death. Her marriage to King Sigismund I the Old of Poland was arranged by the Holy Roman Emperor, Maximilian I, as result of the alliance agreed between the Habsburgs, Sigismund and his brother, King Vladislaus II of Hungary, at the Congress of Vienna in 1515. In April 1518, Bona entered a country very different from her own, governed as an elective monarchy with a strong parliament that gave much political privilege to the nobility, who could hold the royal couple accountable for their actions.²

Polish historians make much of Bona's political position and often write of her in terms that might as well describe a powerful sixteenth-century man. The exhaustive interwar research of Władysław Pocięcha, since augmented by Maria Bogucka, Anna Sucheni-Grabowska and my own contribution, shows Bona as a wife to a weak king and an active politician who bought the crown lands pawned to wealthy senators for royal debts to turn them into the Jagiellonian dynasty's private property, conducted wide-ranging economic reforms in Lithuania, governed her Italian duchies (Bari and Rossano) from afar and took complete charge of raising her children.³ But even though there is much evidence of Bona's political action, such as buying lands or appointing officers, there are few documented occasions of her giving direct advice or counselling the king. Even when this evidence of Bona directly counselling her husband is lacking, historians tend to assume that she was the master-puppeteer behind Polish internal and foreign politics. The view of the Polish historians is strongly grounded in the aura of unbreakable political fortitude that surrounds the queen in reports of her contemporaries. Giovanni Marsupino, the Habsburg ambassador at the Polish court, wrote that "Dear God, talking to the old king is like talking to nobody. The king has no will of his own, he is so curbed. Bona holds everything in her hands, she alone rules the country and gives orders to everyone".⁴ This chapter demonstrates that while Bona pursued a comprehensive political programme and mounted her own political faction which included some of the most powerful Polish nobles, she was only successful in implementing her political agendas insofar as it suited her husband, Sigismund the Old.

Bona's political programme had three main aims. First, she attempted to strengthen the position of the Jagiellonians as a dynasty by buying out crown lands pawned to some of the wealthiest of the realm's nobility for royal debts. But instead of returning them to the state, she converted them into the private property of the Jagiellonians, which was seen by the republican Polish nobility as an attempt to introduce absolute monarchy.

Part of this agenda was also the manipulation of the elective system to solicit the election and coronation of the couple's son, Sigismund August, to the Polish throne in 1530 while his father was still alive. Strengthening of the dynasty at home was connected to consolidating its position in the European context. The dynastic expansion of the Jagiellonians was directed towards the Hungarian and Czech territories, where it collided with the dynastic politics of the German Habsburgs. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the kings of Poland (Alexander I Jagiellon until 1506, then followed by Sigismund I the Old) and Hungary (Vladislaus II Jagiellon) were brothers, but by the end of the sixteenth century Hungary was under control of the Holy Roman Emperors. The Vienna Congress in 1515 between the Jagiellonian brothers and Emperor Maximilian I was a defeat for Jagiellonian diplomacy. Due to the dynastic marriages agreed during the meeting, the Jagiellonians virtually gave up control over Hungary and Bohemia's future. The marriage between Bona and Sigismund was an indirect result of the congress, as she was Maximilian's niece by his marriage to Bianca Maria Sforza. Bona defied expectations to become a quasi-ambassador for her natal family at the Polish court, which was the traditional role fulfilled, for example, by Catherine of Aragon at Henry VIII's court (see Michelle L. Beer's, Chap. 3 in this volume). Despite her Habsburg connections, Bona understood that Poland must counter the growing influence of the Habsburgs in the region or be swallowed by the empire. She thought that Poland should fight the growing influence of the Habsburgs by pursuing two of her other aims—a strong alliance with France sealed with a dynastic marriage and the provision of support to the anti-Habsburg faction in Hungary led by the Zapolya family.

By demonstrating how Bona's political action was dependent on the success of her counsel, this chapter offers a more nuanced analysis of Bona's political activities and the dynamic between the royal couple. Ultimately even Bona, despite her undoubted sway, was hindered by gender constraints. Pursuing her ends often exposed her vulnerability and it is not always easy to distinguish the counsel she offered her husband from her efforts to solicit his approval for her political projects. Despite Bona's political fortitude, the historical evidence suggests that her husband often refused her wishes outright, or that she had to revise her plans on the basis of a significant compromise. This was all complicated by Bona's refusal to constrain her counsel and the manner of giving it by the prescriptions of her gendered office. She notoriously disregarded the tenets of queenship as

they were epitomized in the coronation ritual, particularly in the symbolism of the queen's regalia.⁵ The Polish coronation book, according to which Bona was crowned, states that the crown symbolized her new status as "the consort to royal power" and her duty to provide "good counsel".⁶ "Good" meant guarded by virtue, meaning high moral standards, propriety and goodness, as befitted the "guardian of humility and custom" rather than practically beneficial. The restrictions on how the queen was permitted to give counsel were gendered and dominated by the concept of intercession, but in practice the lives of consorts were often fraught with political challenges that could not be resolved with feminine virtue and mitigation. The world of early modern high politics favoured the devious over the meek. This was linked to the masculine virtue conceptualized by Machiavelli as *virtù*, or the ability to "do wrong, and use it and not use it according to necessity".⁷ Early modern virtue was subject to a gendered double standard, but not all queens, including Bona, would allow themselves to be ruled by it. This chapter thus examines the realpolitik of queenly counsel as practical or even self-interested rather than guided by ideals of queenly virtue and as an instrumental tool in carrying out the queen's political plans, if only she could influence and compromise with her husband.

Throughout Bona's time as the queen of Poland, numerous reports concerning the influence of her counsel survive, written by her enemies as well as supporters. In April 1519, Cardinal Ippolito d'Este, who travelled with Bona to Poland for her wedding in April 1518, wrote to Alfonso I of Ferrara, then Lucrezia Borgia's husband, that: "Everyone wants to be of service to the queen, expecting much good from her favour, because the king displays an extraordinary love for her and she never speaks on someone's behalf in vain, but he always fulfils her wishes most attentively".⁸ This was a golden period in the royal couple's marital life. Bona had just given birth to the couple's first daughter, Isabella, and was soon to conceive their first son, Sigismund August. Bona was not lax in her wifely duties and she took good care of Sigismund's daughters from his first marriage to Barbara Zapolya as well as his illegitimate daughter, Beata Kościelecka, from his relationship with Katarzyna Telniczanka.⁹ The king was so pleased with his new wife that in 1519, a year after the wedding, he made her a gift of the duchies of Pińsk and Kobryń to use for life. He continued to endow her with, for example, Sielce in 1521 and castle Teteryn in 1523.¹⁰ Two factors were key in Bona's initial success: the strength of the couple's relationship and Sigismund's amenable character.

Sigismund's prayer book, now held at the British Library, contains proof that the royal couple led a rich family life and worked as a genuine team. Prayer books were portable and personal, carried in the pockets of their owners as convenient family albums. Made around 1524 in the workshop of Stanisław Samostrzelnik, Sigismund's prayer book served as a family scrapbook, including personal marginalia, such as uplifting proverbs or, indeed, a handwritten recipe involving the use of scorpion oil. However, Sigismund used it primarily as a private means of recording the births of his children. About the birth of his daughter, he writes: "On Tuesday, when four in the evening was still ringing, on 18 January 1519, in Cracow was born the most illustrious lady Isabella of Casimir's line, I wish [to let you know] that you are regarded most lucky and passionately desired".¹¹ Similar sentiment accompanies Sigismund's entry about the birth of his second daughter Sophie, "most lucky and desired", which gave him joy in his old age for which he was grateful to God.¹² Sigismund addresses his daughters in the second person of the present tense, suggesting that they might have been able to read the entry. Sentiment expressed in private seems genuine and suggests that the Jagiellonian family did not lack affection. The shared ownership of the book with his wife, Bona Sforza, also makes it a rare testament to the royal couple's relationship.¹³ Because births of the Jagiellonian children were recorded in two hands, the earlier ones in Latin, the later in Italian, it is highly likely that Bona Sforza at some point took over the family record-keeping. Taking over each other's personal things suggests that the formal declarations of affection that were a part of any arranged royal marriage was not entirely a matter of ritual in this case—a similar practice developed between Henry VIII of England and Anne Boleyn when their relationship was at its strongest.¹⁴ Susanna Niiranen's chapter about Catherine Jagiellon, daughter of Bona and Sigismund, suggests that she shared a similar bond with her husband, John III of Sweden (Chap. 5). Sigismund was truly fond of his young wife, who effortlessly bore him five children, and, perhaps to avoid the awkwardness of forgetting her birthday, he dutifully recorded the date in his prayer book.

Maria Bogucka is right to suggest that Bona's distress after her husband's death in 1547 seems genuine.¹⁵ More importantly, Bona's letter to her daughter Isabella, the queen of Hungary, suggests the reasons why the relationship worked. "His Royal Highness bore his illness and death with the same courageous mind and patience with which he endured life's challenges", she writes, "we lost the most compassionate husband and father, Poland lost a king who was good, kind and affable to everyone".¹⁶

Sigismund's famously amenable character was important in building the couple's relationship, but also in Sigismund's brand of kingship. Stanisław Orzechowski (1513–66), a prominent Polish writer, thinker and politician, commented that Sigismund was “always happy to talk to us, to listen to our counsel. He not only opened his kind ears to us, but also all of his palaces, rooms, the most secret places, he put all of his house and life on public display”.¹⁷ Sigismund's willingness to listen to counsel benefitted Bona, but was also a crucial characteristic for a king within the context of the Polish system of government. In 1505, Alexander I Jagiellon signed the *Nihil Novi* act, in which the Polish kings renounced much of their legislative powers in favour of the parliament, or *sejm*, giving equal powers to the Senate and Chamber of Envoys. The *sejm* was thus established as the central organ of the Polish monarchy.¹⁸ The Polish king had to appear to be susceptible to counsel, but Sigismund seems to have been especially so, if Orzechowski is to be believed. However, Bona learnt very quickly after the marriage that Sigismund's affability was not the equivalent of spinelessness and some of her more ambitious plans had to be abandoned or adapted in order to compromise with her husband.

Following the birth of the couple's son Sigismund August in 1520, Bona made the first documented attempt at exercising her newfound power through direct counsel. The surviving evidence is Sigismund's reply to a letter in which she must have advised him to secure the Duchy of Głogów for two-year-old Sigismund August. Following the feudal partitions of the Polish kingdom among the various branches of the hereditary Piast dynasty in the twelfth century, Głogów resisted the reunification 300 years later and remained under the governance of the Silesian Piasts. The last Piast, Duke Jan II, was defeated by King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary, and Głogów became part of the Bohemian dominions. Bohemia passed into the dominion of the Jagiellonian dynasty in 1471 and Hungary followed suit in 1490. Vladislaus II Jagiellon, Sigismund's brother, became king of these dominions first, with his very young son, Louis, following in 1516. In his youth, Sigismund spent much time at the Hungarian court and became the duke of Głogów in 1499, renouncing his title after his election to the Polish throne in 1506. In 1522, Bohemia and Hungary were ruled by sixteen-year-old Louis, Sigismund's nephew, who was already proving a weak and incapable ruler, so Bona might have been justified in thinking that Głogów was for the taking, especially considering Sigismund's previous governance of the area. Sigismund begged to differ. His reply was very clearly a refusal, slightly reproachful, but nevertheless conciliatory:

We wish that our son could have all kingdoms and realms in his dominion, but we are the guardian of the Hungarian king, who with our help has been trying with great toil to reunify the provinces which had been torn away from his realms and despite much unrest in his own country. Consider Your Royal Highness whether it would be proper and what kind of reputation it would give us among these peoples, if we demanded Głogów from our young nephew, who was given into our care and who has so little, and gave to our son who has no need of this land, instead of extending a helpful hand to our nephew?¹⁹

Jan Malarczyk claims that Sigismund was an Erasmian king, characterized by noble character, goodness and impeccable integrity.²⁰ Bona, on the other hand, cannot be characterized by ideals of early modern queenship. The model imposed on her during her coronation seems least fitting of all. Rather than guided by virtue, her request was prompted by the Machiavellian *virtù*. Her baby son had very little claim to the Polish throne until his election by the nobility, and the queen must have rolled her eyes when reading her husband's arguments about not taking from another king to give to her son, whose future must have seemed very uncertain in the context of the Polish elective monarchy. Bona was unlikely to have forgotten how she was exiled from Milan with her mother, following the fall of her father, Gian Galeazzo Sforza, in 1494. Her background, circumstance and personality made Bona into a Machiavellian queen—clever and monomaniacal in exercising her influence.

Sigismund's letter concerning Głogów suggests that he must have realized Bona's character, but he never discarded her counsel lightly and, whenever possible, sought a compromise, doubtless realizing that keeping the peace in his household depended on it. He especially respected Bona's counsel regarding appointments to vacant offices. While there is limited evidence of instances when Bona's direct counsel to Sigismund was entirely successful, her influence on appointments to offices allows us another perspective on her practices of counsel. The appointments allowed her to create a network of queenly counsel, understood as a group of people whose political interests were aligned with those of the queen and who reinforced the counsel she gave to Sigismund. Andrzej Krzycki, the queen's favourite as well as a famous poet and infamous debauchee, bragged in a letter dated 1520 to Crisostomo Colonna, an Italian poet, that "I have received now and before three prominent church offices thanks to the favour of our most illustrious queen".²¹ He was part of a very

extensive network which included high-ranking office-holders like Piotr Gamrat, Sigismund's secretary, who eventually became the archbishop of Gniezno in 1541. He owed his successful career to Bona, who supported his consecutive promotions to church offices. Most importantly, he was allowed to combine the offices of the bishop of Cracow and the archbishop of Gniezno, arguably the two most prestigious church offices in Poland. Having supporters of such high status could be a liability as Marsupino, the imperial ambassador, pointed out. He reported to the emperor that it might be possible to keep Bona's power in check by threatening to influence the pope to order Gamrat to renounce one of his offices. Marsupino further commented that "that archbishop is the first confidant and advisor of queen Bona and the most hostile towards your highness and his daughter".²² Gamrat proved a loyal and useful ally, who supported Bona's anti-Habsburg and pro-French politics, and helped discharge the tension of the accusations made by the nobility against Bona during the Chicken War.²³ In 1537, the nobility gathered in Lviv to demand the execution of their liberties and the curbing of Bona's political influence by forbidding her to buy out crown lands pawned for royal debt, taking away her control over Sigismund August's education, and, importantly, having permanent royal councillors, which could diminish Bona's and her faction's influence on the king. Gamrat continued to be one of Bona's closest confidants, but his motivations were more complex than merely connected to his acquisition of offices and pro-French politics. Marsupino, who made every effort to keep his master up to date with gossip from the Polish court, reported that "the archbishop and his wife are in Masovia. Bona rules everything. One is the queen, the other is the popess; so that both spiritual and secular matters are in good hands".²⁴ This mysterious "popess" was a woman called Sobocka, the long-term mistress of the archbishop and one of Bona's favourites.

Bona's hold on Gamrat was multi-dimensional and ensured his loyalty, but the same could not be said for other members of her political faction. Piotr Kmita, the voivode of Cracow and Grand Marshal of the Crown from 1529, proved especially useful in facilitating Bona's Hungarian politics, but a disloyal ally in internal politics. This was especially evident during the Chicken War of 1537 when Kmita openly spoke against the queen.²⁵ Another member of Bona's network, Jan Łaski, the primate of Poland, supported her anti-Habsburg and anti-Hohenzollern politics, even if, as an advocate of the "executionist movement", he heartily disagreed with her attempts to consolidate the Jagiellonian dynasty as the

rulers of Poland-Lithuania. The “executionist movement”, linked to the Chicken War of 1537, aimed to enforce the nobility’s political rights by, for example, campaigning for the return of the crown lands pawned for royal debts by the magnates and the right of the parliament rather than the king to appoint to state offices. In particular, Łaski firmly opposed Bona’s efforts to secure an election to the Polish throne for her son, Sigismund August, while his father, Sigismund the Old, was still alive. Even if they were elective kings of Poland, the Jagiellonians were still the hereditary dukes of Lithuania and to perpetuate the union between the two realms, the Poles would have to elect the grand duke of Lithuania. Sigismund’s letter to Bona from 1522 suggests that the royal couple collaborated on the project of securing the loyalty of the Lithuanian lords for the dynasty. Sigismund writes that:

Another enterprise that detains us here, examining carefully the human fragility and the inconstancy of human affairs and wishing to secure the future position of our most illustrious son, on the day of St Barbara, I lingered with a multitude of prelates, dukes and high lords of the senate, with whom we have transacted that if my human life was to end before our son reaches adulthood, they will recognise no one else’s dominion but his.²⁶

This caused a serious concern for Łaski and his faction that the royal couple would pervert the elective system and the Lithuanians would henceforth dictate who would be the king of Poland. Bona and Sigismund succeeded and, in 1530, Sigismund August was crowned as *rex iunior* of Poland while his father was still alive. This election *vivente rege* caused much controversy and the Chicken War of 1537 was partly a delayed backlash against the perceived corruption of the system.

People who belonged, even broadly, to Bona’s faction had their own political agendas and programmes they were keen to realize. The omnipotence suggested by the sources and by modern historians is not born out by Bona’s constant need to accommodate the interests of others. Furthermore, her influence on appointments to offices was not impregnable and the extent of her network was by necessity the result of a compromise with her husband. The same letter that brought news of Sigismund’s success with the Lithuanian lords also contained some less pleasing tidings. Following the death of Sigismund’s secretary, Jan Konarski, Bona recommended two of her Italian courtiers to the vacant church offices. She asked that her personal doctor, Giovanni Andrea

Valentino, a known agent of the duke of Ferrara, be named the new cantor of Sandomierz. Sigismund refused, claiming that he had already promised the office to his other secretary, Mikołaj Zamoyski. He also commented on Valentino's unsuitability for the office as "too young" and someone who might leave unexpectedly. The king was also wary of appointing too many Italians, as Bona's Italian court was already not perceived favourably by the Poles. However, he wrote that "wanting to satisfy your Majesty's wishes, we confirm that the prebendary and altaria of St George, for which you have asked, is for your disposition ... because we always wholeheartedly want to satisfy your Majesty's wishes".²⁷ The office was given to Alessandro Pesenti of Verona, who had been the organist to Cardinal Ippolito d'Este before becoming a royal musician at the Polish court. Even if Sigismund was a gentle and amenable man, Bona often had to compromise on the appointment of her supporters and then compromise again with their respective political agendas.

Bona's political feats of counsel and compromise were even more complicated by the fact that Bona and her network were working against another powerful faction gathered around Krzysztof Szydłowiecki, the grand chancellor of the Crown from 1515. His firmly pro-Habsburg politics led to the Congress of Vienna in 1515 and the marriage between Bona and Sigismund which consolidated the Jagiellonian-Habsburg alliance. But Bona understood that Poland might well join Bohemia and Hungary under the empire's control, unless her three political goals were pursued: strengthening the Jagiellonian dynasty at home; supporting the Hungarian, anti-Habsburg, national party led by the Zapolyas; and creating an alliance with France and the Ottomans. Emperor Maximilian's death in 1519 opened an opportunity for Bona and Łaski to start weaving the Franco-Ottoman alliance. It seems that at the time, Sigismund favoured this line of diplomacy. Already in 1520 Sigismund wrote to Francis I of France, who was one of the candidates in the imperial election of 1519, to assure him that the Polish court gave no support to Charles V, who was elected. To show his commitment to an alliance, Sigismund despatched Łaski as his ambassador to France.²⁸ The original plan hatched in 1521 was for Princess Isabella, Bona and Sigismund's eldest child, to marry Francis I of France's son, Henry. It was Bona's particular wish that the newly-weds should become the rulers of Milan, to which she felt she had hereditary rights. The footprint of Bona's counsel is discernible again in the negotiations conducted in 1523 with the French ambassador, Rincon de Medina del Campo. Bona and Krzycki took part in the negotiations which concluded with a confirmation of the original dynastic match.²⁹

These plans were thwarted with the catastrophe that was the battle of Pavia in 1525, though Poland was by and large spared the political consequences, because the plans were far from advanced. A year later, the wheel of politics turned again and opened a new political opportunity for Bona's anti-Habsburg faction. Sigismund the Old's nephew, King Louis of Hungary, was killed in the battle of Mohács against the Ottomans. According to the resolutions of the Vienna Congress in 1515, the Hungarian throne should have passed on to Ferdinand Habsburg, who married Louis' sister Anne of Bohemia and Hungary. Pociecha argues that Bona originally counselled that Sigismund should try to recover the Hungarian throne for the Jagiellonian dynasty. This is one of the cases when Bona's advice is only discernible by inference, because we lack evidence of it being expressed directly. It is possible that Bona advised Sigismund to stand as a candidate in the Hungarian elections, given her previous advice about the duchy of Głogów. However, Pociecha exaggerates when he argues that "the news of the Mohács must have first reached Bona, who was then constantly in Cracow with the children, and undoubtedly she sent it on to Sigismund with her comment".³⁰ The possibility that a messenger would stop in Cracow when it was known that Sigismund, with the most prominent officers of his court, was in Masovia taking advantage of the death of the last of the Masovian Piasts, is debatable. But queenly advice, so often given in private, is sometimes only traceable through her networks of counsel. For example, we know that Bona's agent, Bernhard von Prittitz, appeared in Hungary soon after to subtly campaign on Sigismund's behalf. All in vain, as the Hungarian nobility elected Jan Zapolya, Sigismund's brother-in-law through his first wife, Barbara Zapolya.

The war between the newly elected Zapolya and Ferdinand Habsburg ensued. The French openly supported Zapolya and sent their ambassador, Rincon de Medina del Campo, to persuade the Polish king to do the same. The Habsburgs sent their own ambassador, Georg von Logschau (Loxau), who reported to Ferdinand: "believe me your majesty that a lot of people here envy and fear this good fortune sent from the heavens to your majesty and they are trying with in many ways and with much cunning to interfere with your plans".³¹ Bona is not named, but she and her faction are implicit, especially as the Habsburgs acknowledged the importance of Bona's counsel. Hoping in vain to solicit her support, Logschau had an audience with the queen, who outwardly promised to give Sigismund favourable advice about Ferdinand's cause. While the queen herself

remained seemingly impartial, having the good of her Italian interests at heart, her people managed the unofficial support given to Zapolya. The tasks were divided. In 1527, Piotr Kmita was in charge of levying troops, while Giovanni Andrea Valentino was broadcasting news of Zapolya triumphs to Federico Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua. Logschau also reported that the French ambassador Rincon, together with Jan Rozrażewski, who was father-in-law to Łaski's cousin, Zuzanna Myszkowska, tried to convince Konstanty Ostrogski, castellan of Vilnius, voivode of Trakkai, and the most prominent member of Bona's network in Lithuania, to send 3000 or more Lithuanian Tartars to aid Zapolya.³² In this case it is difficult to differentiate between counsel and political action, but Bona must have been doing both. Sigismund proved again that his wife was not omnipotent, when in 1528 he announced that Poland would not be providing military support to either side of the conflict. It was another compromise rather than a straightforward defeat for the queen. Sigismund would not help the Habsburgs and gracefully evaded the question of a dynastic marriage offered by Ferdinand, which would render Bona's plans for a French marriage void. The aid provided secretly by Bona and her faction was not immaterial in evening out the Habsburg and Zapolya forces and placing Sigismund in a position where he could tip the scales of the conflict, should he wish to. It is possible that the royal couple were working together again and Bona played her part with the convincing air of authority.

Even if shadowed by compromise, Bona's political programme seemed to have taken off. The Hungarian conflict ended in 1537 with a peace treaty between Zapolya and Ferdinand, stating that after Zapolya's death, Hungary would pass into the Habsburg dominion on the condition of them granting the duchy of Spisz as well as the Zapolya lands to Jan Zapolya's male descendants. In the same year, an anonymous agent of the Habsburgs sent an encrypted message to Vienna stating that:

Queen Bona, the great enemy of the king of the Romans [Ferdinand], the least favourable to the whole German nation and even its open enemy, is trying in every way to prevent the marriage between the Polish king [*rex iunior* – Sigismund August] and the daughter of the Roman king ... The Queen of Poland, seeing that the magnates and the nobility hate her and are trying to cause her damage, is putting all her hope in King Jan [Zapolya]. It is certain, beyond any doubt, that she promised him Princess Isabella and already agreed with him, wishing her daughter to be the queen of Hungary

to spite the one who would want it least [Ferdinand]. And even though the king [Sigismund the Old] opposed this, she managed to bring it to pass by stubbornly insisting.³³

The Habsburg agent refers to four issues: the Chicken War of 1537, which was an attack on Bona's authority; the French marriage, which was once again being discussed with the Valois; the marriage between Sigismund August and Elizabeth of Austria proposed by the Habsburgs; and the marriage between Princess Isabella and Jan Zapolya, which came to fruition in 1539. Arguably, arranging this marriage was the last success of Bona's political faction. The birth of Isabella's son, Jan Sigismund Zapolya, in 1540 was closely followed by his father's death. The baby was elected king by the Hungarians, which resulted in simultaneous attack by Ferdinand and the Ottomans, who saw the opportunity to take control of Hungary. Isabella was subsequently exiled to Transylvania and then Poland.

Bona's other political defeats followed swiftly. First, when the marriage between Sigismund August and Elizabeth of Austria was finally agreed in 1543. This was despite Bona's vigorous resistance reported by Joachim von Maltzan, the imperial ambassador. She reportedly had met the Ottoman ambassador Kardus who brought back the prospect of Sigismund August's marriage to Margaret of France. In the same year, Bona and Isabella were in contact with Roxolana, or Hurrem Sultan, the favourite consort to Suleiman the Magnificent. The triumvirate was so remarkable that it was dramatized at the court of Charles II of England by Roger Boyle, the Earl of Orrery, in a play called "The tragedy of Mustapha, the son of Solyman the Magnificent".³⁴ Roxolana wrote to Isabella in Latin that "we are both born of one mother Eve, made from the same dough, and serve similar men".³⁵ It was unusual for Suleiman, as an Ottoman ruler, to use his consort for diplomatic purposes, but it was a well-established practice among European monarchs. Roxolana hits the nature of the relationship on the head when she writes "servimus". Bona's fate is an example of how women were allowed to pursue their political programme as long as it served the needs of their husbands. Sigismund the Old was adamant that the Habsburg marriage would take place in the same year. He decided to change the political agenda of Polish foreign politics and the usefulness of Bona was outdated. As such, the king's ears were closed to her counsel.

Once Elizabeth arrived at the Polish court in 1543, Bona launched a sustained campaign to humiliate the young queen and to ensure that Sigismund August spent as little time with Elizabeth as possible. Upon

hearing of this, Ferdinand despatched a special ambassador, Marsupino, to provide accurate reports and try to remedy the situation by diplomatic means. The ambassador reported that the young king “is still so afraid of his mother that he does or says nothing without her consent”.³⁶ He also commented on the old king’s true fondness for his new daughter-in-law. Bona was playing the bad cop, telling Marsupino in their first meeting that she cared as much for her daughter Isabella as Ferdinand did for his. The hint was unsubtle—she would treat Elizabeth the way Ferdinand treated Isabella. Ferdinand was also unwise to delay the payment of Elizabeth’s dowry. The trail of documents dated after the couple’s wedding in 1543 reveals that the Polish king repeatedly accepted the delay in payment of the 100,000 Hungarian florins.³⁷ This added force to Bona’s original opposition to the marriage and Marsupino reports that she often taunted her son, telling him to pay for things from his wife’s dowry. Some of the slights were remarkably petty, for example, when Bona refused to allow Elizabeth parmesan cheese, knowing that the young queen was particularly fond of it.³⁸ Marsupino’s letters give us a clue as to what Bona’s counsel given in person might have looked like. He was openly hostile to the queen and he was not witness to the debate, so his report must be taken with a pinch of salt. He describes how when the king was reading a letter from Marsupino,

the queen interrupted him screaming that Marsupino must not be allowed back to the court and then she started crying. The king replied: “Why would he not come?” The bishop [of Płock, Samuel Maciejowski, pro-Habsburg] said that he knew for certain from Marsupino that he was forbidden from following the court and was forced to stay in Cracow. And after a long argument the queen started crying again, shouting that she does not want Marsupino to come. The bishop had many arguments against her, and Bona suddenly hissed like a snake: “My God, I brought a trousseau and a dowry and she brought nothing, yet still you are all my enemies.” To which the king replied “Silence, idiot!”³⁹

Marsupino probably embellished the account he must have heard from Samuel Maciejowski, but there was clearly a disagreement between the royal couple and the account suggests how quickly Bona’s counsel could be dismissed with a brief word from her husband. Marsupino might have portrayed Bona as overtly emotional to discredit her, but other accounts, not least her own letter about the duchy of Głogów cited at the beginning of this chapter, suggest that Bona was prone to giving counsel based on

emotional motivations. She was refused both times, suggesting that Sigismund was not prone to accepting emotion-based counsel and Bona might have been better served by keeping a cool head.

Bona had every reason to be nervous. In 1544 her counsel was dismissed again, this time in a matter that was part of her internal political programme and in which she invested much of her own funds. Her attempt to strengthen the position of the Jagiellonians involved buying out the crown lands pawned for royal debts to some of the most prominent of the Polish nobility. Anna Sucheni-Grabowska, who conducted extensive research about the distribution of the crown lands within the Crown (meaning Poland rather than Lithuania), calculated that of the pawned lands worth in total 675,000 Polish guildens, Bona bought out lands worth approximately 91,000 Polish guildens, which brought her an annual income of 20,000 Polish guildens.⁴⁰ The lands retained their “crown” status, but Bona had the right to appoint officers and designate her successors. Sigismund allowed Bona to start purchasing these lands in 1528 because he was convinced by Bona’s good management of her vast lands in Lithuania, where she conducted wide-ranging reforms.⁴¹ This is a stark contrast to his refusal of Bona’s emotional counsel—Sigismund would be more easily persuaded by political and financial profit than by a wife’s and mother’s pleading. Some of these lands, like the duchy of Pińsk and Kobryń, were a gift from Sigismund to use for life, while others were crown lands like Bielsk, Suraż, Brańsk, Narew, Kleszczele and Kowno purchased from some of the most prominent Lithuanian nobles, such as Olbracht Gasztold, the grand chancellor of Lithuania, and Jerzy Herkules Radziwiłł, the grand hetman of Lithuania. Bona’s possessions in Lithuania were much larger than in Poland, as suggested by the annual income they brought in—36,000 Polish guildens.

After Sigismund August’s marriage to Elizabeth of Austria, under the influence of Samuel Maciejowski, Sigismund the Old decided that his son should have an active function in the realm’s government. Sigismund briefly considered giving the young couple the region of Masovia (where Warsaw is located), but finally decided to hand over control of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania to Sigismund August. This would kill two birds with one stone by providing a *raison d’être* for the *rex iunior* and curbing Bona’s influence in Lithuania, which was the wish of the Lithuanian nobility. This became abundantly clear at the 1544 parliament in Vilnius where the nobility complained about Bona’s unfair judiciary and the “thieves, bandits, liars, and slanderers” she appointed as officers. Once Bona found

out about the secret plans of her husband and son, she started to “cry, implore, beg and entreat the old king that he should not give away all of his authority in favour of his son, for his own sake considering his old age and for the sake of his wife and companion”, before “taking to bed”.⁴² Again represented as emotional, Bona’s counsel was disregarded by her husband, who proceeded with his plan. She had to give up many of her lands and the judicial authority in those she was allowed to keep. Bona had outlived her usefulness in Lithuania, but could be put to work elsewhere, which would also serve as compensation for her Lithuanian loss. In 1545, Sigismund the Old cleverly allowed her to exchange the standard Polish queen’s dower for the Masovia region, a much more substantial landholding, where she conducted profitable reforms.

Bona’s political influence was undermined even further by her son’s second marriage. In 1548, Sigismund August announced that he had secretly married a Lithuanian noblewoman, Barbara Radziwiłł, the previous year. Sigismund the Old died soon after and some laid the blame for his demise on the unexpected news. Bona, to demonstrate her disapproval of the marriage, retreated to Masovia with her daughters in a voluntary exile from court. She never recovered her political influence and as her relationship with her son deteriorated, the prospect of leaving Poland for Italy where she was still duchess of Bari and Rossano became increasingly appealing. One of her last encounters with her son suggests the extent to which the relationship between the queen and her son had failed. In 1552, Sigismund August reported to his friend Mikołaj “the Black” Radziwiłł that:

Today we set out from Kozenice for a hunt and she deliberately planned to meet us on the road. And so she did. She was in a German-style carriage, made for her in Warsaw and designed to imitate Kieżgajło’s carriage, because Kieżgajło’s carriage was transported from Germany via Warsaw. So when we met on the road in the forest today, we conversed of nothing else except for her praising the carriage. We remained there for a little moment, and having talked of nothing else but the carriage, we parted ways.⁴³

Bona’s counsel influenced the internal and foreign political agenda of Poland-Lithuania, so long as it was aligned with the broad commitments of her husband. Once her agenda and his plans diverged, she lost much of her influence, though Sigismund made every effort to compensate her in other ways. She returned to Italy in 1556 to die a year later poisoned by her closest confidants, who may have been working for the Habsburgs. For over twenty years, Bona conducted a political programme, but it was

primarily because her husband was ready to compromise with her, which was in turn motivated by the fact that supporting some of Bona's ideas suited him politically. The overwhelming impression of Bona's omnipotence given by sixteenth-century reports has little grounding in the sources. On the rare occasions that she was recorded providing counsel to the king, she had to compromise, or even experienced humiliating refusal. She is an example of how a queen's counsel was the centre of her political authority, but also how vulnerable that position of authority was and how easily a queen could have been discredited as overtly emotional. Much of Bona's character may be glimpsed from examples of her giving counsel. Never constrained by the feminine notions of virtue, rather she could be characterized by the Machiavellian concept of *virtù*. Bona's case suggests that a queen could be allowed to diverge from her traditional gendered role of counselling according to virtue, but this was predicated on her ability to maintain positive family relationships and ultimately on how useful her counsel was deemed by the men in her life.

NOTES

1. S. Bradford, *Lucrezia Borgia: Life, Love and Death in Renaissance Italy* (London: Penguin Books, 2005); D. Y. Ghirardo, "Lucrezia Borgia as Entrepreneur," *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 61, no. 1 (Spring 2008), 53–91; J. de Vries, *Caterina Sforza and the Art of Appearances: Gender, Art and Culture in Early Modern Italy* (New York: Ashgate, 2010); C. James, "'Machiavelli in Skirts.' Isabella d'Este and Politics," in *Virtue, Liberty, and Toleration: Political Ideas of European Women, 1400–1800*, eds. J. Broad and K. Green (Dordrecht: Springer, 2007), 57–76.
2. N. Nowakowska, *Church, State and Dynasty in Renaissance Poland: The Career of Cardinal Fryderyk Jagiellon (1468–1503)* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007) 32; For an excellent explanation of the Polish-Lithuanian political system see: R. I. Frost, *The Oxford History of Poland-Lithuania. Volume I: The Making of the Polish-Lithuanian Union, 1385–1569* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).
3. W. Pocięcha, *Królowa Bona (1494–1557): czasy i ludzie Odrodzenia*, vols. 1–4 (Poznań: Poznańskie Towarzystwo Nauk, 1949); M. Bogucka, *Bona Sforza* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 2009); A. Sucheni-Grabowska, *Odbudowa Domeny Królewskiej w Polsce, 1504–1548* (Warsaw: Muzeum Historii Polski, 2nd edition, 2007); K. Kosior, "Outlander, Baby Killer, Poisoner? Rethinking Bona Sforza's Black Legend," in *Virtuous or Villainess? The Image of the Royal Mother from the Early Medieval to the Early Modern Era*, eds. C. Fleiner and E. Woodacre (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 199–224.

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5. Similar expectations were conveyed by the French pageants welcoming Mary of England to France in 1514. See Helen Matheson-Pollock's chapter in this volume (Chap. 4).
6. "Ordinato caerimoniarum in coronationibus reginarum Poloniae observandum," in *Corpus Iuris Polonici*. Sectionis I. Privilegia, statuta, constitutiones, edicta, decreta, mandata regnum Poloniae spectantia comprehendentis, ed. O. M. Balzer, Vol. 3, Annos 1506–1522 contentis (Cracow: Sumptibus Academiae Litterarum, 1906), 211.
7. N. Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. W. K. Marriott [The Project Gutenberg: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1232/1232-h/1232-h.htm#link2HCH0015>, accessed on 12/11/2017].
8. Pociecha, *Królowa Bona*, vol. 2, 382.
9. Kosior, "Outlander, Baby Killer, Poisoner?," 205.
10. Sucheni-Grabowska, *Odbudowa Domeny Królewskiej w Polsce*, 153–4.
11. BL, MS add. 15, f. 222.
12. BL, MS add. 15, f. 221.
13. BL, MS add. 15, f. 281; Z. Ameisenowa, *Cztery rękopisy iluminowane z lat 1524–1528* (Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 1967); B. Miodońska, *Miniatury Stanisława Samostrzelnika* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, "Auriga" Oficyna Wydawnicza, 1983); B. Miodońska, *Małopolskie malarstwo książkowe, 1320–1540* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1993).
14. BL, Kings, MS 9.
15. M. Bogucka, *Bona Sforza* (Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 2009), 135.
16. Letter printed in: A. Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki Polskie XVI wieku*, vol. 1 (Cracow: Drukarnia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 1868), 196–7.
17. Bogucka, 129.
18. Frost, *The Oxford History of Poland-Lithuania*, 351.
19. Letter printed in: Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki polskie w XVI wieku*, vol. 1, 75.
20. J. Malarczyk, 'Wizerunek renesansowego władcy', *Annales UMCS*, vol. XXI, sectio G, 1974, 67–84.
21. Pociecha, vol. 2, 382.
22. Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki polskie w XVI wieku*, vol. 1, 127–8.
23. For more on the 'executionist movement', the Chicken War, and attacks on Bona see: Kosior, 'Outlander, Baby Killer, Poisoner?', 208–9.
24. Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki polskie w XVI wieku*, vol. 1, 139.
25. S. Górski, "Conciones in maximo totius regni Poloniae convent apud Leopolim de republica habitae A. D. MDXXXVII," ed. W. Kętrzyński, in *Archiwum Komisji Historycznej*, ed. J. Szujski, vol. 1 (Cracow: Akademia Umiejętności and Drukarnia Wł. Ł. Anczyca i Spółki, 1878), 39–41.

26. *Acta Tomiciana: Tomus Sextus Epistolarum, Legationum, Responsorum, Actionum et Rerum Gestarum Serenissimi Principis Sigismundi Primi, Regis Poloniae et Magni Ducis Lithuaniae*, ed. S. Górski, (Kórnik: Biblioteka Kórnicka, 1857), 162; henceforth known as AT VI.
27. AT VI, 163.
28. Pociecha, *Królowa Bona*, vol. 2, 171–2.
29. *Ibid.*, 180.
30. Pociecha, *Królowa Bona*, vol. 2, 298.
31. Letter quoted in: Pociecha, *Królowa Bona*, vol. 2, 343.
32. Letters reproduced in Pociecha, *Królowa Bona*, vol. 2, 574–5.
33. Letter reproduced in Pociecha, *Królowa Bona*, vol. 4, 210.
34. J. A. Hayden, “The Tragedy of Roxolana in the Court of Charles II,” in *Roxolana in European Literature, History and Culture*, ed. G. I. Yermolenko (Oxford: Ashgate, 2010), 81–8.
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36. Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki polskie w XVI wieku*, vol. 1, 118.
37. Documents relating to the delay in paying Elizabeth’s dowry: The Princes Czartoryski Library, MS 60, 57–60, 83–4, 85–6, 87–8; MS 280, 453, 509.
38. Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki polskie w XVI wieku*, vol. 1, 128.
39. Przeździecki, *Jagiellonki polskie w XVI wieku*, vol. 1, 134.
40. A. Sucheni-Grabowska, *Odbudowa Domeny Królewskiej w Polsce, 1504–1548* (Warsaw: Muzeum Historii Polski, 2nd edition, 2007), 145–6, 150–1, 14.
41. Pociecha, *Królowa Bona*, vol. 3, pp. 46–194, 227ff.
42. Quoted in: A. Sucheni-Grabowska, *Zygmunt August: król polski i wielki książę litewski, 1520–1562* (Warsaw: Krupski i S-ka, 1996), 92.
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Between Kings and Emperors: Catherine of Aragon as Counsellor and Mediator

Michelle L. Beer

In April 1520 Richard Wingfield, English ambassador to the French court, met with Louise of Savoy, mother of the French king, to discuss the upcoming meeting of the English and French courts that summer, a spectacular event that is known to history as the Field of Cloth of Gold. According to Wingfield, Louise “demanded me of the Queen’s grace, and whether I tho[ught her to] have any great devotion to this assembly”.¹ Louise was referring to the Queen of England, Catherine of Aragon, the Spanish wife of Henry VIII, and she was concerned that Catherine’s Spanish allegiances would derail the Anglo-French alliance that was about to be confirmed at the Field of Cloth of Gold. Because Catherine was actively involved in English diplomacy and had close ties to her natal family, Louise assumed that Catherine was working against the meeting.² Wingfield, ever the consummate ambassador, reassured Louise that “none could be more desirous of it [the meeting] than she [Catherine]”, because Catherine was a good wife who only wanted to follow the king’s pleasure.³ It is perhaps slightly ironic that while Wingfield was placating Louise of

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Savoy in Paris, Catherine was in London, presenting her objections to the meeting in front of her own council and her husband.⁴

Louise's anxiety about Catherine's influence in England reflected the active role Catherine had played as diplomatic counsellor both to her husband and to her natal family during her life in England. As Europe's first accredited female ambassador, Catherine worked to sustain and strengthen the alliance between England and Spain by counselling the monarchs of both, and her career marks an intersection of the duties of foreign queens consort with Renaissance diplomacy. Foreign queens consort have long been associated with crossing boundaries and cementing alliances through their royal marriages, and in many ways they were Europe's first, unofficial, resident ambassadors. Although they held no official diplomatic position, queens were expected to maintain contacts with their natal families after their marriages and to provide support, information, and influence at court for their families' interests.⁵

Catherine's role as diplomatic counsellor was intimately connected to the traditional roles as intercessor, peace-weaver and moral wife that she was expected to fulfil as a queen consort. As Catherine Fletcher has argued in this volume, the gendered expectations of elite women as peace-weavers influenced their roles in diplomacy and counsel, making them "ideal diplomats" in theory (Chap. 6). The queen's role as intercessor for her people was closely linked with the Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven and intercessor for mankind.⁶ The association with the Queen of Heaven legitimated the queen's mediation between the king and his subjects, just as she mediated between her husband and her family.⁷ Intercession was linked to the general feminine trait of persuasion and pleading, and thus was closely linked to yet another form of feminine advice-giving and counsel, that of wifely counsel.⁸ There was a long tradition of wifely counsel in medieval Europe, which built upon the idea that wives had a responsibility to persuade and counsel their husbands to lead more Christian lives.⁹ Catherine's diplomatic counsel was intertwined with all of these expectations, as a royal woman whose marriage took her to a foreign court where she provided counsel to her husband and her natal family.

The traditional roles of foreign queens consort as mediator, intercessor and adviser complemented the new, emerging precepts of sixteenth-century ambassadorial practice. With the development of more frequent and prolonged embassies between states, ambassadors became a fixed presence at many royal courts, and they were expected to perform duties similar to those of foreign queens consort. Specifically, counsel and mediation were

considered one of the principal functions of ambassadors, according to humanist prescriptive literature. An ambassador was expected to mediate disputes between his posting and his principal as an “objective” presence.¹⁰ Ideally, an ambassador should work to bring together princes in friendship, although practically this was a difficult, if not impossible, task.¹¹ Like queens, ambassadors were supposed to represent their sovereigns or dynasties with appropriate dignity and honour.¹² As a diplomatically active queen, Catherine relied on both the traditions of queenship and diplomacy to offer counsel and mediate between her husband and the heads of her natal dynasty, Ferdinand of Aragon and Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor.

In their role as mediators between their natal and marital families, queens were not expected to have agendas of their own in foreign policy, although queens like Catherine came to adopt a variety of positions in order to negotiate their divided loyalties. Husbands, sons, fathers and brothers tended to treat their female relatives as conduits for their own ambitions, which conformed with the expectation that women owed absolute obedience to their fathers and husbands.¹³ In practice, however, queens could have their own motivations for intervening in matters of diplomacy and foreign policy, especially if it touched upon the lives and marriages of their children. It was completely acceptable, for example, for Margaret Beaufort and Elizabeth of York to join together in preventing Elizabeth’s nine-year old daughter Margaret Tudor from being sent off too early to marry the much older James IV of Scotland, even if their intervention delayed the alliance the marriage was meant to solemnize.¹⁴ In this volume, Anne Whitelock (Chap. 11) has shown that Anna of Denmark, first queen of Great Britain, actively counselled her husband on the negotiations for her children’s marriages. Bona of Savoy, discussed in Katarzyna Kosier’s chapter in this volume (Chap. 2), also sought to influence her husband’s choices for her children’s marriages as part of her wider program of opposition to Habsburg influence.

Even without the motivation of children, however, queens might intervene in foreign policy, especially if it touched upon their natal dynasties. Traditionally, queens have been seen as partisans of their natal families, to the point of vilification. Henrietta Maria, consort of Charles I, was viciously attacked for her French connections, and historians have argued that she was so devoted to her family’s goals in their early years of her marriage that she ran the risk of alienating her husband completely.¹⁵ Elizabeth of Bohemia, Henrietta Maria’s sister-in-law, was more inclined to mediate between her two families, and she supported her husband both before and

after they went into exile.¹⁶ Catherine of Aragon was a queen with close ties to her natal family, and it is all too easy to assume that she was first and foremost the “Spanish Queen” of Henry VIII.¹⁷ In part this perception is skewed because of her heavy reliance on her nephew Charles V during the divorce crisis at the end of her reign. Not all of Catherine’s contemporaries would have agreed with this assessment, however. The Spanish ambassador himself complained that Catherine had forgotten Spain after her marriage.¹⁸ Catherine’s loyalties were complicated, and the counsel she offered to both sides reveals that she was willing to give practical advice to her natal dynasty on how to conduct their affairs in England, but that she was unafraid to go against her natal family.

While Richard Wingfield certainly overstated Catherine’s enthusiasm for the Anglo-French summit, he was not fundamentally wrong in claiming that Catherine was devoted to England. Indeed, when Catherine argued against the 1520 meeting with France, she had the support of some of the English nobility, who also did not care for an alliance with England’s hereditary enemy.¹⁹ As England’s queen, Catherine did not allow her preference for Spain to cloud her diplomatic judgement, nor did it prevent her from offering advice to her husband and supporting his foreign policies, even when they turned against Spain. In the sixteenth century, England’s alliances frequently shifted between the two major continental powers, the Valois kings of France and the Habsburg rulers of Spain and the Holy Roman Empire. Catherine was forced to adapt to this constantly changing diplomatic environment, although she rarely directly intervened in diplomacy. Instead, she relied upon cultural exchange, courtly ceremony and informal influence in her efforts to counsel kings and mediate between England and Spain.

Catherine’s methods of counsel and mediation are excellent examples of the alternative forms of diplomatic engagement that operated alongside formal embassies in the sixteenth century.²⁰ Elite women, from queens and regents to ambassadors’ wives, were crucially important to the conduct of informal (and formal) diplomacy.²¹ They acted as ambassadors and negotiators, but they also intervened in diplomacy indirectly, by drawing upon their familial relationships and access to the monarch to provide counsel and relay important information.²²

It is often difficult to assess just how involved Catherine was in diplomacy, in part because so much of her influence and mediation was informal. Once she was queen, intimacy with and access to the king was paramount for Catherine, and verbal communications were the most

effective way for her to provide counsel.²³ Because much of Catherine's advice and mediation would have been informal, oral and private, it has left few traces of surviving written sources.²⁴ Those sources that do survive primarily come from her communications with Spain, and thus do not provide the full picture of Catherine's diplomatic activities, which ranged across Europe. Catherine also used other methods to engage in diplomacy, methods that relied on the ceremonial and social practices of diplomacy at Renaissance courts.²⁵ Catherine hosted social functions, exchanged gifts and engaged in royal displays of magnificence in order to offer counsel, facilitate diplomatic relations and promote her own agenda. Courtship, socialization, spectacular display and gift exchange were important ways that women could engage in the politics of royal courts, and these were effective means for Catherine to support her husband's policies and provide diplomatic counsel.

AMBASSADORIAL COUNSEL AND FAMILIAL MEDIATION

Catherine was unusually experienced as a counsellor because of her early involvement in Spanish diplomacy after the death of her first husband. She had arrived in England in 1501 to marry Arthur, the eldest son of Henry VII. Arthur's sudden death in 1502, a few months after their wedding, left her in England as a sixteen-year old widow dependent upon her father-in-law. Her parents moved quickly to cement a new marriage alliance for Catherine with the new heir, Prince Henry, but as the boy was not of age to marry, the princess was forced to wait in England. After the death of her mother Isabel in 1504, Catherine's worth on the marriage market dropped, and she was again forced to bide her time in England while her father Ferdinand and Henry VII argued over her marriage portion.²⁶ The drawn-out conflict over her second marriage encouraged Catherine to become more involved in the diplomacy that would dictate her fate. In 1507 she became her father's accredited ambassador to the English court, in part to advocate for her own marriage, and she immediately began to offer him advice on handling the situation in England.²⁷ Catherine continued in her dual roles as ambassador and consort when she married Henry VIII in 1509. Thereafter she was an important adviser to her husband on diplomatic matters until the breakdown of their marriage in the late 1520s.

Catherine's earliest forays in diplomacy consisted largely of giving diplomatic counsel to her father by sending news and strategic advice to Spain about affairs in England in order to facilitate communication and

understanding between the English court and Spain. After becoming an accredited ambassador at the court of Henry VII, Catherine began expressing her own opinions on Anglo-Spanish diplomacy. For instance, in October 1507, she urged her father to cultivate the friendship of the Lord Chamberlain of England, who could help influence her father-in-law Henry VII in private.²⁸ Ferdinand followed this advice, citing her guidance in his letter to the Lord Chamberlain requesting his friendship.²⁹

In an effort to improve the Anglo-Spanish relations and speed up the negotiations concerning her marriage, Catherine offered her father critiques and assessments of his ambassadors in England. Catherine understood that the new forms of diplomacy emerging in the sixteenth century required sovereigns to select competent ambassadors, and she believed that more experienced and tactful ambassadors would be able to help her cause in England. Her advice to Ferdinand on the importance of ambassadors could have been included in diplomatic conduct books of the era, and they reveal her growing knowledge of diplomatic practice: “nothing contributes more towards the prosperity or adverse fortune of kingdoms than the choice of ambassadors, especially in this kingdom [England], which is so isolated from all others, and requires in every respect more circumspection than any other nation”.³⁰ Quite practically, Catherine viewed England’s isolation from the rest of Europe as a challenge to the conduct of diplomacy there, where it might take months for despatches to make it to Spain and ambassadors frequently had to rely on their own judgement in negotiations.³¹ Consequently, she found that the two successive resident ambassadors in England, Dr. Rodrigo Gonzalvo de Puebla and Don Gutierre Gomez de Fuensalida, were inadequate to the task of negotiating with Henry VII. De Puebla, she argued, was too deferential to Henry VII, while his replacement, Fuensalida, was too blunt and proud.³² She was understandably pleased to learn that Ferdinand was sending a new ambassador in March 1509.³³

When Catherine became queen in June 1509, her marriage to Henry VIII did not change her position as an ambassador for her father at the English court, and for the first years of her marriage she loyally supported her father. Henry seemed to be happy that his wife continued to act as a counsellor to her father, and he began to follow her advice as well.³⁴ When Catherine wrote to Ferdinand shortly after the marriage, she stated that “I have performed the office of ambassador as your highness sent to command, and as was known by the king my lord [Henry VIII], who is, and places himself entirely, in the hands of your highness”.³⁵ At this early stage

of her marriage and queenship, Catherine clearly felt that the interests of her father and her husband were identical. This close partnership would soon be tested when Henry and Ferdinand's first joint campaign in 1512 ended badly for the English, and Catherine had to strike a delicate balance to preserve the alliance her marriage had only recently cemented.

As a young king, Henry VIII was eager to pursue glory and honour in war, and his first campaign was against England's hereditary enemy, France. Henry's desire for war was probably encouraged by Catherine herself.³⁶ In August 1510 Ferdinand instructed his ambassador to ask the queen to persuade Henry to support the undertaking against France.³⁷ This influence would have been exercised orally, and thus leaves no trace in existing sources. Venetian accounts describe Catherine as warmly in favour of Henry's second expedition against the French in 1513, suggesting that she would have supported the 1512 campaign as well.³⁸

The failure of the 1512 expedition was largely due to disease and the inexperience of Henry's noble lieutenants, but the English commanders tried to blame Ferdinand for their defeat.³⁹ They argued that the Spanish had failed to provide the promised supplies and cavalry support to English troops in Gascony.⁴⁰ At this juncture, Catherine stepped in to counsel Ferdinand's representatives on how best to defend their king. Delicately balancing her Spanish loyalties with her submissive role as wife and queen consort, she seems to have worked privately to ensure her father would not be blamed for the military debacle. She informed her father's ambassadors that Henry already knew that the English commanders were the reason the expedition failed, and that he did not blame the Spanish.⁴¹ Catherine's confidence in Ferdinand's exoneration suggests that she had exerted some form of informal influence over her husband. She would have had the support of Thomas Wolsey, the king's fast-rising minister, who indicated that he also did not believe Ferdinand was to blame, so perhaps the two worked together to exonerate the Spanish.⁴² Although the specific method that Catherine used to exert her influence is unclear in this instance, she was aware that her husband had already determined how to deal with the issue and advised her father's ambassadors to act accordingly.

As Catherine gained experience as an ambassador and go-between for her father, she began to take a more balanced approach in negotiations between England and Spain. Catherine continued to advocate for the Anglo-Spanish alliance, but years of near-failures and disappointments on Ferdinand's side had made her realize that the alliance must serve both

England and Spain's interests. When, in 1514, Henry VIII broke away from his alliance with Spain and concluded a peace deal with Louis XII of France, Catherine chose to support her husband. As discussed in greater detail by Helen Matheson-Pollock in this volume (Chap. 4), Mary Tudor, Henry's younger sister, was betrothed to Louis as part of the new Anglo-French alliance.⁴³ Although the alliance isolated Spain, the proxy marriage ceremony between Mary and Louis's representative included Catherine's active support of her husband's policy and subsequently her dear friend's marriage. The betrothal ceremonies were held in Catherine's chambers at Greenwich, making Catherine the hostess of the ceremony and demonstrating her support for the alliance through courtly hospitality.⁴⁴ Catherine's loyalty to her husband and her support of the marriage was in clear contrast to the behaviour of the Spanish ambassador, who had refused to attend the betrothal ceremony.⁴⁵ The French alliance did not last long, and in 1515 Catherine advised her father that a new Anglo-Spanish treaty would be successful because it contained clauses that would be profitable to both England and Spain.⁴⁶ From 1515 onwards, Catherine emphasized the need for mutual respect and benefits between allies and advocated as much for England's honour as she did Spain's. Moreover, Catherine consistently offered this advice to her father and his successor.⁴⁷

Catherine's father died in 1516, but she remained an important point of contact for her family's interests in England, and she continued to provide general counsel and information to ambassadors from her family, now headed by her nephew, Charles V, king of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor.⁴⁸ She understood the tendency of Spanish diplomacy to make extravagant promises and counselled Charles V to be more pragmatic in his dealings with the English. When Charles's ambassadors arrived in England to negotiate new treaties, she advised them that they must be careful to only make promises that Charles could fulfil. Revealing that she had learned the lessons of her father's repeated failures to deliver on his promises to Henry, in 1523 she counselled Charles's ambassadors that it was "much better to promise little and perform faithfully than to promise much and fail in part".⁴⁹ Charles evidently did not heed her advice, because a year later she told Charles's ambassador that she was "very sorry" that the emperor had promised so much in the treaty, and she was concerned that Charles would be unable to fulfil it and thus lose the alliance.⁵⁰ Catherine's fears were justified when Henry turned to a French alliance in the autumn of 1525, after Charles refused to join him in a full-scale invasion of France.

Over the course of her queenship, Catherine's advice to her family increasingly advocated for a mutually beneficial Anglo-Spanish alliance. After living in England for many years before she became its queen, she clearly felt she understood the English temperament. And, as she told her father in 1507, if an ambassador understood the English then she was already halfway to achieving her objectives.⁵¹ Years later, she cautioned her father that "[t]here is no people in the world more influenced by the good or bad fortunes of their enemies than the English", and advised Ferdinand to judge English diplomatic overtures accordingly.⁵² As ambassador and queen consort, Catherine was a crucial source of communication and influence for her dynastic relatives. Henry VIII, as her husband, benefited from her years of experience as an accredited ambassador to England, and her skills allowed her to act as a mediator between her husband and her father and nephew. Catherine was able to pass along information and provide counsel in part through her role as hostess of the English court, which was part of the traditional duties of the English queen consort.

FACILITATING COMMUNICATION AND COUNSEL THROUGH HOSPITALITY

Catherine's ability to counsel her husband relied on her intimate involvement in the ceremonial and social aspects of the royal court, including the reciprocal exchanges of honour, magnificence and hospitality that were important aspects of diplomacy in the sixteenth century. The tradition of the queen as royal hostess remained a part of the ideals of pre-modern queenship, and Catherine was well-placed to ensure royal guests were treated honourably, in part by facilitating sociability between English courtiers and foreign delegations.⁵³ Hosting entertainments in her chambers provided excellent opportunities for Catherine to interact with foreign delegations, potentially gathering information, news and gossip that she could then use to advise her husband.⁵⁴ News-gathering and information exchanges were a crucial part of diplomacy generally, and this was an important way for queens to participate in the more informal aspects of diplomacy and politics.⁵⁵ More formal diplomatic occasions, such as the ceremonial signing of treaties or betrothals, became opportunities for Catherine to demonstrate her support for particular policies and counsel others to do the same.

Intimacy with the king was always an important goal for foreign ambassadors and necessary to the success of their negotiations, and by facilitating connections Catherine's hospitality allowed her to be a diplomatic mediator between the king and foreign representatives. Henry liked to invite ambassadors to Catherine's chamber for an evening's entertainment, which often featured music and dancing by her ladies.⁵⁶ Catherine's Spanish and Imperial connections meant that these ambassadors were particularly welcome in her chambers, which gave them opportunities to discuss matters with the king and queen in relative privacy. For example, to celebrate a new league with Catherine's nephew Charles V in 1517, Henry and Catherine invited his ambassadors to dine privately with them, which was considered unusual and "contrary to the custom of the Kings of England", by the Venetian ambassador.⁵⁷ The unusual and informal nature of the dinner would have suggested that confidences were being shared between the king, the queen and the Imperial ambassadors. Other ambassadors at the court understood that the hospitality and intimacy facilitated by Catherine indicated the closeness of the alliance between England and the Habsburgs.⁵⁸

Catherine's hospitality was not, however, limited to hosting Spanish or Imperial ambassadors, and by extending hospitality to all foreign delegations Catherine could continue to counsel the king. By maintaining her honour and dignity while hosting rival delegations, Catherine indicated she was a dutiful wife, thereby ensuring that her own relationship with the king, and thus her ability to provide counsel, was not damaged. Catherine's hospitality extended to hosting foreign guests at her personal country estate, the manor of Havering-atte-Bower, where her hospitality was particularly praised by later chroniclers.⁵⁹ Catherine entertained Henry VIII and his guests at Havering during the summer progress of 1519, when the king sought to impress noble French hostages who were staying at the English court in fulfilment of the Anglo-French peace treaty of 1518.⁶⁰ Catherine's hospitality was part of Henry's program to entertain the hostages in high style, and she did not neglect her duty as the kingdom's foremost hostess: "[f]or their welcomyng she purveyed all thynges in the moste liberallest maner: and especially she made to the kyng suche a sumptuous banquet that the kyng thanked her hartely, and the straungers [the French hostages] gaue it greate prayse".⁶¹ Although the Anglo-French alliance threatened Spain, Catherine needed to fulfil her duties as hostess in order to remain close to the king and retain her ability to offer counsel.

MATERIAL CULTURE AS SILENT ADVICE

Material culture was an alternative form of diplomacy that Catherine used to achieve her diplomatic goals. The material culture of the court played an important part in diplomacy; the costly clothing worn by monarchs could demonstrate loyalties and rare and fine objects were used in gift exchanges to demonstrate affection and esteem between allies. As a mediator between the English and Spanish courts, Catherine was well-placed to advise her family on how effective gifts could be. Gifts were an important component of early modern diplomacy, and negotiations, alliances or summits were frequently marked by the exchange of gifts between sovereigns and their ambassadors.⁶² Gift-giving also kept the lines of communication open between sovereigns in moments of tension and provided openings for mediation and counsel by ambassadors or interested parties.

Catherine encouraged her father to use gifts to repair his diplomatic relationship with England in 1515, when Ferdinand sent Henry VIII a jewelled collar, two horses and a sword in an effort to gain his help against the French. Both the Venetian ambassador and Henry's adviser, Thomas Wolsey, regarded these gifts as expensive bribes to obtain English aid.⁶³ In contrast, Catherine believed the gifts were marks of honour, esteem and affection for her husband. The gifts themselves, luxury items commonly exchanged between princes, were ostentatious and publicly given, two important factors that separate gifts from bribes at the pre-modern court.⁶⁴ Catherine specifically cited those gifts as the reason for the new alliance between England and Spain.⁶⁵ Her husband seems to have agreed, and he claimed that that the gifts were important not because of their material value, but because they reminded Henry of Ferdinand whenever he looked at them.⁶⁶ The gifts were a public confirmation of Ferdinand's love and esteem for Henry, as the entire court and the ambassadors from other kingdoms and territories could see how much Ferdinand valued his son-in-law.

Gift exchanges could keep lines of communication open, which were important for future negotiations and Catherine's ability to provide counsel and mediation. Even when England was not formally allied with the Habsburgs in April 1519, Henry and Catherine, acting as a marital unit, sent gifts to her family, creating an opening for a closer alliance in the future. Henry sent a gelding and Catherine two hobbies (gentle riding horses) to Spain as gifts for Catherine's nephew Ferdinand, who in return sent them two Spanish horses, which were originally a gift from Ferdinand's

brother, Charles V.⁶⁷ In this round of gift-giving, Catherine's dynastic connections, expressed in ambassadorial despatches with familial language such as nephew, aunt and brother, were their own form of counsel, by reminding all of those engaged in the exchange of the deep and lasting ties between England and Spain. An English rapprochement with Spain continued for the next year, culminating in meetings between the two sovereigns in May 1520 and again in July.⁶⁸

While gift-exchange could create opportunities for resuming or repairing alliances, Catherine's permanent residence in England allowed her to use her very presence to offer advice and mediation between England and Spain through material culture. Catherine used her wardrobe on a number of occasions to demonstrate her alliances and loyalties, and she relied on the changeable nature of clothing and its association with national or dynastic identity to help her mediate between her two families.⁶⁹ Catherine's wardrobe choices indicated her "silent counsel" in the form of support for her marital family or for England at delicate diplomatic moments, when overt statements of opposition or loyalty would have been ill-advised. Catherine could use her wardrobe to indicate her loyalty to her husband and to counsel the Spanish that they needed to rethink their policies towards England.

Catherine chose to take advantage of the mutable nature of clothing to emphasize her loyalty to England when her nephew Charles V visited England briefly in 1520. During her nephew's visit, Catherine wore a gown of cloth of gold with violet velvet lining which was embroidered with Tudor roses in gold. Catherine's necklace of five strings of pearls featured a diamond pendant of the patron saint of England, St. George, slaying the dragon. Catherine's pendant was very similar to the "Lesser George" badges worn by members of the Order of the Garter, Europe's oldest and most honourable chivalric order. The Order was founded by Edward III (who also happened to be Catherine's great-great-great grandfather) and was closely associated with English nationalism.⁷⁰ St. George was also the patron saint of Aragon, and so this message may have been intended to express her loyalty to both England and her homeland.⁷¹ Catherine's choices identified her with her husband and England at a delicate time in Anglo-Spanish diplomacy, when England was closely allied to Charles's rival, the king of France. The mutability of clothing allowed Catherine to use her wardrobe to make a statement of loyalty towards her husband and adopted country without denying or abrogating her loyalties to her dynasty.

After the meeting with Charles, Catherine continued to use her wardrobe and her servants' liveries as a medium for diplomatic messages at the Anglo-French summit known as the Field of Cloth of Gold. Nearly 6000 members of the English court (and probably an equal number of French as well) were in attendance when the king of France, Francis I, accompanied by his wife Queen Claude and his mother Louise of Savoy, met Henry and Catherine for several days of jousting, entertainments, feasting and diplomatic exchange.⁷² The sheer scale and visibility of the festivities at the Field of Cloth of Gold meant that the clothing of monarchs and their households took on a heightened significance, as both the English and the French strove to demonstrate their commitment to the alliance while maintaining their honour and independence. In this setting, Catherine provided spectators, sovereigns and ambassadors with a visual argument in favor of an alternative Spanish alliance for England by using her clothing to emphasize her Spanish heritage.

Catherine was waited upon by a particularly large number of liveried servants at the Field of Cloth of Gold, with her Wardrobe staff providing livery coats and suits of clothes to fifty-five guardsmen, six footmen, thirteen grooms and pages of the chamber, and numerous staff from the Stables.⁷³ As discussed by Alexandra Johnson in this volume (Chap. 8), asserting honour and status through material culture and magnificence was an important political strategy at the royal courts of Europe. Her servants enhanced Catherine's reputation, demonstrating her own honour and the strength and influence of her position. Their liveries reflected her loyalties to both her marital and natal dynasties in England and Spain through the emblems and badges sewn onto their costumes. Her servants would have put on a magnificent display, with each group wearing different combinations of colours and fabrics. Her footmen wore red and black, including doublets of red velvet upon which were embroidered cloth of gold sheaves of arrows.⁷⁴ A sheaf of arrows was one of Catherine's Spanish dynastic badges, and it had originally been her mother Isabel's emblem.⁷⁵ Other servants at the Field wore Tudor colours of green and white with Catherine's badges, thus combining her two dynasties into one display. Catherine's badges on her servants' livery would identify her presence with her dynastic alliances, serving to heighten and extend the silent diplomatic advice the queen's own clothing offered to onlookers.

Catherine could also use her own clothing and the liveries of her household together to show her support for an Anglo-Spanish alliance. When attending one of the jousts held at the Field of Cloth of Gold between the French and English knights, Catherine wore a head-dress

in the Spanish fashion, with the tress of hair over her shoulders and gown, which last was all cloth of gold; and round her neck were most beautiful jewels and pearls. She was in a litter, covered completely with cloth of gold, embroidered with crimson satin foliage, which was wrought with gold ... The horses and pages were all covered in like manner, as also the 40 hackneys [sic] of her ladies and the six waggons [sic].⁷⁶

Her Spanish coif involved a *tranzado*—a long plait of hair encased in gold and jewels that hung down her back—with her head probably covered in a jaunty Spanish bonnet.⁷⁷ This style would have been markedly different from the way French and English women wore their hair, which was usually pinned up and covered by gold nets, ribbons or linen coifs.⁷⁸ By wearing her hair in “the Spanish fashion”, Catherine would have significantly differentiated herself from the women of the French court and emphasized her advocacy for Spain. The weight of her advice was magnified, moreover, by her attendants and pages, who were all dressed in a similar manner to the queen, extending the statement made by her clothing. Catherine’s clothing and the liveries and badges of her servants acted as reminders of the enduring connections between England and Spain, and Catherine’s presence at the Field argued, through the medium of her household and wardrobe, for a continuation of the alliance her marriage had cemented eleven years earlier.

Catherine’s decision to dress in Spanish fashion at the Field of Cloth of Gold was undoubtedly meant to emphasize her family allegiances and to encourage her husband to consider an alliance with her nephew instead. Catherine did not always dress in Spanish fashions, and most of the gowns recorded in Catherine’s account books were not Spanish in style.⁷⁹ She wore gowns and outfits in a variety of styles, and as recently as March 1520, her wardrobe included several gowns made in the “French fashion”. Three of these gowns had been altered to fit the latest French fashions according to the advice of Sir Thomas Boleyn, who had just returned from a diplomatic mission to France.⁸⁰ Some of the most costly and elaborate of Catherine’s gowns, such as a gown of purple cloth of gold, were gifts from her husband and therefore unlikely to have been in the Spanish style.⁸¹ Although Spanish fashion would become closely associated with her over the course of her queenship, Catherine frequently wore other fashions, so her Spanish dress in front of the English and French courts at the Field had diplomatic implications and personal meaning for the queen.⁸²

After the Field of Cloth of Gold, the Anglo-French alliance continued for another year until French aggression provoked England to ally with Catherine's nephew Charles.⁸³ While Catherine may not have been able to prevent the alliance in the short term, she was able to ensure that when her husband was ready to abandon France, there was already the groundwork in place for a more serious English alliance with her nephew. As one of the most diplomatically active English queens of the early modern period, Catherine was able to successfully offer counsel to both Spanish and English diplomats, courtiers and sovereigns. Even before she became queen, Catherine sought to mediate between her father and her new homeland by offering advice and guidance on strategy and embassy personnel. When she became queen, she combined this experience of Renaissance diplomacy with the traditional queenly roles of peace-weaver and mediator. This unique combination provided her with a strong position from which to offer advice to her husband and her kin. Catherine's career shows that she understood that in order to be a successful queen of England, she needed to acquiesce to policies that turned against Spain temporarily in order to maintain the Anglo-Spanish alliance in the long term. Her diplomatic efforts, which included maintaining lines of communication with Spain, extending hospitality at the English court, and using the clothing and material culture to offer silent advice, allowed her to mediate between her natal and marital dynasties, becoming a counsellor to both.

NOTES

1. J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner, and R. H. Brodie, eds., *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, 1509–1547* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, & Roberts, 1862), 3.1:721, PDF e-book. Hereafter abbreviated *LP*; calendar entries have been cited for accessibility and ease of reference. Whenever possible, I have consulted original English manuscripts. Portions of this essay were read at “Kings and Queens 5: Dynastic Loyalties” in Greenville, SC, 8–9 April 2016.
2. For more on Louise of Savoy's considerable diplomatic career, see Chap. 6. Throughout this chapter, I will be referring to Catherine's natal family allegiances as Spain or Spanish, although this is slightly inaccurate. Strictly speaking, Catherine's natal dynasty was the Trastámaras, and her parents were the first joint rulers of the newly united Spanish kingdoms. This dynasty was replaced by the Habsburgs when Catherine's father Ferdinand died in 1516, leaving as his heir his grandson (and Catherine's nephew),

Charles of Habsburg. For the latter part of Catherine's reign, her nephew (usually known as Emperor Charles V) was the head of her dynasty, and it would be more accurate to speak of her relations with Charles as Imperial. However, to avoid confusion, I will continue to refer to Catherine's allegiances as Spanish, which more accurately reflects her own sense of dynasty than "Habsburg" or "Imperial".

3. *LP*, 3.1:721.
4. *LP*, 3.1:728.
5. John Carmi Parsons, "Mothers, Daughters, Marriage, Power: Some Plantagenet Evidence, 1150–1500," in *Medieval Queenship*, ed. John Carmi Parsons (Stroud, UK: Sutton, 1998), 69.
6. See also Chap. 4 for additional associations between queens consort and the Virgin Mary.
7. Queenly association with the Virgin Mary developed alongside Christocentric kingship in the fifteenth century, Joanna L. Laynesmith, *The Last Medieval Queens: English Queenship, 1445–1503* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 30–4; Janet L. Nelson, "Medieval Queenship," in *Women in Medieval Western European Culture*, ed. Linda Elizabeth Mitchell (New York: Garland, 1999), 180; Queenly intercession is usually discussed in relation to formal, public requests for mercy by queens, see Lois L. Huneycutt, "Intercession and the High-Medieval Queen: The Esther Topos," in *Power of the Weak: Studies on Medieval Women*, ed. Jennifer Carpenter and Sally-Beth Maclean (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 126–46; John Carmi Parsons, "The Queen's Intercession in Thirteenth-Century England," in *Power of the Weak: Studies on Medieval Women*, ed. Jennifer Carpenter and Sally-Beth Maclean (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 147–77.
8. Margaret Howell, "Royal Women of England and France in the Mid-Thirteenth Century: A Gendered Perspective," in *England and Europe in the Reign of Henry III (1216–1272)*, ed. Bjorn K.U. Weiler and Ifor W. Rowlands (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2002), 172.
9. Sharon Farmer, "Persuasive Voices: Clerical Images of Medieval Wives," *Speculum* 61, no. 3 (July 1, 1986): 517–18, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2851594>; Laynesmith, *Last Medieval Queens*, 243.
10. Timothy Hampton, *Fictions of Embassy: Literature and Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 7–8.
11. Daniela Frigo, "Prudence and Experience: Ambassadors and Political Culture in Early Modern Italy," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 25, <https://doi.org/10.1215/10829636-2007-017>; see also Chap. 6.
12. John M. Currin, "'Pro Expensis Ambassadorum': Diplomacy and Financial Administration in the Reign of Henry VII," *The English Historical Review* 108, no. 428 (1993): 591.

13. Andrea Thomas, “‘Dragonis Baith and Dowis Ay in Double Forme’: Women at the Court of James V, 1513–1542,” in *Women in Scotland c.1100–c.1750*, ed. Elizabeth Ewan and Maureen M. Meikle (East Linton, UK: Tuckwell, 1999), 90.
14. G.A. Bergenroth, ed., et al. *Calendar of Letters, Despatches and State Papers Relating to the Negotiations Between England and Spain Preserved in the Archives of Simancas and Elsewhere* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1862–1954), 1:210, PDF e-book. Hereafter abbreviated *CSP Spanish*; Parsons, “Mothers, Daughters, Marriage, Power,” 63–6.
15. Karen L. Nelson, “Negotiating Exile: Henrietta Maria, Elizabeth of Bohemia, and the Court of Charles I,” in *“High and Mighty Queens” of Early Modern England: Realities and Representations*, ed. Carole Levin, Jo Eldridge Carney, and Debra Barrett-Graves (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 62–5; Caroline Hibbard, “Translating Royalty: Henrietta Maria and the Transition from Princess to Queen,” *The Court Historian* 5, no. 1 (2000): 23.
16. Nelson, “Negotiating Exile,” 68–71.
17. Giles Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon: The Spanish Queen of Henry VIII* (New York: Walker & Company, 2010).
18. *CSP Spanish*, 2:201.
19. *LP*, 3.1: 728.
20. New diplomatic history has begun to include cultural exchanges, court ceremony and elite ritual into the study of diplomacy, thus demonstrating that professionalization and centralization did not subsume other forms of diplomatic engagement, see John Watkins, “Toward a New Diplomatic History of Medieval and Early Modern Europe,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 7–8, <https://doi.org/10.1215/10829636-2007-016>; Tracey A. Sowerby, “‘A Memorial and a Pledge of Faith’: Portraiture and Early Modern Diplomatic Culture,” *The English Historical Review* 129, no. 537 (April 1, 2014): 296–331, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ehr/ceu070>; Robyn Adams and Rosanna Cox, eds., *Diplomacy and Early Modern Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Catherine Fletcher, *Diplomacy in Renaissance Rome: The Rise of the Resident Ambassador* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); for the traditional account of early modern diplomatic history, see Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1964).
21. Olwen Hufton, “Reflections on the Role of Women in the Early Modern Court,” *The Court Historian* 5, no. 1 (2000): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.1179/cou.2000.5.1.001>; Caroline Hibbard, “The Role of a Queen Consort: The Household and Court of Henrietta Maria, 1625–1642,” in *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age, c.1450–1650*, ed. Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 393–414; Lorraine Attreed,

- “Gender, Patronage, and Diplomacy in the Early Career of Margaret of Austria (1480–1530),” *Mediterranean Studies* 20, no. 1 (2012): 3–27, <https://doi.org/10.1353/mds.2012.0004>; Susan Doran, *Monarchy and Matrimony: The Courtships of Elizabeth I* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Natalie Mears, “Love-Making and Diplomacy: Elizabeth I and the Anjou Marriage Negotiations, c. 1578–1582,” *History* 86, no. 284 (October 2001): 442.
22. For more on the varied ways elite women engaged in diplomacy and counsel, see Chaps. 2, 4, and 6.
 23. Laynesmith, *Last Medieval Queens*, 243.
 24. For more on the informal role of women at court and the opportunities it afforded them, see Hufton, “The Role of Women in the Early Modern Court.”
 25. Glenn Richardson, “‘Most Highly to Be Regarded’: The Privy Chamber of Henry VIII and Anglo-French Relations, 1515–1520,” *The Court Historian* 4, no. 2 (August 1, 1999): 119–40, <https://doi.org/10.1179/cou.1999.4.2.002>; Catherine Fletcher, “‘Furnished with Gentlemen’: The Ambassador’s House in Sixteenth-Century Italy,” *Renaissance Studies* 24, no. 4 (September 2010): 518–35, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1477-4658.2009.00618.x>.
 26. Catherine’s mother’s death caused upheaval in the Iberian kingdoms, as Catherine’s sister Juana and Juana’s husband Philip of Burgundy became the new monarchs of Castile, greatly reducing her father Ferdinand’s (who remained king of Aragon) influence and material resources. With Isabel’s death, Henry VII looked to an alliance with the new rulers of Castile, not with Ferdinand, and the match with Catherine lost its appeal. Henry’s new alliance and repeated arguments over Catherine’s dowry delayed Catherine’s second marriage.
 27. *CSP Spanish*, 1:526.
 28. *CSP Spanish*, 1:551.
 29. *CSP Spanish*, 1:576.
 30. *CSP Spanish*, Supplement to vols. 1 and 2: 100–1.
 31. This was an issue English ambassadors abroad faced as well, see Fletcher, *Diplomacy*, 54.
 32. *CSP Spanish*, Supplement to vols. 1 and 2: 17; Catherine’s advice and opinion of de Puebla was by no means accurate or unbiased, for she seems to have blamed de Puebla for many problems outside of his control and shared a snobbish disdain for the non-noble *converso* with other Spanish diplomats, see Garrett Mattingly, “The Reputation of Doctor De Puebla,” *The English Historical Review* 55, no. 217 (1940): 27–46.
 33. *CSP Spanish*, Supplement to vols. 1 and 2: 17.

34. For further discussion of royal partners working together, see Chap. 2.
35. Mary Anne Everett Green, ed., *Letters of Royal and Illustrious Ladies of Great Britain, from the Commencement of the Twelfth Century to the Close of the Reign of Queen Mary*, vol. 1 (London: H. Colburn, 1846), 159, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/hvd.32044010186450>.
36. Murphy notes that the young nobles of Henry's court encouraged the king to attack the French, but he does not consider Catherine's influence, Neil Murphy, "Henry VIII's First Invasion of France: The Gascon Expedition of 1512," *The English Historical Review* 130, no. 542 (February 1, 2015): 25–6, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ehr/ceu367>.
37. *CSP Spanish*, 2:50, 52.
38. *CSP Venetian*, 2:211, 87.
39. Murphy, "Henry VIII's First Invasion of France," 46–8.
40. *LP*, 1.1:1286.
41. *CSP Spanish*, 2:72, 76.
42. *LP*, 1.1:1356, cited in Murphy, "Henry VIII's First Invasion of France," 46.
43. *CSP Venetian* 2:505; Chap. 4.
44. *CSP Venetian* 2:503.
45. *CSP Venetian* 2:503.
46. *CSP Spanish*, 2:238.
47. Catherine was not the only royal daughter to tire of her father's inconstancy. Margaret of Austria, regent of the Netherlands, favoured a stable truce with France over her father's constant demands for war, and even negotiated the 1508 Treaty of Cambrai to cement peace between France, Aragon and her father, see Attreed, "Gender, Patronage, and Diplomacy," 14. For more on Margaret of Austria's diplomatic career, see Chap. 6.
48. Charles V held numerous titles across Europe, becoming king of Spain and its territories in 1516, and Archduke of Austria and Holy Roman Emperor in 1519. In Spain he was known as Carlos I, and he became Charles V when elected Holy Roman Emperor in 1519. To lessen confusion, I will refer to him exclusively as Charles V, despite the slight inaccuracy.
49. *CSP Spanish*, Supp. 2: 185.
50. *CSP Spanish*, Supp. 2: 325.
51. *CSP Spanish*, Supplement to vols. 1 and 2: 100.
52. *CSP Spanish*, 2:238.
53. Christine de Pizan, *The Treasure of the City of Ladies*, trans. Sarah Lawson, rev. ed. (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 40–1; Laynesmith, *Last Medieval Queens*, 246; Sharon D. Michalove, "Equal in Opportunity? The Education of Aristocratic Women, 1450–1550," in *Women's Education in Early Modern Europe: A History, 1500–1800*, ed. Barbara J. Whitehead (New York: Garland Publishing, 1999), 53, 58; Barbara J. Harris, *English*

- Aristocratic Women 1450–1550: Marriage and Family, Property and Careers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 234. Catherine’s successors would continue to combine entertaining with politics, see Chap. 11.
54. Catherine Fletcher notes that the wives of male ambassadors at the court of Rome may have acted as hostesses, but that we need more research on the role of women in diplomacy and ambassadors’ households, for more on the importance of news-gathering for queens consort, see “Ambassador’s House,” 534; Jill Bepler, “Dynastic Positioning and Political Newsgathering: Hedwig Eleonora of Schleswig-Gottorf, Queen of Sweden, and Her Correspondence,” in *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics, c. 1500–1800*, ed. Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly and Adam Morton (New York: Routledge, 2017), 132–52.
 55. For the importance of news-gathering for resident ambassadors, see Fletcher, *Diplomacy*, 45–8.
 56. Sebastiano Giustiniani, *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII*, ed. Rawdon Brown (London: Smith, Elder, 1854), 2:97, PDF e-book.
 57. Rawdon Brown, ed., *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs: existing in the Archives and collections of Venice, and in other libraries of Northern Italy* (London: Longman, 1864), 2:918, PDF e-book. Hereafter abbreviated *CSP Venetian*. Giustiniani, *Four Years*, 2:98.
 58. Diplomats were accustomed to reading acts of hospitality as political messages, see Fletcher, “Ambassador’s House,” 523, 528.
 59. *LP*, 3.2: 1537.
 60. Richardson, “Privy Chamber of Henry VIII,” 130–1.
 61. Jannette Dillon, *Performance and Spectacle in Hall’s Chronicle* (London: Society for Theatre Research, 2002), 68.
 62. Sowerby, “Portraiture and Early Modern Diplomatic Culture,” 315.
 63. *CSP Venetian*, 2:653.
 64. Fletcher, *Diplomacy*, 148.
 65. *CSP Spanish*, 2:238.
 66. *CSP Spanish*, 2:231.
 67. *LP*, 3.1:190.
 68. For an account of the meetings, see *CSP Venetian*, 3:50.
 69. Catherine Richardson, “Introduction,” in *Clothing Culture, 1350–1650*, ed. Catherine Richardson (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004), 20–1; Roze Hentschell, “A Question of Nation: Foreign Clothes on the English Subjects,” in *Clothing Culture, 1350–1650*, ed. Catherine Richardson (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2004), 49–50.
 70. *CSP Venetian*, 3:50; Maria Hayward, *Dress at the Court of King Henry VIII: The Wardrobe Book of the Wardrobe of the Robes Prepared by James Worsley in December 1516; Edited from MS Harley 2284, and His Inventory Prepared on 17 January 1521, Edited from Harley MS 4217, Both in the British Library* (Leeds, UK: Maney Publishing, 2007), 227; Catherine was

- descended from Edward III through his son John of Gaunt, whose daughter Catherine married Henry III of Castile in 1388. Catherine of Lancaster and Henry III were Catherine's great-grandparents.
71. Maria Hayward, "Spanish Princess or Queen of England? The Image, Identity, and Influence of Catherine of Aragon at the Courts of Henry VII and Henry VIII," in *Spanish Fashion at the Courts of Early Modern Europe*, ed. José Luis Colomer and Amalia Descalzo, Confluencias (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, 2014), 24.
 72. Glenn Richardson, *The Field of Cloth of Gold* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 10.
 73. The National Archives, Kew, E315/242/3, fols 26–29. Hereafter abbreviated TNA.
 74. *LP*, 3.1:852; TNA, E315/242/3, 22v, 23r.
 75. Isabel's emblem was used extensively in Spain as her symbol and in conjunction with her husband Ferdinand's symbol of the yoke, see Barbara S. Weissberger, "Tanto Monta: The Catholic Monarchs' Nuptial Fiction and the Power of Isabel I of Castile," in *The Rule of Women in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Anne J. Cruz and Mihoko Suzuki (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 43–63.
 76. *CSP Venetian*, 3:85; see also Hayward, *Dress*, 227; Catherine had worn Spanish dress in the past for political purposes, such as during Maying festivities witnessed by the Spanish ambassador, *LP* 2.1:411.
 77. Hayward, "Spanish Princess," 30; for more on Spanish hairstyles for women, see Janet Cox-Rearick, "Power-Dressing at the Courts of Cosimo de' Medici and François I: The 'Moda Alla Spagnola' of Spanish Consorts Eléonore d'Autriche and Eleonora Di Toledo," *Artibus et Historiae* 30, no. 60 (2009): 40, 47; Ruth Matilda Anderson, "Spanish Dress Worn by a Queen of France," *Gazette Des Beaux Arts* 98 (1981): 215–22.
 78. Hayward, *Dress*, 171.
 79. There are three existing account books from Catherine's Wardrobe of the Robes, which date from approximately 1515–1520: TNA, E101/418/6; TNA, 315/242/3; John Rylands Library, University of Manchester, Manchester, Latin MS 239.
 80. JRL Latin MS 239, 15v.
 81. The British Library, London, MS Harley 2284, 29r; without a Spanish tailor in England, most of Catherine's gowns would have been made in the English style, see Hayward, "Spanish Princess," 25.
 82. The long-standing association between Catherine and Spanish fashion was not lost on her husband, and during the divorce crisis, Henry declared that he hated the Spanish style of dress, even when worn by other women, *LP*, 5:1187, 521.
 83. Richardson, *The Field of Cloth of Gold*, 189.

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Counselloresses and Court Politics: Mary Tudor, Queen of France and Female Counsel in European Politics, 1509–15

Helen Matheson-Pollock

Using the case of Mary Tudor, Queen of France, this chapter explores the crucial role of female counsel in early sixteenth-century international diplomacy. Mary, the younger sister of England's King Henry VIII, married Louis XII of France and became Queen Consort of France for barely 90 days across the winter of 1514–15. Despite her brief reign Mary held the title "Queen of France" until her death in 1533 and maintained a marked interest in Anglo-French affairs throughout her life, including playing a prominent role at the magnificent meeting in 1520 of Henry VIII and Louis' successor, Francis I, later known as the Field of the Cloth of Gold. It could be argued that due to the briefness of the marriage and Mary's tenure as Queen Consort of France there appears to be limited value in exploring Mary's "queenship". Certainly the brevity of Mary's marriage curtailed the influence that she could exert in the international political sphere in her own right. Nevertheless, her residual association

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with the French crown was a marked demonstration of her popularity and the personal influence that was associated with the position of queen consort.

This chapter will present Mary's conduct as Queen of France in the context of the female counsellor, highlighting counsel as an element of Mary's queenship. The importance of her female attendants as her own counsellors, as well as models of female counsel including examples from Mary's own life and popular literature that probably formed part of her education, form a useful vignette for a discussion of queenship and counsel.

I

As the peace between God and mankind
 By the means of the Virgin Mary
 Was already made, so now are
 We French relieved of our burdens,
 For Mary is married among us again.¹

These verses by Pierre Gringoire highlight the reception of the marriage of England's princess, Mary Tudor, and King Louis XII of France in 1514. The marriage was solemnized in Abbeville with much celebration, which continued during her progression to Paris for her coronation.² Entertainments included ceremonial *tableaux vivants* designed by Gringoire, whose accompanying verses made plain reference to Mary's role as peacemaker between France and England, giving her equal significance with the most Christian Kings, Henry VIII and Louis.³

The potent presentation of Mary as the Holy Virgin set the tone for the nature of the power she would wield as queen consort, as well as alluding to Henry VIII's quest for Christian supremacy in Europe, confirmed by his receipt of the title *fidei defensor*—defender of the faith—from Pope Leo X in 1521.⁴ The ceremonials also established Mary's importance as an ambassador for England, a bridge between Louis and Henry from the earliest days of her relationship with the former. The staged and carefully stage-managed entertainments and tableaux formed what could be termed “visual rhetorical” displays of magnificence and perhaps even counsel, outlining from the outset the role that Mary would play at the French court, mediating the historical enemies that were the kings of France and England.

Although writing later of the coronation ceremony, Thomas Elyot's wisdom on the value of royal performance is true of Mary's marriage celebrations. Elyot asserts that "the honorable circumstances than vsed / shulde be impressed in the hartes of the beholders perpetual reuerence: whiche ... is fountayne of obedience".⁵ The impressive performances celebrating the union were meant to signal far and wide the importance placed on the marriage. Through her marriage Mary was a "tangible symbol" of the Anglo-French alliance.⁶ Furthermore, Mary's role as queen, that is her queenship, embodied the role of counsellor and quasi-diplomatic agent, taking her status beyond that of symbol—tangible or otherwise—to active participant in the maintenance of the friendship or fraternal relationship between Henry VIII and Louis XII.

II

Mary's conduct as Queen Consort of France and the integrity of her counsel was defined by the political context that led to her marriage. Princess Mary Tudor was born in 1496, the fifth child and third daughter of the family. At the time of her birth her father had reigned for a little over ten (mostly successful) years following his conquest at the Battle of Bosworth. He brought peace to England by uniting the houses of Lancaster and York through his own diplomatically significant marriage to Princess Elizabeth of York. Across his reign Henry VII slowly but surely attempted to secure the future of his dynasty, and the marriages of his children were vitally important to Henry VII's diplomatic strategy. The couple had produced two sons—Arthur, Prince of Wales and Henry, Duke of York—and three daughters—Mary, and her elder sisters, Margaret and Elizabeth. Henry's use of his children as diplomatic pawns is well known and given the relative newness of her family within the context of the royal houses of Europe, it was almost guaranteed that Mary's parents, Henry VII and Elizabeth of York, would be seeking a significant royal match for her almost from the moment of her birth, wanting to ally their new dynasty to the socio-political elite of Europe.

Aged only three, Mary's brother, Prince Arthur was betrothed to Catherine of Aragon in 1489, although the marriage did not take place until 1501.⁷ Arthur's sudden death in 1502 necessitated that Henry VII find another way to ensure an alliance with Spain, however, and so his younger son, Henry (b. 1491) was offered, and a treaty for the marriage between Catherine of Aragon and Henry was signed in 1503. The couple

were betrothed, although the marriage itself did not take place until after Henry VIII's accession in 1509.⁸ Arthur's untimely death and the subsequent efforts undertaken to marry Catherine to Prince Henry would have been a dominant feature of Mary's early years and probably shaped her initial opinions of diplomatic marriages and her future role. After the death of her mother in 1502, Catherine of Aragon was one of the most constant female presences in Mary's life. The two became close and Mary's staunch loyalty to Catherine coloured her relationship with her brother Henry throughout his long and torrid divorce proceedings in the 1520s and 1530s, evidenced by Catherine of Aragon's stated, official role as Spanish Ambassador, the ambassador for her father, Ferdinand of Aragon, as discussed by Michelle L. Beer in Chap. 3 in this volume.⁹

Compounding Henry's diplomatic strategy with regards to allying his dynasty with the ruling houses of Europe, the eldest Tudor princess, Margaret (b. 1489), was betrothed to James IV of Scotland as part of the Treaty of Perpetual Peace between England and her northern neighbour. Princess Elizabeth (b. 1492) was initially identified as the daughter who would solidify Henry VII's alliance with France. Before her death at just three years old, a match was proposed between Elizabeth and Francis of Angoulême, later Francis I of France. In 1507 Mary was betrothed to Charles of Castile to ally England with the House of Burgundy and the dominant family of Europe, the Habsburgs.¹⁰

Mary's betrothal (and subsequent marriage) was a direct consequence of, and at times a contributing factor to, her brother's political machinations in Europe. England's alliance with Spain and the Low Countries, marked by Mary's betrothal to Charles of Castille, necessitated Henry sending troops to aid Margaret of Austria, Charles's aunt, against the Duke of Gelders. Mary was known as Princess of Castile and communicated with her future Burgundian relatives in a manner that fully anticipated the match taking place.¹¹ After the new pope, Leo X, advised Henry to readdress his Continental allies (encouraging him to rethink his relationship with Louis of France in particular), her betrothal to Charles was broken off. Mary officially renounced Charles in July 1514, and on 12 August Henry wrote to the Pope declaring the intent that Mary would marry Louis XII of France. Public reaction to Mary's changing circumstances was widely negative. The English ambassadors in Brussels reported that the proposed marriage of Mary and Louis was spoken of "with great dissatisfaction" in all of Charles' territories. Charles' tutor was said to "[sneer] at the fidelity of England". Archduchess Margaret proposed to

seek verification from the English before acting, but should the rumour prove true, to remonstrate by desiring a French match for Charles.¹² In his celebrated history Edward Hall's comment that "the Dutchmen heryng these newes were sory, and repented them that they received not the lady, and spake shamefully of this marriage, that a feble old & pocky man should mary so fayre a lady" reveals the widely felt dissatisfaction of the Low Countries at the rejection of their candidate, Charles.¹³

The situation was further complicated for Henry because of the relative situations of his sisters' marital families. In 1503 Princess Margaret Tudor had married King James IV of Scotland—as Scotland and France were ancient and firm allies—and reigned as Queen of Scotland until the death of James IV at the Battle of Flodden in 1513.¹⁴ Had Mary married Charles of Burgundy, matters might have been quite different but after the death of James IV, Louis XII of France declared himself Protector of France for the minority of James V, the one-year old infant who inherited his father's throne.¹⁵ Louis's declaration ironically tied him through family to Henry VIII via Henry's elder sister, Margaret, James V's mother. Seen from the other perspective, though, having one sister as mother to the young Scottish king and another married to and able to influence the French king gave Henry an unprecedented spread of power and influence across northern Europe, even further enhanced by his wife's relations in Spain and familial connections to the Hapsburgs, although this last relationship had been damaged by the broken betrothal between Mary and Charles of Burgundy.

III

If counsel is or can be defined as politically motivated advice in context, then a dynastic marriage alliance presents the queen consort as something like the physical manifestation of that political relationship. She is representative of the political position of her natal family, be it royal father, brother and so on. In the case of foreign-born consorts, a significant part of their role and responsibility would be to represent the interests of their natal family to their marital family at the latter's court, offering their own or their family's counsel to their royal spouse. No children resulted from Mary's brief union with Louis that would have guaranteed her (and her brother) an interest in the French throne over the longer term. In fact, Mary was arguably soon eclipsed by Louise of Savoy, mother of Louis' heir Francis I. Although not a holder of French power herself Louise was able

to employ tropes of maternal power such as those later used by the great queen mother, Catherine de Medici, that were inaccessible to the childless Mary.¹⁶ However, the correspondence surrounding her marriage highlights the seriousness with which Mary took her role and associated responsibilities. According to Erin Sadlack, in attempting to increase the effectiveness of her counsel and other political activity, Mary used her education, drawing on “two sources of authority to increase the power of her position: the conventions of early modern letter writing and the rhetoric of chivalry that imbued the French and English courts”.¹⁷ Mary’s correspondence forms a key part of her strategy for conciliar activity; displaying some of her efforts to engage with her husband on key issues, while maintaining channels of communication with her brother and his English advisers. A great deal of diplomatic activity took place off or beyond the page of a letter, with more entrusted to face-to-face conversations, the privacy of which could be more easily policed. Personal relationships and conversation, then, are a third source of Mary’s authority which can be added to those identified by Sadlack.

Mary’s queenship was intrinsically linked with female counsel in myriad ways, and the extent to which counsel was an accepted and acknowledged aspect of early modern queenship should not be underestimated. The queen’s surviving correspondence reveals that the women of her household were integral to her ability to best perform the role of counselling consort to Louis; when Louis sought to deprive her of her female attendants, the loss of her ladies severely impinged on her authority as will be explored fully below. Extant correspondence makes plain the seriousness with which Mary took her role as queen, encompassing as it did the role of quasi-diplomatic agent of her brother, Henry. Mary’s correspondence and that of the English ambassadors resident during her time in France highlight not only Mary’s strategies for providing counsel, but also crucially the necessity of retaining the support of her English female attendants who formed a link between Mary’s new and former courts, and who also counselled their queen.

IV

What is known of Mary’s formal education as an English princess confirms her keen preparation for the role of French consort. As well as achieving fluency in French long before her marriage to Louis and competence in Latin (waning as a language of political usefulness by the first quarter of

the sixteenth century), Mary's education as a Tudor princess ensured that she was well prepared for her royal role as consort and quasi-diplomatic agent of England at the French court, able and willing to receive and offer counsel to the King her husband, and her brother, especially through correspondence.¹⁸ Erin Sadlack, whose study of Mary's correspondence has been of great help in the preparation of this chapter, reads the literary influence of texts including Ovid's *Heroides*—The Heroines—in Mary's letters and her use of correspondence to achieve political aims. *Heroides* in particular would have been familiar to Mary partly because her French tutor, John Palsgrave, used a French translation in his teaching.¹⁹ The text itself is particularly apt for the education of an early modern princess, being comprised of the narratives of classical heroines, many of them queens. *Heroides* is Ovid's collection of 15 epistolary poems written in the guise of maligned heroines from Greek and Roman mythology, addressing their former lovers and chastising them for perceived wrongs. Subjects include Penelope, long abandoned by Odysseus as he fought in the Trojan war; Dido, Queen of Carthage writing to Aeneas after he left her for Italy; and Medea, first wife of Jason, bemoaning her abandonment for Creusa (also known as Glauce) whom she later murdered.²⁰ While there is by no means the suggestion that Mary should model her conduct on that of the women about whom she learnt in *Heroides*, the dynamism of the women, the erudition of their methods and the political acumen displayed might well have been of interest to the princess. Palsgrave also wrote one of the first French-English textbooks which outlines some of the methods he employed in teaching Mary, including quoting great works of French literature to encourage grammatical excellence. Sadlack highlights that Mary's epistolary prowess was a direct result of her literary education. Calling Ovid's *Heroides* "arguably the oldest literary depiction of women's letter writing" Sadlack asserts that "nearly all of [Ovid's] heroines successfully employ letters to achieve their desires"; thus Mary learnt the power of persuasion through a well penned epistle in her schoolroom.²¹ Sadlack presents a generous reading of the impact of Mary's educational background, and its effect on her political practices, namely her understanding and employment of epistolary conventions drawn from literature.²² *Heroides* and the *Roman de la Rose* are not ancient history, it is true, but Sadlack's rendering of Mary as a literate and erudite young woman is indeed borne out by her correspondence.

Mary's mother and grandmother provide the link between the two branches of Mary's education—theoretical and practical—revealing a high

degree of female influence on the young princess. David Starkey reports that the similarity between Mary's and Henry VIII's handwriting and that of their mother suggests that Elizabeth of York played a key role in the early formal education of her younger children, including the crucial practice of teaching them to write.²³ Mary's grandmother, Lady Margaret Beaufort, was celebrated as an exceptionally educated woman. She established two colleges at the University of Cambridge—Christ's in 1505 and St John's which was completed in 1511 after her death.²⁴ Lady Margaret also patronized printers Wykyn de Worde and William Caxton and was a published author as the translator of the fourth book of *The Imitation of Christ* (1504) and *Mirror of Gold for the Sinful Soul* (1506).²⁵ Caxton made use of his patroness' reputation and position by presenting her as an exemplar of womanhood. In the prologue to *Blanchardyn and Eglantine*—a text Caxton contends to be “honeste and joyefull to all vertuouse yong noble gentylnen and wymmen for to rede”—Caxton highlights the value of reading a variety of works of literature as didactic “for yonge ladyes and damoyssellys for to lerne to be stedfaste and constaunt in their parte to theym that they ones have promised and agreed to”.²⁶ Somewhat contradicting the traditional emphasis of Margaret Beaufort as overtly devout, in his prologue Caxton associates her with the idea that women should read romance literature to counteract their tendency to “occupy them and studye overmoche in bokes of contemplacion” in order to make them more “stedfaste and constaunt”; an idea not endorsed in the curricula of later humanist educators such as Juan Luis Vives and Thomas Elyot, who espoused the rejection of Romance literature in favour of dedication to devotional texts.²⁷ The balance between Lady Margaret's association with traditional sites of learning, devotional texts and historic romances speaks to the complexity and form of young Mary's education, supporting the engagement of Oxbridge educated tutors to teach the princess languages and literature in order to enable the princess to conduct herself as required in her future role.

Even more significant is the practical example the two women set for the young Mary. Although Elizabeth of York died in 1503 when Mary was just seven, she would have been a significant presence in her young daughter's life, and her history would have been well known. As the eldest daughter and surviving heir of Edward IV, Elizabeth had arguably a better claim to the English throne than her eventual husband, Henry Tudor—a fact with which he was reputedly ill at ease.²⁸ Elizabeth had been forced to navigate the complexities of a court and country at war from a very early

age—her childhood and youth were defined by the Wars of the Roses, the decades-long familial war only ended by her marriage. There are few examples of Elizabeth actively participating in the politics or government of the realm but this is most likely due to advanced diplomacy; a recognition of the sensitivity of her—and her new husband’s—position in an only recently unified realm rather than a lack of political acumen or engagement. From her mother, then, Mary probably learnt the art of publicly appearing at peace and in unity with her husband the king, while not forgetting the significance of her own natal family and birth rights. There is also a degree of similarity in the way in which Mary’s marriage to Louis was a form of conflict resolution, as was Elizabeth’s to Henry VII.

Lady Margaret Beaufort played her own significant role in reconciling the warring factions in the resolution of the Wars of the Roses, arranging the marriage of her son, Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond to Princess Elizabeth of York by corresponding with Elizabeth’s mother, Elizabeth Woodville, consort of Edward IV. It was through Margaret that Henry VII derived his claim to the English throne and probably in recognition of this from 1499 Margaret styled her name “Margaret R”—widely believed to represent *regina*, a designation of royal authority to which she was not technically entitled.²⁹ Margaret was consistently known at court as “my lady the king’s mother”, making full claim of all the regal authority that she could. Her influence extended into every corner of the court because of her commission of a great *Book of Ordinances* which prescribed the pattern for significant court events for decades.³⁰ Mary’s own christening, for example, like the christenings of her siblings, was performed according to the pattern laid down by Lady Margaret, as was the proxy marriage that took place between Louis (represented by the Duc de Longueville) and Mary in 1514. This ceremony was performed in the rooms at Greenwich Palace belonging to Catherine of Aragon, symbolizing the close relationship and alliance between the two women.³¹

V

The role that Mary’s (potential) marriage played in securing Henry VIII’s diplomatic policies confirms the significance of dynastic alliance through marriage, but this was only a small part of Mary’s role as consort. The marriage “sealed the deal” as it were, solidifying the alliance through the transformation of Princess Mary of England into a new political and national identity as Queen Consort of France. In the early sixteenth

century the role of consort was not passive. Mary's role as English agent at the French court was to continue to keep Louis mindful of Henry and their fragile alliance, and mutual interests. Necessarily, then, she regularly corresponded with her brother and Cardinal Wolsey, keeping abreast of English affairs and what Mary could or should say to Louis to aid Henry's objectives.

A clear statement of Mary's agency and intended queenly authority is the promise she exacted from Henry (evidenced by her correspondence) that were she to survive her husband she would subsequently be able to marry a man of her choosing.³² This event came to pass perhaps sooner than Mary anticipated, and her controversial choice was Henry's close friend and confidant Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. Defending her action—marrying without Henry's express permission as king—Mary reminded Henry and his council of her full awareness and complicity in the alliance between England and France that was solidified by her marriage to Louis. Writing plainly to the English court from her widowed seclusion in France the queen dowager claimed "though I understode that he was verray aged and sikely yet for the advauncement of the said peax, and for the futheraunce of your causes, I was contented to conforme my self to your said mocionn"³³ This letter survives only in draft in the hand of Cardinal Wolsey's scribe, Brian Tuke, with alterations by Wolsey himself. Given the importance of the letter to Mary's personal agenda it is unsurprising that she sought advice from Wolsey on how best to address Henry in order to achieve her aims. In terms of Mary's political role and agency through marriage, key is Mary's acknowledgment that part of her role as Queen of France was to further Henry's causes, his political aims and objectives—first through the marriage itself, and secondly through mediating between the courts of Henry and Louis from her position as consort. In the revised letter Mary flatters Henry: "I doubte not but ye have in your good remembrans that where as for the good of peax and for the furtherance of your affayres ye moved me to marye with my lorde and late husband king loys of fraunce".³⁴ Wolsey's edits to the letter encourage Mary to emphasize the significance of her marriage and the service she performed for the king her brother.

According to Barbara Harris, "the letter documenting Mary's marriages can ... be used to expose and elucidate the close connection between the arranged marriage, the patriarchal family, and pervasive patterns of male dominance within the aristocracy as a whole".³⁵ This can clearly be seen, as through his counsel by correspondence, Wolsey supports and

acknowledges Mary's status as Henry's political agent: although she may not have had a choice in the matter of her marriage to Louis, her conduct within the marriage had a not insignificant bearing on the success of Henry's Anglo-French alliance.³⁶ Mary's letters "provide a rare opportunity to look at the arranged marriage from a woman's perspective and to observe her successfully manipulating an oppressive social institution to gain some measure of autonomy".³⁷ Harris is referring primarily to Mary's negotiation of her second marriage to the man of her choosing, however it is possible to see her acting with some authority—even autonomy—within the confines of her first marriage to Louis. Mary understood that the conciliar relationship that was key to the success of her marriage necessarily worked both ways—if she were to exert influence on Louis on her own behalf or that of her brother and his allies, then Henry had to grant her favours and requests in order to demonstrate to Louis that her words carried weight with his brother monarch. The fraternal relationship, too, was a key part of her strategy. As highlighted elsewhere in this collection, it was a very common epistolary convention for monarchs to invoke familial tropes to convey equivalency and emphasize their advice or requests. In this case, the fact that Henry was Mary's brother added real weight to the rhetorical relationship.³⁸ According to Sadlack, "Mary fully appreciated the political implications of her decisions and ... she continually sought to increase her authority, authority she would ultimately use to fashion her own response to the politics of marriage in early modern Europe".³⁹ Fundamental to the politics of Mary's marriage, and to her queenship, was the practice of counsel—here loosely defined as the politicized activity of giving and receiving advice. As Queen Consort of France, Mary was engaged in a broad and mutable conciliar network that spread between her husband and her brother via members of Henry's royal household in England and his ambassadors in France and Mary's female attendants who had travelled with her from England to form her queenly household. For Mary, as queen consort, to attempt to offer counsel to her husband was not unusual; what is perhaps unusual at this date is Mary's use of the word "counsel" to describe her own activity and that of her female attendants.

VI

Mary's queenship, including the extent to which she sought to influence her husband and considered herself capable of administering counsel, would have been greatly indebted to models she witnessed in her youth,

both real and as imagined in contemporary literature. In her work on *Feminized Counsel* Misty Schieberle asserts that women become aligned with truth and counsel in key texts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, themselves becoming idealized counsellors in late fifteenth-century literature. In works by Chaucer and Gower, for example, Schieberle highlights the prime suitability of a queen to offer counsel to kings and other aristocratic men, encouraging them to exercise moral and political virtues. Queens, it is claimed, were far superior as counsellors than the poets themselves who perceived their own lack of authority and status with regards to advising monarchs, despite active participation in the *Mirror for Princes* genre. This is particularly pertinent to the case of Mary Tudor because her education would undoubtedly have included the works Schieberle discusses.⁴⁰ It is quite possible, even likely, therefore, that Mary's attitude to giving and more particularly receiving counsel from her female attendants was shaped by near contemporary literature. Schieberle wrote about an earlier period than that considered here, however. The prevalence of the female counsellor in late medieval literature makes a clear case for the familiarity of the female counsel to a late fifteenth/early sixteenth century audience. Thus the role played by Mary Tudor in advising her husband and engaging with her brother between the French and English courts would not have seemed anomalous.

Mary's use of "counsel" to describe the activity of her female attendants appears to be the first use of the term by a woman in that context in the British State Papers.⁴¹ As discussed in the introduction to this volume (Chap. 1), counsel is not a gendered term, simply the act of advice delivered by a person of authority.⁴² The question, then, is why few women in the early sixteenth century were considered to have this authority. Although addressing a later period and the court of a queen regnant rather than queen consort, the work of Natalie Mears on Elizabeth Tudor is relevant to a discussion of Mary. Highlighting specifically the role of counsel at the Elizabethan court Natalie Mears suggests that the "informal and dynamic nature" of counsel—the term used to discuss both solicited and unsolicited advice—allows us to see the "interaction between individuals operating at court".⁴³ This understanding of counsel allows great scope to view female attendants as counsellors in a relatively unstudied manner. Concurring with Schieberle who claimed that it was the quality of the counsel not the gender or circumstance of the counsellor which was significant, Mears suggests that above all the process of dispensing and receiving counsel reveals trust between the persons involved, irrespective

of gender or position.⁴⁴ Mears cites agents, ambassadors and other officials who were members of Elizabeth Tudor's court but not appointed to the privy council as among those from whom the queen would take advice. One of these was Elisabeth Parr, marchioness of Northampton, a long-time friend and confidante of the queen who was described in 1562 as a "counsellor" of Elizabeth in a letter which also likens the privy chamber to the counsel chamber.⁴⁵ Although in this letter the Elizabethan ambassador (then resident in Spain) was criticizing the Queen's attendants' counselling or—in his mind—"gossiping" practices, the example nonetheless highlights the use of the term "counsel" in relation to women at and around the court of Elizabeth Tudor. The idea that the female attendants of a powerful noble or royal woman could have influence, even politically significant influence, over their mistress is not new, but is perhaps more typically associated with the privy chamber or court of a queen regnant rather than a queen consort. A significant historiographical debate has assessed the extent to which Elizabeth Tudor's female courtiers and attendants had political agency at her court, and the degree to which this agency was a required or inadvertent part of their roles.⁴⁶ Elizabeth Tudor was in her home court when she became queen, but she was as vulnerable and isolated as her aunt, Mary, in terms of allies as the monarch was always subject to the agendas of his or her court and council/counsellors. Embassies such as the Habsburgs attempted to capitalize on this vulnerability by influencing Elizabeth's female courtiers to influence the queen in turn.⁴⁷ Instances such as this clearly highlight that contemporary figures recognized the potential value of female attendants in terms of influencing their mistresses and playing a part in high-level court and even international politics, as was the case with the household of Mary Tudor in France in the 1510s.

VII

Throughout her work, Sadlack is at pains to emphasize Mary's political importance, yet there is very limited evidence to suggest that Mary was unusually—or even at all—successful in her individual petitions and request. For the purposes of this chapter, it does not actually matter. As was contemporaneously the case, what is most important is the act of counselling and receiving counsel, whether or not advice was followed through.⁴⁸ Unfortunately little material survives relating to the specifics of counsel received by Mary from Henry VIII on matters on which she

should attempt to influence Louis, or her success or failures. What is significant, however, is that Mary shows a fundamental awareness of the importance of counsel to her role as queen consort, emphasized by her specific use of the word “counsel” to explain the role of her female attendants in supporting her as suggested above.

To fulfil her own conciliar role with regard to Louis, it was necessary for Mary to be the recipient of good and wise counsel, from her brother and his court but also her own household who supported her in France. Corresponding with her brother, Henry VIII, Mary revealed the disbanding of her English household by the French court and wrote of her “mother Guldeford”—the mother of the maids of her chamber—who had been sent back to England against her wishes.⁴⁹ From very early on in her new life, Mary was to be left with those “such as never had experience nor knowledge how to advise or give me counsel in any time of need”.⁵⁰ Mary wrote to Henry’s chief minister, Cardinal Wolsey, that she “had as lief lose the winning I shall have in France as to lose her [Mother Guildford’s] counsel when I shall lack it”.⁵¹ Mary’s comment that she had been left without attendants who could give her adequate counsel articulates the extent that the role of “counsellor” was an accepted and expected duty of a female courtier.⁵²

Mary’s attendants were her links with her home court and her fellow quasi-ambassadorial representatives of England and English interests in her role as Queen of France. Thinking of Mary and her attendants in ambassadorial terms highlights their political importance and links the structure of the foreign-born queen consort’s court and entourage with that of a foreign embassy, an undoubtedly political unit. Proximity of an ambassador to his monarch was an important factor in an ambassador’s suitability for a post. Catherine Fletcher’s work on the role of the ambassador in the early sixteenth century highlights that across Europe “[t]he dispatch of a trusted favourite as ambassador could underline a monarch’s seriousness” and commitment to a particular course of action.⁵³ The role of the ambassador’s attendants, too, was crucial. Fletcher comments that “the work of the ambassador was underpinned by the efforts of many others”, and the conduct of those “others” was crucial. Fletcher cites an Italian treatise from 1543 which asserts that the comportment of a noble ambassador’s secretaries and officers was vital to the success and conduct of their embassy.⁵⁴ The parallel with the queen consort’s household is clear. Without her attendants, her quasi-ambassadorial entourage, Mary could not see how she was expected to conduct herself and fulfil her role at the French court.

Without her ladies and other members of her household, Mary was politically isolated. Mary's female courtiers were meant to form a "cocoon" around her, a permeable barrier between the young queen and the wider context of the French court.⁵⁵ When it became apparent that Mary's political wings were being clipped by the loss of her female attendants and confidantes, she sought the support of other members of her natal court, namely Charles Brandon—a frequent visitor to the French court who sometimes acted as Henry's ambassador—and Thomas Wolsey. This caused an overt shift from female to male counsel and allowed for a change in strategy, a minimization of the political role of Mary and her attendants. Wolsey wrote to Louis presuming to offer him counsel himself. Reminding Louis that he had advised Wolsey that he might act as one of his own privy councillors, Wolsey sought to persuade Louis that allowing Mary to retain her English attendants, including Mistress Guildford, was in his interest, as she had been chosen specifically to "counsel" Mary as to how best to please her new husband and conduct herself in her new, prestigious court.⁵⁶ Being such a young and innocent young woman, Mary needed a maternal role model and Mistress Guildford had come out of retirement at the behest of Henry VIII specifically to aid his sister. Cleverly seeking to minimize the overtly political relationship between the two women, Wolsey's letterletter couches his request in the language of female friendship and family. Louis was unconvinced, however, and refused to allow Mary's attendants to return. The English ambassador, the Earl of Worcester replied to Wolsey with Louis' unarguable logic that he and Mary were in as "good and parfaite love es ever any two creatures can be, and bothe of an age to rewle them selfe, and not to have servants that shuld loke to rewle him or hur. If his wife need of counsaill or to be rewlid, he is able to do hit".⁵⁷ Wolsey's clever language had not worked. Recognizing that the opposite were true, Louis was unconvinced by Wolsey's attempt to "depoliticize" the role of Mary's female attendants in helping her navigate the French court, because the best counsellor for a new young queen was himself as her husband and the long reigning king.

Try as she and Wolsey might, Mary was unable to persuade Louis to retain her attendants. As a sign of her affection and in payment for their services Mary ordered her treasurer, Nicolas de Cerisay, to pay an English goldsmith 600 French crowns for jewellery to be presented to her attendants who had been sent home.⁵⁸ Hall's *Chronicle* records that so devastated were some of the ladies by the change in their circumstances that "some dyed by the way returning, and some fell mad".⁵⁹

Wolsey secured Mistress Guildford the chief counsellor, without whom Mary was concerned she could not function in France, an annuity of £20 from 21 November 1514, which was later raised to £40 per annum.⁶⁰ The fact that Mary's need for her attendants was not purely rhetorical, nor political, serves to emphasize the intimacy of the conciliar relationship that the young queen consort had with her household. As is clear from the scholarship surrounding Queen Elizabeth and her female courtiers and Henry VIII's relationship with his privy chamberers, emotional attachment between a royal and his or her household only serves to enhance the functionality and success of the relationship, and in no way detracts from the political nature of personal politics.

Mary's concerns and issues persisted, however, and her male advocates at the French court—the Duke of Suffolk and the Earls of Dorset and Worcester—continued to keep Wolsey (and by extension Henry VIII and the rest of the Privy Council) informed of her situation. Suffolk informed Wolsey that Mary had shown the gentlemen “divers things the whiche we woll shew you at our coming wherby we perceyve that she had nede of somme good ffreundes about the king”.⁶¹ Attempting to provide Mary with the conciliar support she needed, the English ambassadors—to whom Louis had seemingly no choice but to listen—called together some of Louis's principal advisers and said that Mary had asked them “on hir bihalff and in the name of the king our maister that they wold be good and loving to her and they wold gyve hir counsaill frome tyme to tyme how she might best order hirselffe to content the king wherof she was moost desirous and in hir shuld lak no goode wille”.⁶² In this manner it appears that Mary was attempting a new strategy, ingratiating herself with the king her husband through his associates, and to gain the necessary intimacy.

The ambassadors were at pains to assert Mary's commitment to the principal men of her new court because of their relationship with and importance to their king. The ambassadors continued that Mary “knew well they were the men that the kind loved and trusted and knew best his mynde therefore she was utterly determyned to love theym and trust theym and to be ordered by their counsaill in all causes for she knew well that those that the king loved must love hir best and she theymm”.⁶³ Perhaps Mary realized that she was at risk of alienating Louis and his court by appearing to continue to be more English in her loyalties than French, superseding the needs of her new court, country and family with that of her natal family and the Tudor court in England. Not only would this have negated Mary's personal influence at the French court by souring her relationship with

Louis, she would have been of limited usefulness to Henry if she could no longer access and attempt to persuade Louis to favour her brother and English interests. Mary's strategy for retaining the favour of Louis and his councillors was successful. Dorset reassured the English court that "the quenys grace cantuniys stylele her goudeness *and* vysdome *and* innresyth in the same so that che lyses no gronde *and* duly incresehyth in the kyngys her hussbandes fawer *and* in the fa[vor] ofe hys pryfe console".⁶⁴ Louis' advisers, in turn, assured Mary that they appreciated her good will and would offer her counsel whenever she had the need.

* * *

Although her reign was brief, the various ways in which she engaged in political and quasi-ambassadorial activity with other women provides an important contribution to the study of early modern women and politics. Mary's use of the word "counsel" to describe her activity and that of her attendants articulates her acceptance and acknowledgement of the role she played as an adviser to the powerful men around her. Like the literary female counsellors highlighted by Schieberle, Mary knew that the quality of her advice was as, if not more, significant than her gender in terms of her audience's receptiveness to it, although crucial to her conciliar strategy was the inherent authority of her position as Tudor princess and French queen.

From female role models, including her mother and paternal grandmother, Mary learnt valuable and practical lessons about how best to exert her authority within the confines of her natal and marital courts and how to navigate the complexities of diplomatic relationships between two parties very recently at war. Key to this was appearance—the necessity of appearing steadfastly loyal to her husband in public, while in private engaging in a more nuanced, conciliar relationship that balanced loyalty to her husband with that to her natal family, thereby fulfilling the consort's complex and challenging role. From her female attendants Mary directly received wisdom and counsel, and from her brother the king and his advisers Mary received instructions and instruction on how best to approach and advise her husband. These three aspects of how a queen might counsel and be counselled are clear evidence of Mary's association with and utilization of her female attendants and other female influence in her conciliar conduct, and is therefore a crucial aspect in the study of queenship and counsel.

NOTES

1. “Comme la pais entre Dieu et les hommes,/ Par le moyen de la Vierge Marie, / Fus jadis faicte, ainsy a present sommes / Bourgoys Francoys, deschargez de nos sommes, / Car Marie avecque nous se marie” Pierre Gringore’s Pageants for the Entry of Mary Tudor into Paris, ed. Charles Read Baskervill (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934), 15. Baskervill transcribed the magnificently illuminated presentation copy given to Mary. See BL, MS Cotton Vespasian B.II.
2. A rich account of these events is given in Jean-Pierre Seqguin, *L’information en France de Louise XII à Henri II*, Genève, 1961, 11; nos 54–61.
3. There is an interesting parallel between Mary and Louis’ marriage festivities and those that had earlier celebrated the solemnizing of Margaret Tudor’s marriage to James IV. The Somerset herald’s lengthy and elaborate account described the August 1503 wedding festivities at Holyrood, which included masques just as took place for Mary and Louis. Suggestions that Margaret would counsel and advise James IV can be read into the treatment and deference Margaret received from her new husband. Leland, John, *De Rebus Britannicis Collectanea*, IV, ed. T. Hearne (London, 1770); Sarah Carpenter, “‘TO THEXALTACYION OF NOBLESSE’: A Herald’s Account of the Marriage of Margaret Tudor to James IV,” *Medieval English Theatre*, Vol. 29 (2007), 104–120. My thanks to Alexandra Johnson for sharing her insights on this topic with me.
4. Erin A. Sadlack, *The French Queen’s Letters: Mary Tudor Brandon and the Politics of Marriage in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 2–3.
5. Thomas Elyot, *The Boke Named the Governour* (London: Thomas Bethélet, 153), 174v.
6. Erin A. Sadlack, “Epistolary Negotiations: Mary the French Queen and the Politics of Letter-Writing,” *Sixteenth Century Journal*, Vol. 41, No. 3 (Fall 2010) 691–711, 693.
7. For more on the early years of the Tudor dynasty see, for example, Thomas Penn, *The Winter King: Henry VII and the Dawn of Tudor England* (London: Simon and Schuster, 2013); John Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); J. D. Mackie, *The Earlier Tudors 1485–1558* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952); J. J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (London: Yale University Press, 1997) and David Starkey, *Henry: Virtuous Prince* (London: Harper Press, 2008). A condition of the marriage was that Henry would execute one of the last surviving male heirs to the former ruling House of York, and so Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick was executed on 28 November 1499 before Catherine set sail from Spain. The delicate terms on which Arthur and Catherine’s marriage was agreed illustrate the relative fragility of the Tudor dynasty and the necessity of Henry’s policy of diplomatic alliance through marriage.

8. Penn, *The Winter King*, 192; Starkey, *Henry*, 168 and Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, 7–13.
9. Chapter 3 in this volume. Catherine's influence on Mary and the close relationship between the two women that began when Mary was just eight years old and continued until her death in 1533 is a fascinating topic, not discussed here for the sake of brevity.
10. John M. Currin, "England's International Relations 1485–1509: Continuities amidst Change," 14–43 in *Tudor England and its Neighbours*, eds. Susan Doran and Glenn Richardson (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 34, 37.
11. Morgan Pierpont Library, Rulers of England Box 02, Henry VIII, no. 33a.
12. "Henry VIII: August 1514, 1–15," in *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 1, 1509–1514*, ed. J S Brewer (London, 1920), 1331–47. *British History Online* <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/letters-papers-hen8/voll/pp1331-1347> [accessed 17 July 2017].
13. Hall, *Chronicle*, 569.
14. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, 57; Starkey, *Henry*, 114, 162–3.
15. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, 37, 50–54, 57; Starkey, *Henry*, 136–7 and 162–3.
16. For more on this see Chaps. 6 and 7 in this volume.
17. Sadlack, *The French Queen's Letters*, 3.
18. Mary's French correspondence includes her earliest surviving letter written to Margaret of Austria, duchess of Savoy, sometime between 1510 and 1513 when Mary was nominally Princess of Castile and addressed Margaret as "Madame mabonne Tante". Morgan Pierpont Library, Rulers of England Box 02, Henry VIII, no. 33a. Mary's first letter to Louis XII was a holograph letter in French, now BL Additional MS 34201, f. 27r from August 1514.
19. Sadlack, "Epistolary Negotiations," 703.
20. See, for example, Ovid, *Heroides* ed. Harold Isbell (London: Penguin, 1990).
21. Sadlack, *The French Queen's Letters*, 5.
22. Sadlack, "Epistolary Negotiations," 701–8.
23. Starkey, *Henry*, 66.
24. Michael K. Jones and Malcolm G. Underwood, *The King's Mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort Countess of Richmond and Derby* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992) 91, 106, 178, 202–31; Brenda M. Hosington, "Lady Margaret Beaufort's Translations as Mirrors of Practical Piety," 185–204 in *English Women, Religion and Textual Production, 1500–1625* ed. Micheline White (London: Ashgate, 2013), 187.

25. Jennifer Summit, "William Caxton, Margaret Beaufort and the Romance of Female Patronage," in *Women, the Book, and the Godly: Selected Proceedings of the St. Hilda's Conference, 1993, vol. 2*, eds. Lesley Janette Smith and Jane H. M. Taylor (London: Boydell and Brewer, 1995), 151.
26. Blake, *Caxton's Own Prose*, 57–8 as cited in Summit, "William Caxton, Margaret Beaufort," 156.
27. Summit, "William Caxton, Margaret Beaufort," 157–8.
28. D. M. Loades, *The Tudor Queens of England* (London: A and C Black, 2009), 74–7; Mackie, *The Earlier Tudors*, 49, 54, 65; Guy, *Tudor England*, 55, 57, 71 and Starkey, *Henry*, 32.
29. From the 1460s Margaret had styled herself "Margaret Richmond" in recognition of her second husband, Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond so it is possible that the R continued to denote this earldom, however, R for regina is a far more commonly accepted reading. Guy, *Tudor England*, 3; Penn, *The Winter King*, 98–9.
30. Penn, *The Winter King*, 33, 94–7.
31. Beer, "Between Kings and Emperors," 12; Walter Cecil Richardson, *Mary Tudor: The White Queen* (London: Owen, 1970), 81; and Mackie, *The Earlier Tudors*, 683.
32. TNA SP1/10 ff. 79–80, Mary, Queen of France to Henry VIII, draft in the hand of Brian Tuke, Spring 1515. Erin Sadlack conjectures that Wolsey would have been so invested in the process that he would have sent Tuke to Calais to write under Mary's direction, returning the draft to Wolsey for editing before preparing a clean copy to be sent to Henry.
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Ibid.*
35. Barbara J. Harris, "Power, Profit, and Passion: Mary Tudor, Charles Brandon, and the Arranged Marriage in Early Tudor England," *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1, Women Family, and Work (Spring, 1989), 59–88, 60.
36. For more on Wolsey's policy relating to France see, for example, T. A. Morris, *Europe and England in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2002), 159–62.
37. Harris, "Power, Profit and Passion," 60.
38. See, for example, BL MS Cotton Caligula D VI, f. 255r, Mary, Queen of France to Henry VIII, c. Jan/Feb. 1515 and BL MS Cotton Caligula D VI, ff. 253r–254r, Mary, Queen of France to Henry VIII, c. Jan/Feb. 1515.
39. Sadlack, *The French Queen's Letters*, 3.
40. Misty Schieberle, *Feminized Counsel and the Literature of Advice in England, 1380–1500* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 3–4.

41. According to a search of State Papers Online; http://go.galegroup.com.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/mss/paginate.do?sort=DA-ASC-SORT&inPS=true&rodId=SPOL&userGroupName=ucl_ttda&tabID=T001&searchId=R1&searchType=BasicSearchForm¤tPosition=16. Margaret of Savoy uses the word “counsel” to describe her own activity to Maximilliam II in 1510 but the context is different and Margaret writes as a fellow ruler.
42. Definition adapted from Schieberle, *Feminized Counsel*, 9. My thanks to Joanne Paul for sharing her insights on this work. See also the Introduction to this volume (Chap. 1).
43. Mears, *Queenship*, 50.
44. Schieberle, *Feminized Counsel*, 5.
45. TNA SP 70/38 f. 219, Thomas Chaloner to Elisabeth Parr, marchioness of Northampton, 20 June 1562; Helen Graham-Matheson (now Matheson-Pollock), “Petticoats and Politics: Female Agency at the Early Elizabethan Court,” in *Ladies-in-Waiting: The Politics of the Female Household across Early Modern Europe*, eds. Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 31–50.
46. Pam Wright began this debate in 1987 with her essay, “A Change in Direction,” in *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, ed. David Starkey (Longman: London, 1987), 147–72. The subject has since been revisited and variously analyzed in, for example, Judith Barbara Greenbaum Goldsmith, “All the Queen’s women: The Changing Place and Perception of Aristocratic Women in Elizabethan England, 1558–1620” (PhD diss., Northwestern University, 1987); Catherine Howey, “Busy Bodies: Women, Power and Politics at the Court of Elizabeth I, 1558–1603” (PhD diss., The State University of New Jersey, 2007); Natalie Mears, “Politics in the Elizabethan Privy Chamber: Lady Mary Sidney and Kat Ashley,” in *Women and Politics in Early Modern England, 1450–1700*, ed. James Daybell (Burlington and Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 67–83; Charlotte Merton, “The Women who Served Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth: Ladies, Gentlewomen and Maids of the Privy Chamber, 1553–1603” (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 1992) and Anna Whitelock, *Elizabeth’s Bedfellows: An Intimate History of the Queen’s Court* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013) and Graham-Matheson, “Petticoats and Politics,” 31–50.
47. J. M. B. C. Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Relations Politiques des Pays Bas et de l’Angleterre, sous le règne de Phillippe II*. 11 vols (Brussels, 1888–1900) Vol. IV, MCCC, Guzman de Silva to Margaret, duchess of Parma, 17 July 1564.
48. For further discussion see Joanne Paul, *Counsel and Command in Early Modern English Thought*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

49. No. 3356, 1413, Mary, Queen of France to Henry VIII, 12 October 1514, *LP, I*, 1513–14; a transcription of the severely damaged BL Cotton MS Caligula D VI, f. 257.
50. *Ibid.*
51. No. 3355, 1413, Mary, Queen of France to Henry VIII, 12 October 1514, *LP, I*, 1513–14; a transcription of the severely damaged BL Cotton MS Caligula D VI, f. 146.
52. TNA SP 70/38 f. 219, Thomas Chaloner to Elisabeth Parr, marchioness of Northampton, 20 June 1562; Graham-Matheson, “Petticoats and Politics,” 31–50.
53. Catherine Fletcher, *Diplomacy in Renaissance Rome* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 92.
54. *Ibid.*, 94, citing Francesco Priscianese, *Del governo della corte d’un signore in Roma* (Città di Castello: S. Lapi Editore, 1883), 69.
55. The use of the word “cocoon” here alludes Pam Wright, “A Change in Direction,” 167, and to the scholarly discussion of the function of Elizabeth I’s privy chamber and female attendants more fully explained in note 45.
56. No. 3356, 1413, Mary, Queen of France to Henry VIII, 12 October 1514, *LP, I*, 1513–14; a transcription of the severely damaged BL Cotton MS Caligula D VI, f. 257.
57. Ellis, *Original Letters*, 2nd Ser., Vol. I, 244.
58. Green, *Letters*, vol. I, 178–9.
59. Hall, *Chronicle*, 570.
60. *LP, I*, ii, 3499 and *LP, II*, i, 569.
61. BL Cotton MS Caligula D VI, f. 160r, Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk to Thomas Wolsey, 18 November 1514.
62. *Ibid.*
63. *Ibid.*
64. BL Cotton MS Caligula D VI, f. 196v.

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Catherine Jagiellon, Queen Consort of Sweden: Counselling Between the Catholic Jagiellons and the Lutheran Vasas

Susanna Niiranen

The daughter of Bona Sforza,¹ Catherine Jagiellon (1526–83) was a Polish-Lithuanian-Italian princess married to a Swedish prince, John Vasa (1537–93), Duke of Finland, later King of Sweden. The primary reason for their marriage was Duke John’s foreign policy in the Baltic Sea, and as

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a consequence Catherine's life in Sweden involved balancing between the position of a daughter, sister and mother of the Polish king(s) and that of a Swedish queen consort. The dynastic interests of the two royal families sometimes intertwined but were often different and even conflicting. Catherine Jagiellon can be regarded both as a "counsellor" and as an object of "counselling". She was counselled by both families as well as by important stakeholders such as ecclesiastical agents. In the absence of an established, specific regimen for queens consort at the time, the concepts and practices of counsel and counselling were especially fluid and demand closer investigation. The Latin word *consilium* appears in few texts investigated for this chapter, but more often, the act of counsel-giving is subject to interpretation. Moreover, the reconstruction of the sixteenth-century Swedish queens consort political involvement is fragmentary, privileging particular roles, and marked by silences, gaps or other archival distortions. The survival of Catherine Jagiellon's correspondence and other sources represents only a fraction of which remains: sources for her husband and other male agents survive rather better.²

While exceptional pre-modern Scandinavian sovereign female rulers such as Margaret (1353–1412), Queen Regnant of Denmark, Norway and Sweden, and Christina (1626–1689), Queen Regnant of Sweden, have been regarded in scholarship as political agents, queens consort like Catherine Jagiellon³—usually excluded from the formal mechanisms of political power—have mostly been studied in relation to the forms of "indirect power" or "soft power"⁴ they used, as well as the mechanisms of cultural transfer they were involved in. Cultural exchange is by no means a negligible issue, since international marriages were commonplace in early modern European royal courts and through them not only individuals, but material objects, practices, languages and ideas crossed existing boundaries.⁵ What makes Catherine Jagiellon's situation more complex is that she was Roman Catholic (her great-grandfather King Jogaila (1362?–1434) converted to Catholicism, which would later become an important symbol of Lithuania's conversion to Christianity) while her husband John was raised Lutheran (his father King Gustavus I (Vasa) had implemented the Reformation in Sweden). On one hand, the number of cross-confessional marriages or bi-confessional households was generally low in post-Reformation Europe, but occasionally political and dynastic purposes could dictate such princely or royal matches, as was the case with Catherine de Bourbon and the Duc de Bar, Henrietta Maria and Charles I, and Anna of Denmark and James I (discussed in Chap. 11 of this volume by Anna

Whitelock). On the other hand, cross-confessional dynastic marriage served as a means of attempting to negotiate toleration and gain a public presence for the minority faith in a princess' marital kingdom.⁶ In Sweden, however, the country was gradually moving towards Lutheran Orthodoxy at the end of the sixteenth century. This chapter discusses Catherine Jagiellon's role of giving and receiving counsel between these two groups of interest, the Jagiellons and the Vasas, particularly as it concerned questions of religion.

The chapter further examines different forms and means of counsel, of which the Swedish queen consort was both the object and the provider. It explores who her counsellors were and to whom she gave advice, as well as how the advice was exchanged and received. In addition, it seeks to analyze how Catherine Jagiellon was able to establish a network of confidants in a situation where her husband was crowned king after four years of imprisonment together. The couple were married in October 1562, but their life at court in Turku, Duchy of Finland, ended quickly the following summer when King Eric XIV's troops besieged Turku Castle. Duke John's independent foreign policy (including the marriage with a Jagiellonian princess) had precipitated a total break with his half-brother King Eric. Catherine and John were captured, taken to Sweden and incarcerated in Gripsholm Castle, but the terms of surrender stated that they should not be executed. After their release in 1567, John joined with his younger brother, the future Charles IX of Sweden, in 1568 to depose Eric and secure the throne for himself. It seems that Catherine and John developed a close relationship during the years of imprisonment, when they did not have many confidants around. Since she was a foreigner by birth and also a member of the Roman Catholic Church, which was strongly suspected of planning to re-Catholicize Sweden, it is relevant to ask whether the confessional strife made establishing trust more difficult for her than it was for Lutheran consorts. (Her predecessor, Queen Karin Månsdotter, and successor, Gunilla Bielke, were both Swedish and Lutheran.) The question is examined by exploring letters and other preserved written material (such as diplomatic reports) on the negotiations in which she was involved.

Catherine Jagiellon's term as a duchess and queen in Sweden (1562–83) is particularly interesting in terms of counselling, since religious and ethnic tensions were increasing then. It was also an active period of the state-building process (c. 1560–1720), a much studied and debated phenomenon in Swedish, Finnish and international historical scholarship.⁷ Although the state-building process began in Sweden in the sixteenth century, the major structural changes were not implemented until the next century.⁸

However, even during the early stages of state-building, the king recruited experts and advisers from among his followers. What about the queen consort? Was she mostly in contact with the same persons as the king or did she have her own network of confidants? Points of comparison are quite scarce and difficult to make with other queens consort, since there was no clear-cut legislation regulating the queen consort's position and privileges in Sweden. Moreover, scholarly interest in queens consort at the turn of sixteenth century has not been very intense.⁹

Juridically, Catherine Jagiellon was not a monarch, since Poland was an elective monarchy and even if a title of *princeps* or *infans* was used for her and she was treated as a princess (in the meaning of a king's daughter or sister), her position was technically not hereditary. She could have ascended to the Polish throne only through election, as her sister Anna and her son Sigismund did. No less importantly, there was no tradition of female monarchs in Sweden.¹⁰ In Sweden, Catherine was not in the position of a ruling queen, nor that of a regent, who had more political power than a queen consort. In 1569, after King Erik XIV had been dethroned and John replaced him, the Succession Pact was renewed. It included a provision that in the case of King John's death, Catherine could stand as Queen Regent until their son Sigismund came of age.¹¹

In the background to this alliance confirmed by marriage between the royal houses of Sweden and Poland-Lithuania was the growing power of Russia and its threat to both countries.¹² Indeed, John's decision to marry a Polish princess was part of a foreign policy strategy to develop a closer relationship with Poland-Lithuania, which would not incidentally increase his own power (even as his half-brother Eric XIV sought to reduce it through parliamentary action). Although John was aware that this strategy was against Eric's wishes, his political plans were linked to a personal interest in Catholicism and irenic religiosity.¹³ After long-term negotiations via various envoys travelling between the royal courts in Sweden and Poland-Lithuania and bringing letters and portraits, the marriage between *Princeps* Catherine Jagiellon and *Dux* John was finally realized relatively quickly. It unified one of the most established royal dynasties in Central Europe, the Jagiellons, with a newcomer dynasty from the north, the Vasas. The Jagiellons had been hereditary grand dukes of Lithuania, as well as kings of Poland, Hungary and Bohemia, and had married into several ruling houses, including the Habsburgs, Europe's imperial dynasty, when the Vasas had been mere provincial nobles.

Through the wedding held in Vilnius on 4 October 1562, Catherine Jagiellon became Duchess of Finland, and the ducal couple travelled almost immediately to Turku, the capital of the Duchy. The wedding in the Lower Castle of Vilnius was conducted as a Roman Catholic ceremony, even though John was a Protestant. A clause in the marriage contract permitted Catherine to practise her religion without interference.¹⁴ This kind of clause had been typical of Jagiellon marriage contracts since the 1530s.¹⁵ Catherine's brother, King Sigismund August of Poland, and the bride herself had probably (too) high expectations about the duke's position during the marriage negotiations, since John had made assurances that as Duke of Finland he was independent of Sweden, like a prince of the Empire in Germany.¹⁶ When John was appointed Duke of Finland in 1556 at the age of eighteen, he took up his residence at Turku Castle, first with his mistress Catherine (Karin/Katarina) Hansdotter, with whom he had four children between 1556–60.¹⁷ Serious doubts at the Jagiellon court regarding the young Swedish groom were assuaged by means of a loan of 120,000 riksdaler to Sigismund August, although against Eric XIV's consent.

In return John received as security seven castles in Livonia, perhaps the most strategically important area in the Baltic.¹⁸ When Eric XIV found out all these actions of his half-brother against his consent, the conflict between the brothers burst into the open.

DOSKA THE DWARF AND THE POLISH COURTLY COMMUNITY

Duchess Catherine brought a large entourage (fifty-nine persons) with her to Turku, including courtiers and servants who were mostly of Polish origin. It seems that she favoured Polish *familiars* until the end of her life in Sweden, although her court was characteristically international, as early modern courts usually were. In Turku, her *hovmästare* (court master),¹⁹ cooks and baker were Poles, while an Italian named Cola took care of the wine cellar. In addition, the apothecary Mathias Losius and a dyer are mentioned. Among the women, there were nine ladies-in-waiting, four servants and a washer, all of whom had Polish names. Catherine also brought with her four dwarfs: two male, Maciek and Siemioniek, and two female, Doska and Baska.²⁰ Doska was probably a certain Dorotea Ostrelska, who is often mentioned in connection with Catherine, and Baska may have been a woman called Barbara.²¹ According to Małgorzata Wilska, Doska was educated, but we do not have any details of her

education. Doska was one of the only members of Catherine's entourage that she kept with her while imprisoned with her husband by Eric XIV. At the time of the imprisonment, in the late summer of 1563, the new duchess and her foreign courtiers had been in Turku for only eight months. It was also Doska who was in correspondence with Catherine's sister, Duchess Sophia of Brunswick-Lüneburg (1522–75).²²

Clothes and books were sent to the prisoners. John had a relatively large library with typical humanistic titles, while Catherine's books are described only as "papist" (*papistiska böcker*) in an inventory. Apparently, they read in the prison and since Catherine was not allowed to keep any of her Catholic chaplains with her, it is possible that she sought religious consolation and counsel from books.²³ The ducal couple was finally released from Gripsholm after four years' imprisonment. Three children had been born during these years: Isabella in 1564, who died before the age of two, Sigismund in 1566 and Anna in 1568, just after the family's release. In turn, Eric XIV was deposed and incarcerated as a result of the upheaval. John and Catherine were crowned the new King and Queen of Sweden in 1569. In a letter to the Duchess of Brunswick-Lüneburg, Doska worried that lenient Catherine would let the dethroned king out of prison. It is not clear whether she counselled her mistress directly on this issue, but her correspondence with the duchess is suggestive. In addition, Dorotea Ostrelska is said to have warned the Polish guards when the royal prisoner (Eric) attempted to escape.²⁴ It seems that Doska was a trusted and much-appreciated court dwarf: dwarfs' clothes were included in John's and Catherine's property inventory at the time of the imprisonment in 1563²⁵ and when Doska was ill, she was treated with expensive, imported substances, such as saffron.²⁶ However, her position did not differ remarkably from that of other dwarfs in European courts. Dwarfs were not uncommon in early modern European courts; on the contrary, they were owned, exchanged and sent as gifts by early modern monarchs in Spain, France, England, Italy, Russia, Poland, Portugal, Germany, the Spanish Netherlands and further afield. The fact that they were objectified as gifts did not prevent dwarf attendants from becoming long-lasting and much-loved court subjects.²⁷

Nevertheless, it would be imprudent to regard Doska as a "counsel-giver" to the queen consort. The social gap between a servant—even if serving at court—and a member of the royal family was too vast, although there could have been an emotional bond between them. Real friends—who could securely counsel each other—were believed to be

bound by likeness.²⁸ Instead, Doska was a confidant and an observer, who reported about various situations and impressions she saw around the queen and her entourage, but apparently abstained from giving straightforward counsel, as a peer could have done. Interestingly, Betty M. Adelson has noted that despite differences between the various courts, there are several themes that span nations and centuries. One of them is the loyalty of court dwarfs, who followed their masters or mistresses to prison.²⁹ It is known that after the siege of Turku Castle by Eric XIV's troops, many of the duchess' servants travelled back to Poland, but it is obscure why Doska was chosen or expected to follow her mistress to Gripsholm. Was it a convention for trusted court dwarfs, who were separated from their parents very early on and who did not necessarily have a family of their own? However, Doska disappears from the sources after 1577, probably due to her death. The queen continued to be surrounded by Poles, or at least by Polish ecclesiastics and servants, who returned from Poland to rejoin the court of their mistress, this time in Stockholm.

The Swedish court was modest by standards that we usually understand by "early modern European court" meaning French, Spanish or English courts, for instance.³⁰ Its structure followed northern German models and the offices were usually the same as at German courts. Each chamber was headed by a master or a mistress (*mästare, mästarinna*). The courtiers who served in the royal bedchamber and the surroundings formed the core group closest to the monarch. *Hovfruntimret* (derived from the German *Frauenzimmer*) consisted of the women who attended on a female member of the royal family and was headed by a court mistress (*hovmästarinnan*). Her duty was to control that no unwanted person was admitted into the lodgings of the *hovfruntimret*. All communication with the queen, whether spoken or written, had to go via the court mistress. A number of unmarried aristocratic court maids served under her and she controlled both their personal reputation as well as the court's reputation by reading all their letters before they were sent out.³¹ Thus, the *hovmästarinnan* was both aware of and monitored various kinds of information and knowledge at the court. She was a mental gate-keeper to keep undesirable out and played the final card in the selection process of people and knowledge.

The Polish courtiers of Catherine Jagiellon represented people, habits and languages from "home". The "counselling" input of ordinary courtiers and servants was generally limited to everyday, practical matters such

as housing, dressing, grooming, eating, drinking, gardening, moving from place to place, nursing, preparing medicine, washing and so forth, and it was primarily transmitted orally. This is not to say that their contributions were not important: without their specialized input on labour and empirical know-how, the court could not function. In contrast, the high household dignitaries who had regular access to the monarch, his or her councillors or other royal family members, and who could build personal relationships with them, were essential points of contact and could become influential mediators between different parties. Even the ladies-in-waiting of a queen consort could have considerable influence, as the chapter by Matheson-Pollock in this volume shows (Chap. 4), although their political activities have frequently been overlooked.³² Queen Catherine Jagiellon's long-term *hovmästarinna* was Karin Gyllenstierna (d. c. 1602), who probably acquainted her with Swedish court life. After Catherine's death, Karin had the same position serving her daughter, Princess Anna. However, Karin did not follow Anna and Sigismund to Poland, but stayed in Sweden. Instead, King Eric XIV's daughter, Sigrid, travelled to Poland and became a lady-in-waiting at her cousin's court. John III's illegitimate daughter Sofia Gyllenhielm served at the court of John's sister, Elizabeth, but she was soon married to Pontus de la Gardie, previous *hovmästare* who was dispatched on an official embassy visit to Gregory XII for the Queen and the King of Sweden in 1576.³³ These few examples around Catherine Jagiellon show that these women were active and significant members of family networks at court. The marriage of the queen's ladies-in-waiting to members of the local nobility was an effective strategy to bind nobles to the court, ensure continuity and transmission of knowledge, but also to raise a new group of loyal subjects.

Catherine's servants and courtiers brought from Poland-Lithuania also formed a small religious community. Already in 1562, at least two Polish Roman Catholic priests travelled from Vilnius to Turku with the duchess in order to take care of her spiritual needs as had been agreed in the marriage contract. However, the number of her original chaplains varies in different sources.³⁴ When imprisoned the following year, Catherine had to survive without a court chaplain. As queen, she continued her Catholic practices privately with the help of her priests. In 1572, both of her chaplains were old and wanted to return to Poland. Only "Jacob" went back home, but the other court chaplain, old and sickly Albert Grohowski, stayed in Stockholm, a decision which was not without consequences. The queen and Father Albert were isolated from other Catholics, excepting

those who were left from Catherine's Polish entourage. On the one hand, Grohowski was apparently not a great theologian, nor was he in contact with his ecclesiastical superiors. On the other hand, John dominated the religious climate at the court with his irenic ideas. Catherine (whose religious education was perhaps not the most orthodox) seemed to slide away from correct dogma. When suspected of heresy by the Catholic dignitaries in Poland and Italy, Catherine blamed Grohowski for permitting it: a notable instance of the queen imputing her own conduct to poor counsel. She was evidently perceived to be in need of guidance and during the 1570s a number of newly educated Jesuits were sent to her court. Their mission was based on a scheme for the re-Catholicization (or Counter-Reformation, known also as *Missio Suetica* among Jesuits) of Sweden. The Catholic queen was central to these plans, since it was thought that her court might serve as a base for the operation: her old chaplains were to be replaced by young and dynamic Jesuits. She was also thought to need spiritual advice, because her new practices were regarded as heretical, first and foremost the evangelical communion celebrated in two kinds (*sub utraque specie*), with both the bread and the wine given to the celebrants. Stanislas Warszewicki, Polish Jesuit and rector of the collegium of Vilnius, was sent to Sweden with the official purpose of negotiating the Sforza inheritance, but primarily to convert John and to make the local church more favourable to Catholicism. Another reason was to give confessional counselling to the queen.³⁵

CONFESSIONAL COUNSELLING

When John seized power with his Catholic consort beside him in 1568, the Catholic powers of Europe, particularly Poland, saw a chance to interfere with the politico-religious situation of Sweden. The series of events which followed confirms the fact that religious and political issues were inextricably intertwined and any incident could trigger renewed conflict, which—given the competition for power in the Baltic, together with ideas of expansion and competition among the European dynasties—had resulted and was likely to lead to new (military) conflicts. Since the distinction between “religion” and “politics” is often difficult to make in this situation, the conceptual framework of “confessionalism” encompasses both, in addition to the social sphere. Confessionalism means the formation of religious ideologies and institutions in Lutheranism, the Reformed Church and Catholicism, and one which denotes the articulation of belief

systems and the recruitment of clerical bodies, as well as a system of rituals which can be seen as part of social discipline. The result was an inflexible situation with mutual antagonism on both sides, in Sweden involving mainly Lutherans and Catholics.³⁶

In a letter to Princess Anna Jagiellon, Catherine's sister, in November 1569, Cardinal Giovanni Commendone, a papal legate to Poland, asked for instructions concerning Catherine Jagiellon's politico-religious situation in Sweden.³⁷ Since Sweden and Poland were at war and communication between the sisters had been temporarily interrupted, Anna was unable to reply. However, cardinals and bishops involved in the plans for the re-Catholicization of northern Europe in the Tridentine spirit rightly estimated both that Anna was worried about the reputation of the family and that she was able to influence her younger sister in Sweden. Simultaneously and in the same vein, the Bishop of Ermland, Martin Kromer, previously employed in the royal chancellery at the Polish courts of Catherine's father (Sigismund I) and brother (Sigismund Augustus), had written directly to the new queen, urging her to convert her husband.³⁸ According to historian Henry Biaudet (1870–1915), Kromer was a friend (*ami*) and adviser (*conseiller*) of Catherine Jagiellon before her marriage.³⁹ It is also possible that he served as tutor of Sigismund II Augustus and his sisters with other theologians, such as Stanislaus Hosius, the poet Johannes Dantiscus and the historian Jost Ludwig Decius.⁴⁰ Kromer was not just another adviser, since from 1558 to 1564 he served as the Polish envoy to Emperor Ferdinand I. In this capacity his tasks included advocacy of King Sigismund Augustus' claims in the complicated affair of the inheritance of his and Catherine's late mother Bona Sforza, which was also claimed by the King of Spain. In February 1570, Catherine replied to Kromer, explaining King John's decision to stay loyal to his father's faith. She also expressed her concern that the Swedes might not respond in a good way to the conversion of their king and thus implicitly counselled her one-time counsellor not to put so much pressure on her in the matter.⁴¹

Regardless of Catherine's negative reply, rumours concerning the king's conversion circulated in Europe. Even the king's own envoys firmly stated that he had converted.⁴² While there is no evidence to support this (nor of who counselled the envoys to pretend it was true), John obviously had both religious and opportunistic Catholic sympathies. Instead, John worked on reforms within the Lutheran Church. These reform plans were also reported to the pope, despite the fact that the king was the head of

the Church in Sweden. John demanded that the pope grant him a number of dispensations, which would ease the establishment of an irenic Church in Sweden or—according to certain interpretations—permit him to pave the way for a reintroduction of Catholicism in his realm.⁴³ There are some notable parallels here with the case of James I of England.⁴⁴ The information travelled to the Papal Curia most often via Catherine's letters. The three main requests in the correspondence between the Swedish queen and the pope in the 1570s were to grant permission for Mass to be recited in the vernacular, for the marriage rights of the clergy to be continued and to allow the practice of *communio sub utraque specie*, regarded as heretical by the Catholic Church. Catherine explained her pain at being suspected of heresy. First she denied her use of *sub utraque*, but later on she admitted it and demanded absolution (accusing, as we saw above, her confessor Albert Grohowski of granting permission). There were many other requests, but perhaps these three were deemed to be the most urgent, since they were repeated in several letters. It seems that Catherine repeated John's demands, since their letters often follow the same narrative.

The pope was not receptive to Catherine and John's demands. Catherine explained that these reforms were the best way to get the Swedes to be responsive to Catholicism. It is perhaps daring to say that Catherine Jagiellon counselled the pope. However, Gregory XII was more dialogical with her in contrast with his predecessor, Pius V, who found her suspicious and insincere and did not take her counsel on how to facilitate the re-Catholicization of Sweden into consideration at all. Even the renowned special legate Antonio Possevino presented John's demands to Rome, but the pope's answer was "non possumus" (we cannot). Oskar Garstein provides an interesting narrative regarding this in his *Rome and the Counter-Reformation*, which is based on Catholic sources of these events.⁴⁵ It is striking, however, that he ignores Catherine Jagiellon in the process. Of course, John was the head of the Lutheran Church in Sweden and the pope was the leader of the Catholic world, but it is odd that Catherine's letters and actions are neither analyzed nor even mentioned. It was Catherine who was most often in contact with the pope, although it is more than possible that John was behind the correspondence, since some of the letters with similar content from John's chancellery are dated on the same day as that of Catherine's. The letters addressed to the pope are not autographed but written in the chancellery, as most of the official letters have Catherine's signature CATHARINA R[EGINA].⁴⁶ However, Catherine was able to write Latin, as evidenced by her autographed letter

to the Abbess of Vadstena preserved in the Uppsala University Library.⁴⁷ According to a later source, the eminent Polish diplomat and cosmopolitan Christopher Warszewicki (1543–1603) explained to Sigismund, Catherine’s son, that issues associated with the Catholic faith were particularly her field, which she was able to facilitate.⁴⁸ It appears that John very clearly understood Catherine’s valuable relations with the Papal court, compared to his own, and used Catherine as a diplomatic tool or pathway to Rome as well as a means of access to the Sforza inheritance and the Polish throne. She was a member of the Jagiellonian dynasty, closely tied with the Roman Catholic Church. She was also a daughter of Bona Sforza, whose immense inheritance remained to be dispersed. That process demanded high-level, international Catholic support, since the money was stuck in Naples, which at that time was part of the devoutly Catholic kingdom of Spain, and whose king could not imagine the money going to Protestants. In matters related to confessionalism, there are several internationally significant matters on which Catherine and John can be considered a “working couple”: John III’s Church and the liturgical reforms in Sweden; Catherine’s religious habits which needed to be controlled in accordance with the Papal Curia (her need for “religious advice”); re-Catholicization plans in Sweden; and the inheritance of Bona Sforza. In order to achieve results, they needed each other, and they attempted to work for their own, their families’ and the common good, with Lutheranism and Catholicism alternately and together, depending on the matter. Of course, the tasks were impossible.

In 1574, Pope Pius V had sent his Polish envoy, Stanislas Warszewicki, to Sweden to visit the queen. In his letter, the pope counselled Catherine to stay loyal to her father’s faith and to work for the propagation of Catholicism.⁴⁹ Cardinal Hosius wrote to Martin Kromer, his former colleague from the Polish royal court, informing that Warszewicki would be travelling to Sweden.⁵⁰ This type of correspondence, which continued especially between Cardinal Hosius, Anna Jagiellon and Catherine Jagiellon through the 1570s, is telling since it shows the importance of Catherine’s birth family and her early advisers. Hosius did not hesitate to continue to give counsel to the queens. In 1576, for instance, he advised Catherine to write to the Vice-King of Naples and to Philip II concerning the payment of her maternal inheritance.⁵¹ When disagreements or misunderstandings between the two sisters appeared, Hosius tried to counsel them to reconcile.⁵² The Jesuit diplomat Antonio Possevino arranged that Stanislas Warszewicki be left in Stockholm as chaplain to the queen and

her son Sigismund. Since it was obvious in a hereditary monarchy that Sigismund would ascend the throne, there was every reason to create a network of trustworthy, preferably Catholic persons around the Swedish crown prince. Catherine Jagiellon's position and networks were seminal in all this. She was at the heart of a network that facilitated Catholic counsel in Sweden through her own, previous counsellors from her youth.

COURTIERS AND AMBASSADORS ADVISING THE KING AND QUEEN

After their release from Gripsholm Castle in 1568 and coronation in 1569, John III and Catherine Jagiellon gathered a group of trustworthy, educated noblemen around them to serve as courtiers and ambassadors. Some of these were Swedes, such as Ture Bielke, while others were of foreign origin, such as Pontus de la Gardie, Petrus Rosinus and Petrus Fecht. Both Pontus de la Gardie and Ture Bielke were also Catherine Jagiellon's court masters (*hovmästare*), with Pontus de la Gardie holding the title already in 1568 in John's court and next year in Catherine's court.⁵³ However, as counsellors to the Catholic queen they took considerable risks. While Pontus de la Gardie died as a celebrated war hero in 1580, Ture Bielke's loyalty to Catherine—and after Catherine's death to her son Sigismund—cost him his life: John's younger brother Charles IX ensured by means of threats and bribes that the Court of the Estates would issue death sentences against Erik Sparre, Ture Bielke, and Gustav and Sten Baner. Erik Sparre was Catholic and the others probably also had Polish and/or Catholic sympathies. They were decapitated in 1600. Petrus Rosinus, a Dutch Catholic who followed Ture Bielke to Rome in 1575,⁵⁴ and the ill-fated royal secretary Petrus Fecht drowned off Bornholm, Denmark in 1577 while on a mission to Rome and Naples for Catherine and John. As a theologian, Petrus Fecht was one of John's closest advisers in his controversial Church reform.⁵⁵

It may also be that John and Catherine made mistakes in recruiting people to their service. Among these was undoubtedly Carlo Brancaccio, an Italian in the service of the Swedish royal couple.⁵⁶ Pontus de la Gardie, one of the most renowned military commanders in Sweden during the sixteenth century, has been credited with much of the country's military success in the 1580s (in Narva, for instance). He played an essential, but not very successful, role in John's and Catherine's diplomacy. At least Cardinal Hosius blamed the queen consort of Sweden for not listening to

his advice. Due to Brancaccio's and de la Gardie's (who were apparently Catherine's and John's choices) incompetency everything went wrong: the Sforza inheritance remained still unpaid in Naples and John's religious ambitions were seriously suspected in the Papal Curia.⁵⁷ It is another striking example of political blame falling on poor counsel.

Pontus de la Gardie was originally from Languedoc in southern France, but he changed his name to make it sound aristocratic, which he was not (originally Pons d'Escouperie). Not much is known about his past. According to some sources he was formerly a monk, but what is certain is that he was an international mercenary before he came to Sweden. There he soon gained John III's favour. While John's father Gustav Vasa was oriented both politically and culturally toward the German-speaking world, John was interested more in central and southern European cultures. He had travelled extensively and spoke several languages, as did Catherine Jagiellon. De la Gardie's confession seems to have been flexible, but plausibly his background was Catholic, which was an important factor when he was sent to Rome to negotiate about the Sforza inheritance. Being a native speaker of Romance language(s) was possibly an advantage, in addition to his skill in Latin. Nevertheless, papal legates complained about his behaviour and boastfulness.⁵⁸ De la Gardie returned from Rome without making any progress in the matter. On the contrary, it seems that as an ambassador in Italy he was more harmful than useful and he behaved more like a military commander than a diplomat. Despite the poor results, John bound him tightly to the family in 1580 by marrying him to Sofia Johansdotter Gyllenhielm (ca. 1556–83), his own illegitimate daughter, who had been born from his relationship with Karin Hansdotter before his marriage to Catherine Jagiellon. It is unclear if the marriage was a reward for military success or as a means of keeping an eye on Pontus de la Gardie, or both.

King John III and King Stefan Batory of Poland (Catherine's brother-in-law), had allied against Tsar Ivan IV in December 1577. However, there were several severe disagreements between them. First, the issue of the substantial inheritance due to Catherine and her Jagiellonian sisters had not been resolved. Second, Poland claimed the whole of Livonia, without accepting Swedish rule of any part of it. Third, the 120,000 daler loan from John to Sigismund Augustus on the occasion of his and Catherine's marriage in 1562 had still not been repaid, nor had Catherine's dowry. In the spring of 1582, John III's Catholic sympathies had waned and relations with Stefan Batory were tense. The Italian-born legate to Poland, Domenico Alamanni, came to Stockholm to meet the king and

negotiate about Livonia.⁵⁹ John was reluctant to cooperate and behaved aggressively. After not achieving any results with the king, Alamanni wished to meet the queen. John accepted, but warned that it would not change his mind. At first, the legate begged the queen to mediate between the two kings. Catherine's whole life was characterized by tensions and conflicts in which she often conducted the role of a maker of concord. The intersection of women as mediators and coordinators of extended networks is indeed an essential characteristic of early modern European societies. Overlapping familial and political concerns were part of court politics and diplomatic networks. Although Catherine operated both formally and informally, these kinds of encounters with diplomats, for instance, show the manifold indirect ways of exercising political influence and authority. This time, her emotions, both sadness and annoyance, are described in the legate's report as if emphasizing her frustration toward continuous negotiations and counselling. With tears in her eyes, Catherine assured him that she suffered greatly from the discord between the brothers-in-law. Alamanni blamed Pontus de la Gardie for the troublesome relationship between Poland and Sweden. When the war with Russia was ended, Sweden was able to keep the conquests led by de la Gardie in Karelia and Ingria, but had to withdraw from Livonia. Catherine cautiously agreed. During a second audience, Catherine was not as receptive as before. For instance, she spoke about the large sums spent on ambassadors, resulting in nothing but futile words and phrases. In saying this, she referred to favours which Sweden had asked from Poland, including failed negotiations around her own inheritance from her mother. In the background, there was also her dowry, which still remained unpaid. John had attempted to collect the money several times and had also discussed the issue with Alamanni earlier. Alamanni gave several explanations, and the Queen listened calmly to what he said, but she left immediately after he finished his talk. A third audience was planned, but the queen announced that she could not attend because of illness. It is possible that in this way, Catherine, who still had hopes for better results, forced John to give the farewell audience to Alamanni. On this final occasion, the legate was kept waiting until one of the royal secretaries, Per Rasmusson Brun (1581–96), came to say "*apud principes sunt varia consilia et mutabilia*" ("among princes, plans are varied and changeable").⁶⁰ We do not know the tone of the quotation—whether it possibly includes irony, for instance—but it can be interpreted as expressing the feeling of frustration of both the royal couple and their counsellors (the secretary himself). Finally, the king was ready to

give the farewell audience. Ture Bielke and Pontus de la Gardie were present. The audience was another fiasco, and culminated in John losing his temper. Worried about the possible consequences, Bielke and de la Gardie sought to appease the legate afterwards. They were quite right, for relations between the brothers-in-law never improved. Furthermore, their successors inherited disputes, the most significant being the quarrel over Livonia, which caused a series of wars between the two countries.

CONCLUSION

Early modern royal and princely families used the “hard power” of administration, diplomacy and war, but their authority was also legitimized by “soft power”, defined as attraction and cooption through the promotion of culture and values rather than coercion and force. The idea of “soft power” is frequently linked with aspects of religious and cultural patronage, often regarded as a woman’s domain. This division is visible in those of Catherine Jagiellon’s activities for which written sources have been preserved. She was not directly involved in administration or warfare, but she was taken up with important diplomatic negotiations, at least via correspondence. One of the reasons for her involvement was her confession, an advantage when operating in Catholic Europe, together with her birth and transnational networks with lay and ecclesiastical Catholic agents. While these made her contributions intrinsically valuable, even if she personally negotiated with the pope and cardinals and attempted to recruit the best possible advisers and intermediators, one has to conclude that they were not very successful: the relationship between Poland and Sweden—as well as between her husband and her brother-in-law—remained difficult, she did not receive her maternal inheritance, her dowry was not paid and Sweden did not get re-Catholicized, among other things.

It is important to bear in mind that the situation after John and Catherine’s release from prison in 1568 was far from easy: Sweden and Poland were practically at war and Catherine had lost the court and entourage which she had brought with her to Turku in 1562 after the wedding. She never saw any of her family members after leaving Vilnius; she corresponded with her siblings at a distance, and their relations were not particularly warm. In the correspondence with Cardinal Hosius and Anna, her sister, it was Catherine who was given advice, probably because of the order of their ages and because Anna was the Queen (first queen consort and then queen regnant) of the powerful kingdom of Poland and Grand

Duchess of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. However, Catherine was able to quickly establish a new court in Sweden proper, largely formed of Polish courtiers but also including Swedish and international courtiers. Some of these were experienced professionals in court life, such as the dwarf Doska, who had endured the tough years in Gripsholm with her mistress. While “counsel” is generally understood as something abstract, the practical agency of sixteenth-century servants—as well as the psychological and affective aspects of long-term, even entire life or transgenerational, household relationships—certainly included continuity that helped the queen consort in a new situation and activities which can be defined as “everyday counsel” between queens consort and their extended household *famili-ares*. Archival research, studies of material culture and household spaces, and ability to interpret between the lines would provide better insight into the experiences and cultural forms of this group of men and women.⁶¹ Horizontal networks of peers were important, but vertical interdependencies and cross-hierarchical ties in early modern courts also need further investigation. Naturally, the basis of Catherine Jagiellon’s networks was founded on her family and kin. In various conflicts and negotiations, there was at least an undercurrent of concern regarding the dynastic succession of the Catholic Jagiellons.

Pressures from the side of the Jagiellons and also the Vasas were enormous. Dynastic succession, purity of confession, and negotiations of war and peace endangered emotional bonds with one’s siblings and even one’s spouse and children. In the end, it seems that Catherine Jagiellon was reactive rather than proactive, but she dutifully attempted to fulfil her tasks as an intermediary if we do not include her last years. Similarly, she calmly received counsel from various fronts without complaining. From the modern perspective of face-negotiation theory—and, related to that, politeness theory⁶²—it can be said that she was concerned with “saving face” and she carefully managed her self-presentation in ambiguous, vulnerable and uncertain situations (unlike her husband John III or some of their ambassadors) characterized by conflict, embarrassment and potential threat. She even helped others, for instance, her sister Anna and the legate Alamanni, to maintain face in a difficult situation, as basically required for successful participation in an orderly civil society.

While Gustav Vasa recruited several experts from Germany who were crucial in the formation period of the administration in the 1530s, John and Catherine as a “working couple” recruited servants, courtiers, various envoys and ambassadors as well as ecclesiastics equally from the Catholic

world. Some of their unofficial counsellors, like Cardinal Hosius, were not directly in their service, but linked with Catherine's previous court in Poland. The relationship between Catherine and Anna Jagiellon's early counsellors and their former protégées was not cut after the princesses were married. Their previous counsellors such as Cardinal Hosius might have had his own (and indeed Catholic Church) interests, but it seems that he also felt responsible to continue their "counselling". Catherine in particular, attempted to spread these counsels in her new environment and balance the various demands. It was, however, not always easy to recruit adept counsellors at the marital court dominated by a different culture, language and religion. Nevertheless, this international group of people communicated (although not always very successfully) with foreign audiences, creating and working on transnational issues and paving the way for the development of the public sphere. After this period of the Catholic, central and southern European influence at the royal court, Catholicism became punishable in Sweden either by deportation or the death penalty from Sigismund's dethronement in 1599. Sigismund's successor was Charles IX, whose favouritism towards Protestant German-speaking areas was particularly notable. Sweden turned again towards German culture.

NOTES

1. See Chap. 2 by Katarzyna Kosior in this volume.
2. James Daybell, "Gender, Politics and Archives in Early Modern England," in *Gender and Political Culture in Early Modern Europe 1400–1800*, eds. James Daybell and Svante Norrhem. (London: Routledge 2012), 25–46, 31.
3. On Catherine Jagiellon, see August Hahr, *Drottning Katarina Jagellonica och Vasarenässansen. Studier i Vasatidens konst och svensk-polsk-italienska förbindelser* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1940); C.J. Gardberg, *Turun linnan kolme Katariinaa*, trans. Irma Savolainen (Helsinki: Otava 1993); Miia Ijäs, "Katariina Jagellonica – vaimo, kuningatar, diplomaatti," *Genos* 80, no. 2 (2009): 52–9. Miia Ijäs' article is the only attempt to analyze Catherine Jagiellon's political agency as a "wife", "queen" and "diplomat", although problematization or discussion of these categories in the framework of gender remains quite vague.
4. Elizabeth Tingle, "The Afterlife of Rulers. Power, patronage and purgatory in Ducal Brittany," in *The Image and Perception of Monarchy in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, eds. Sean McGlynn and Elena Woodacre (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 281–97, 282; on the notion of "soft power", see e.g. Joseph S. Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. (New York: Public Affairs, 2009).

5. For further information, see, for instance, the website of the project *Marrying Cultures: Queens Consort and European Identities 1500–1800*, accessed September 24, 2017, <http://www.marryingcultures.eu/>.
6. Keith P. Luria, *Sacred Boundaries: Religious Coexistence and Conflict in Early Modern France* (Washington: Catholic University Press of America, 2005), 153; Carolyn Harris, *Queenship and Revolution in Early Modern Europe: Henrietta Maria and Marie Antoinette*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).
7. See e.g. Michael Roberts, *Sweden's Age of Greatness 1632–1718* (Aylesbury: Macmillan, 1973); Michael Roberts, *The Swedish Imperial Experience 1560–1718* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Nils Erik Villstrand, *Riksdelen. Stormakt och rikssprängning 1560–1812*. Finlands svenska historia 2. Skrifter utgivna av Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland 702: 2 (Helsingfors: SLS, 2009), 342, 344; Nils Erik Villstrand, *Sveriges historia 1600–1721*. Norstedts Sveriges historia (Stockholm: Nordstedt, 2011); Petri Karonen, *Pohjoinen suurvalta. Ruotsi ja Suomi 1521–1809* (Helsinki: SKS, 2014); Jan Lindegren, “The Swedish ‘Military State’, 1560–1720,” *Scandinavian Journal of History* 10, no. 4 (1985): 305–336; Mirkka Lappalainen, “Regional Elite Group and the Problem of Territorial Integration: The Finnish Nobility and the Formation of the Swedish ‘Power State’, c. 1570–1620,” *Scandinavian Journal of History* 26, no. 1 (2001): 1–24; Jan Glete, *War and the State in Early Modern Europe. Spain, the Dutch Republic and Sweden as Fiscal-Military States, 1500–1660* (London: Routledge, 2002); Mats Hallenberg, *Kungen, fogdarna och riket. Lokalförvaltning och statsbyggande under tidig Vasatid* (Stockholm: Symposium, 2001); Mats Hallenberg, Johan Holm, Dan Johansson, “Organization, Legitimation, Participation: State Formation as a Dynamic Process – the Swedish Example, c. 1523–1680,” *Scandinavian Journal of History* 33, no. 3 (2008): 247–68.
8. The administrative system was mostly in place by the beginning of eighteenth century, when Sweden’s position as a great European power collapsed as a result of the Great Northern War (1700–21), Karonen & Hakanen, “Personal Agency and State Building in Sweden (1560–1720),” in *Personal Agency at the Swedish Age of Greatness 1560–1720*, eds. Petri Karonen and Marko Hakanen (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society 2017), 7.
9. See, the biographies in the *Dictionary of Swedish National Biography*. Sture Arnell, “Karin Månsdotter,” *Svenskt biografiskt lexicon*, <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/12352>; Birgitta Lager-Kromnow, “Katarina Jagellonica,” *Svenskt biografiskt lexicon*, <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/12406>; Birgitta Lager, “Gunilla Bielke,” *Svenskt biografiskt lexicon*, <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/13306>; see also Sture Arnell, *Karin Månsdotter* (Helsingfors: Söderström & co. 1951); on the political debate on female monarchs during the early modern era (principally circa 1600 to 1720) in Sweden and England, see Karin Tegenborg Falkdalen, *Kungen är*

- en kvinna: Retorik och praktik kring kvinnliga monarker under tidigmodern tid* (Umeå: Umeå universitet 2003); see also popular monographs on queens consort by the same author, Karin Tegenborg Falkdalen, *Vasadrottningen. En biografi om Katarina Stenbock 1535–1621* (Lund: Historiska Media, 2015); Karin Tegenborg Falkdalen, *Margareta Regina – vid Gustav Vasas sida* (Stockholm: Setterblad, 2016); on the early modern court as a group of various people surrounding the sovereign's spouse, whether official or semi-official councillors, people of influence, family, friends or members of the retinue, see Orsolya Réthelyi, "Mary of Hungary in Court Context (1521–1531)" (PhD diss., Budapest Central European University, 2010).
10. Margaret, daughter of King Valdemar of the Danes, queen consort of Norway in 1363–80 and Sweden in 1363–64, as well as regent, brought about the Union of Kalmar, ruling Denmark, Norway and Sweden in her own right. The union was dissolved when Sweden became independent in 1523.
 11. Förnyelse af arfföreningen [Renewal of Succession Pact] (Rikets råd), 26 January 1569, *Svenska riksdagsakter 1521–1718*, II (1561–1592), ed. Emil Hildebrand (Stockholm: Norstedt & Söner 1899), 294–296.
 12. Miia Ijäs, "Res publica" Redefined? *The Polish-Lithuanian Transition Period of the 1560s and 1570s in the Context of European State Formation Processes* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2015); Lars Ericson Wolke, *Johan III: En Biografi* (Stockholm: Historiska Media, 2004), 316; Lena Rangström, *En brud för kung och fosterland: kungliga svenska bröllop från Gustav Vasa till Carl XVI Gustaf* (Stockholm: Livrustkammaren & Atlantis, 2010), 75; Ivar Svalenius, *Rikskansliet i Sverige 1560–1592*. Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Riksarkivet: 7 (Stockholm: Kommentus, 1991), 108.
 13. Raisa Maria Toivo, *Faith and Magic in Early Modern Finland*, Palgrave Historical Studies in Witchcraft and Magic (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 62.
 14. A. Fryxell, *Handlingar rörande Sveriges historia*, vol.3 (Stockholm: Hjerta, 1839), 65–78.
 15. Karl-Heinz Spiess, "Royal and Princely Marriages in Late Medieval Europe," in *Lithuania-Poland-Sweden. European Dynastic Unions and Historical-Cultural Ties*, eds. Eugenijus Saviščevas and Marijus Uzorka (Vilnius: National Museum – Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania, 2014), 75.
 16. Before the marriage, John had established a genuine princely rule of his own in Finland. The duchy was given relatively independent feudal rights by the king, a fairly extensive part of southwestern Finland, including the province of Turku and the royal manor of Kokemäenkartano, Åland, western Nyland and some parishes from the west borders of Tavastia. In addition, John was appointed Governor-General of Finland, including all the

- other areas beyond the Gulf of Bothnia and up to the eastern border. Those areas were not held by feudal right, however, but with John as a royal appointee. Lars Ericson Wolke, *Johan III: En Biografi* (Stockholm: Historiska Media, 2004), 48–50.
17. Before John's marriage, Karin was married to a courtier of John, Klas Westgöte, and given Vääksy Manor in Kangasala, Finland in 1561, Cardberg, *Turun linnan kolme Katariinaa*, 29–47.
 18. Roberts, *Early Vasas*, 209.
 19. The English equivalents of the Swedish courtiers are from the bilingual glossary in Fabian Persson, *Servants of Fortune. The Swedish Court between 1598 and 1721* (Lund: Wallin and Dalholm, 1999), iii–v.
 20. Wilska calls them “Dosia” and “Basia”, Małgorzata Wilska, “Atrakcyjność kultury dworskiej w czasach Jagiellonów,” *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 38 (1994): 5–13.
 21. Gardberg, *Turun linnan kolme Katariinaa*, 85.
 22. Natalia Nowakowska, Ilya Afanasyev, Stanka Kuzmova, Giedre Mickunaite, Susanna Niiranen, Dusan Zupka, *A dynasty in the making. The Jagiellonians 1386–* (Forthcoming in 2018).
 23. The Jagiellonian books in Scandinavia will be investigated by SN within the project “Late Medieval and Early Modern Libraries as Knowledge Repositories, Guardians of Tradition and Catalysts of Change” (Academy of Finland and University of Jyväskylä, 2017–2021).
 24. A. Fryxell, ”Om oenigheten mellan Erik XIV och Johan III”. *Handlingar rörande Sverges historia*, vol. 3 (Stockholm: Hjerta, 1839), 33–65, 63.
 25. Stockholm, Royal Palace Archives, Inventarium, Katarina Jagellonica 28 Oct – 3 Dec 1563. Kungliga och furstliga personers enskilde egendom vol.3 1556–1594.
 26. Fabian Persson, “Living in the House of Power,” in *Politics of Female Households Ladies-in-Waiting Across Early Modern Europe*, eds. Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 345–6.
 27. For the various roles female dwarfs had at early modern courts, Janet Ravenscroft, “Dwarfs – and a Loca – as Ladies’ Maids at the Spanish Habsburg Courts,” in *Politics of Female Households Ladies-in-Waiting Across Early Modern Europe*, eds. Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (Leiden: Brill, 2013).
 28. The idea and linkage between friendship and good counsel in the early modern era, see Stella Achilleos, “Friendship and Good Counsel: The Discourses of Friendship and Parrhesia in Francis Bacon’s ‘The Essayes or Counsels, Civill and Morall’,” in *Friendship in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Age*, eds. Albrecht Classen and Marilyn Sandidge (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2010), 643–74.

29. Betty M. Adelson, *The Lives of Dwarfs: Their Journey from Public Curiosity Toward Social Liberation* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005), 18.
30. In the seventeenth century, “the Age of Greatness”—when Sweden is regarded as a “Great Power”—the royal court was no larger than that of an important German electorate such as Hanover or Saxony. In the sixteenth century, the royal court was even smaller.
31. Persson, *Servants of Fortune*, 21–3.
32. Akkerman & Houben, “Introduction,” in *Politics of Female Households Ladies-in-Waiting Across Early Modern Europe*, eds. Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 5.
33. Roberts, *Early Vasas*, 283.
34. According to the inventory of 1562, there were two chaplains named Wojciech and Jakob as well as one clerk; E.G. Palmén, *Puolan kirjallisuudesta poimittuja tietoja Suomen historiaan*, Historiallinen Arkisto XVIII (Suomen Historiallinen Seura: Helsinki, 1903), 336–61, 355.
35. Biaudet, *Documents concernant* 2012, 165; Toivo, *Faith and Magic*, 2016, 64.
36. Wolfgang Reinhard, “Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters,” *Zeitschrift für historische Forschung* 10, no. 3 (1983): 257–77; R. Po-chia Hsia, *Social Discipline in the Reformation: Central Europe 1550–1750* (London: Routledge, 1991); Stefan Ehrenpreis & Ute Lotz-Heumann. *Reformation und konfessionelles Zeitalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002); Peter Marshall, “Confessionalization, Confessionalism and Confusion in the English Reformation,” in *Reforming Reformation*, ed. Thomas Mayer (London; New York: Routledge, 2012), 43–64.
37. Cardinal Commendone to Anna of Poland, [s.d. Nov 1569], Henry Biaudet, *Le Saint-Siège et la Suède durant la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle. Notes et documents. Origines et période des relations non officielles 1570–1576 I* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit; Helsingfors: Société d’histoire de Finlande, 1906), 1.
38. Martin Kromer to Catherine of Sweden, Rostock, 1–15 Dec 1569, Biaudet, *Le Saint-Siège et la Suède*, 2.
39. Biaudet, *Le Saint-Siège et la Suède*, 213.
40. Almut Bues, “Art Collections as Dynastic Tool. The Jagiellonian Princesses Katarzyna, Queen of Sweden, and Zofia, Duchess of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel,” in *Queens Consort, Cultural Transfer and European Politics, c.1500–1800*, eds. Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly and A. Morton (London: Routledge, 2016), 15–36.
41. Catherine of Sweden to Martin Kromer, Stockholm, 6 Feb 1570, Biaudet, *Le Saint-Siège et la Suède*, 4.

42. E.g. Ambassador Don Juan de Zúñiga to Philip II, 9 May 1577, Rome, Henry Biaudet, *Documents concernant les relations entre le Saint-Siège et la Suède durant la seconde moitié du XVIe siècle II. Époque de relations officielles, vol I. Mission en Italie de Pontus de la Gardie (1576 – 1577)*. (Genève: Chaulmontet, 1912), 338–41; see also Hubert Languet to Philip, Vienna, 15 January 1574, Philip Sidney, *The Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney* vol. I, ed. Robert Kuin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 89.
43. Oskar Garstein, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation in Scandinavia: Jesuit Educational Strategy, 1553–1622* (Leiden: Brill, 1992), xxvi–xxvii.
44. See Chap. 11 in this volume by Anna Whitelock.
45. Garstein, *Rome and the Counter-Reformation*, xxvii.
46. See, Catherine Jagiellon's letters to the Pope Gregory XIII. Catherine Jagiellon to the Pope, Pridie Nativitatis B.V. Mariae Dei genitricis, (7 Sep) 1573, Stockholm, Arch. Segr. Vat., Segr. di Stato, Germ. 95, fol.361; Catherine Jagiellon to the Pope, 4 Jan 1574, Stockholm, Arch. Segr. Vat., Segr. di Stato, Germ. 95, fol.362; Catherine Jagiellon to Pope, 17 Jul 1574, Stockholm, Arch. Segr. Vat., Segr. di Stato, Germ. 95, fol.363; Catherine Jagiellon to the Pope, 20 Apr 1578, Stockholm, Arch. Segr. Vat., Segr. di Stato, Germ. 95, fol.372.
47. Catherine Jagiellon to Abbess Karin Bengtsdotter Gylta, 1 Jul 1579. E291, Uppsala University Library, Uppsala.
48. Wierzbowski, *Warszewicki*, 103.
49. Pius V to Catherine Jagiellon, 8 March 1570, Rome, *Le Saint-Siège et la Suède*, 5.
50. Cardinal Hosius to Martin Kromer, 26 March 1570, Rome, Biaudet, *Le Saint-Siège et la Suède*, 5.
51. Cardinal Hosius to Catherine Jagiellon, 7 July 1576, Subiaco, Biaudet, *Documents*, 50–2.
52. E.g. Cardinal Hosius to Anna Jagiellon, 12 June 1577, Biaudet, *Documents*, 393–6.
53. Bengt Hildebrand, "Pontus de la Gardie," *Svenskt biografiskt lexicon*, accessed October 2, 2017, <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/sbl/artikel/17387>.
54. Petrus Rosinus to Ture Bielke, Rome 5 February 1575, Stockholm, Riksarkivet, *Italica 1573–77*.
55. Ivar Svalenius, *Rikskansliet I Sverige 1560 – 1592* (Stockholm: Kommentus, 1991), 156; Bengt Hildebrand, "Petrus Fecht," *Svenskt biografiskt lexicon*, accessed September 28, 2017, <https://sok.riksarkivet.se/Sbl/Presentation.aspx?id=15180>.
56. Henry Biaudet, *Carlo Brancaccio: un italien au service de la Suède au XVIe siècle*. (Genève: Chaulmontet, 1912).
57. Cardinal Hosius to Catherine Jagiellon, 26 August 1577, Subiaco, Biaudet, *Documents*, 488–94.

58. Cardinal Hosius to Catherine Jagiellon, 12 July 1577, Subiaco, Biaudet, *Documents*, 441.
59. *Legatio Domini Alemani, quam habuit apud Regem Sueciae*, ed. Klaus I. Karttunen (Roma, Suomalaisen tiedeakatemia toimituksia, 1910), 3–53; see also the report of nuncius Alberto Bolognetti, Bishop of Massa, Warsaw, 15 August 1582, Vatican City, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Nunz. Pol. vol. 19, 252–60.
60. Brun was an experienced, international secretary; he had studied in Rostock and was employed by the Royal Chancellery in 1571. He also served as an envoy to Poland and as a peace negotiator in 1580s, Svalenius, *Rikskansliet i Sverige*, 153–6.
61. See, Clegg, ‘Good to Think with’, 43–66.
62. According to, sociologist Erving Goffman, face is the positive public image one seeks to establish in social interactions, Erving Goffman, “On Face-Work: An analysis of ritual elements in social interaction,” *Psychiatry: Journal of Interpersonal Relations* 18, no. 3 (1955): 213–31 [reprinted in *Interaction Ritual*, pp. 5–46]; Sociolinguists, Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson used Goffman’s face theory as a foundation for explaining human interactions that revolved around being polite. In developing politeness theory they expanded and added to face theory by arguing that we have two faces; one based on a desire for approval and acceptance by others (positive face), and the other based on a desire to proceed without being impeded upon (negative face), see Penelope Brown and Stephen C. Levinson, *Politeness: Some universals in language usage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987). [First published 1978 as part of Esther N. Goody, ed. *Questions and Politeness*. Cambridge University Press].

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The Ladies' Peace Revisited: Gender, Counsel and Diplomacy

Catherine Fletcher

In his *Chronicle* of 1548, Edward Hall considered the negotiations for the 1529 Treaty of Cambrai; “This peace was called the womennes peace”, he wrote.¹

The fact that the name “Ladies’ Peace” has stuck is an indicator of the unique status in early modern European history of this treaty negotiated by Margaret of Austria (1480–1530), aunt of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, and Louise of Savoy (1476–1531), mother of Francis I, King of France.² Their male relatives were engaged in a long-running series of wars on the Italian peninsula (which had begun in 1494), not to mention conflicts on France’s southern and eastern borders. The treaty addressed some of their differences, although the Italian Wars dragged on for another thirty years until, after the death of both men, their heirs reached a settlement in the 1559 Treaty of Cateau-Cambrésis.

The negotiations leading up to the Treaty of Cambrai were the subject of a detailed study by J. G. Russell, published in 1992.³ This chapter revisits Russell’s findings and sources in light of more recent scholarship on

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women and diplomacy, and in light too of evidence for the protagonists' earlier careers from the diaries of Venetian senator Marin Sanuto and from Margaret's correspondence with her father, the Emperor Maximilian. It argues that the cases of Margaret and Louise provide important insights into the roles that royal women might play as counsellors and recipients of counsel in the sixteenth century. It draws new conclusions about the ways that women might deploy gendered rhetorical strategies in their provision of counsel, arguing that the construction of women as peacemakers and inexpert in military matters belies the reality of their interactions. It argues that the focus of much existing historiography on gender difference has led, perhaps inadvertently, to a neglect of important similarities in the way that men and women were evaluated as diplomats. Setting out first the background to the careers of Margaret and Louise, it then assesses how women's experience might be understood in relation to counsel and diplomacy, and considers some strategies deployed by Margaret in counselling the Emperor Maximilian.

In a period when women were widely thought to be inferior to men, female counsel, I will argue, had to be hedged around with qualifications. Counsel was one aspect of diplomacy, in which context it was typically offered in correspondence rather than in person. It might be direct and blunt or might be carefully coded, depending on the nature of the relationship between the individuals concerned. I will show below some of the codes used by women. It might be conveyed explicitly, or might be implicit in a diplomat's presentation and analysis of a particular dilemma. An emphasis on gender in the study of counsel and diplomacy risks the analysis falling into a set of binary oppositions, and it is important to emphasize that male diplomats brought a range of different experiences to their work.⁴ They might be intimates of a monarch, or have expertise in warfare, or be clerics with a concomitant knowledge of law (helpful for drafting treaties); they might be noblemen or merchants. Treatises on the ideal ambassador discussed the relative merits of different types of men as diplomats.⁵ The choice of ambassador for any particular task was a complex decision predicated on an assessment of the circumstances involved,⁶ and discussion of female diplomacy must take this into account.

The question of women and early diplomacy is a vexed one. Accredited female ambassadors were rare indeed (Catherine of Aragon, whom Michelle Beer discusses in Chap. 3, is one of the very few exceptions). There are some notable individual examples of royal women undertaking diplomatic missions: Carlotta, Queen of Cyprus, who came to Rome in

1461, is one example; Christina of Denmark at the Cateau-Cambrésis negotiations in 1559 is another.⁷ Aristocratic women in dynastic marriages often had a diplomatic role as intermediaries between their husband's court and that of their birth family.⁸ Women at court and in ambassadors' households could of course play significant informal roles in diplomacy, and these have been the principal focus of most recent studies, which have explored areas such as networking, information-gathering and gift-giving.⁹ Indeed, the banner of the "new diplomatic history" has stretched to encompass a very large range of political praxis with a diplomatic element. As Kühnel has pointed out, there are problems with the formal/informal distinction in relation to gender because there are many examples of women undertaking formal roles, notably in the ceremonial context, and of male diplomats operating through informal channels.¹⁰ The Ladies' Peace, however, is of interest precisely because the case enables an assessment of how women protagonists in formal, accredited diplomacy were perceived.

The Treaty of Cambrai was negotiated at a crucial stage in the Italian Wars, a complex series of conflicts in which the major parties were France and the Holy Roman Empire.¹¹ The latter had been ruled since 1519 by Charles V, whose territories extended to cover the kingdom of Naples, Spain, Austria, the Low Countries and the German States; Charles also enjoyed growing influence in northern Italy and sought to extend Habsburg influence in central Europe (on which see Kosior's contribution to this volume, Chap. 2). Four years earlier, in 1525, Francis I, King of France, had been humiliated when he was captured at the Battle of Pavia. He had been obliged to give up his sons as hostages and to sign the Treaty of Madrid (1526) which, however, he quickly repudiated (of which more below). In alliance with Henry VIII, King of England, Francis declared war on the Emperor in January 1528, but that summer disease wreaked havoc on the French campaign for Naples, which largely put an end to Francis' ambitions on the Italian peninsula beyond Milan. With the upper hand in Italy and military challenges to contend with elsewhere (not least the prospect of Ottoman invasion) Charles decided to pursue peace. He reached agreement with Pope Clement VII via the Treaty of Barcelona in June 1529: the Treaty of Cambrai was to follow.

The decision to entrust the 1529 negotiations to Louise and Margaret was regarded by the Imperial side as largely a matter of face-saving for Francis. He could leave his mother to make concessions and, if need be, let her take the blame for decisions taken without his knowledge. The

peace could be done in “no more honourable or convenient” way than by the ladies in question.¹² However, it is clear from diplomatic accounts of the preparatory discussions that both women were consulted about the text and had scope to influence it. Guilbert Bayart, Bishop-Elect of Avranches, who acted as Louise’s agent in the preliminaries to the negotiations (though maintaining the pretence that he was acting on his own account), took a copy of the minute “to show to the said lady of Angoulême [Louise of Savoy], protesting that if she should not find it good, that she could amend it”.¹³ The preamble to the treaty sets out for the record why it was thought appropriate for women to negotiate in these circumstances.¹⁴ First, the ladies were not bound by questions of injury to honour in the same way the men would be: were the princes to negotiate, they would be honour-bound to resort to combat. Second, should Francis wish, he might claim his mother had negotiated without his knowledge, and throw the blame on her (literally, in the French proverb, “throw the cat at her legs”). Third, there was no suitable alternative third party, the King of England and his cardinal being an option unlikely to bear fruit. (Henry VIII was by this time seeking to end his marriage to Charles’ aunt Catherine of Aragon.)¹⁵ Russell, following Doucet, noted that Francis had already used the fact that the Treaty of Madrid had been “negotiated by his mother and ambassadors” as an excuse to repudiate it.¹⁶ Charles V, perhaps reflecting on this experience, wrote in March of 1529 that “women’s wishes are not at all to be trusted”.¹⁷ However, too much weight should not be placed on women’s weakness as negotiators in this regard. All manner of excuses were used in this period to disown treaties, and they might easily be found for those agreed by men. Parties could allude to secret dealings with an enemy or some other real or invented breach of an agreement. For example, as we will see below, in 1528 Francis I claimed that the troops he sent to support the Duke of Guelders in his conflict with Margaret of Austria were not in breach of a peace treaty because they went solely for defensive purposes, but Margaret clearly did not see it that way. It would be a mistake to assume that the fact of negotiation by women made this treaty fundamentally weaker than others.

THE PROTAGONISTS’ CAREERS

Indeed, both Margaret of Austria and Louise of Savoy had substantial prior experience in government and diplomacy. Following the death of her brother Philip the Fair in 1506, Margaret took a substantial role in caring for his children, including her nephew Charles (the future Emperor

Charles V).¹⁸ She acted as Regent in the Low Countries for Charles during his minority and later during his extended absences in Spain. She was involved in arranging the League of Cambrai (1508) and intervened in Charles' marriage negotiations (1515). She held meetings with Cardinal Wolsey not only during the negotiations for the League of Cambrai, but again in 1513, 1520 and 1521. She had an active part in Charles' campaign to be elected Holy Roman Emperor.¹⁹ In 1525, it was proposed that she might take charge of the nine-year-old Princess Mary of England, who was at the time engaged to Charles V.²⁰ On Russell's assessment, in 1528 "she was still directing policy in the north"; that year she "had concluded her own commercial truce with England".²¹ In a *relazione* of 1525, Venetian diplomat Gasparo Contarini described her as a "wise woman".²²

Louise of Savoy had also been described as "wise"²³ and had likewise served as Regent (1515–16 and 1525–26).²⁴ She was far from inactive in between her regencies: numerous reports testify to her involvement in diplomatic business. As she wrote to the Doge and Signoria of Venice in October 1515, shortly after Francis' accession, "for my part I will work tirelessly in all the affairs that I recognise can help you for the good and maintenance of the true and entire friendship between my said lord and son and your most illustrious Signoria".²⁵ In January 1518, Sanuto summarized Zuan Badoer's end-of-mission *relazione* as Venetian orator to France, and noted Badoer's observation that: "Madama his mother is a most wise lady, and the King her son has great reverence towards her, and often in the street he speaks to her with cap in hand".²⁶ The implication here was that the king doffed his cap to his mother, a gesture typically indicating obedience to a superior. Given the careful rhetoric of the *relazione* genre, this was probably intended.²⁷ Louise accompanied Francis to the Field of Cloth of Gold summit with Henry VIII (1520); in February 1521 an envoy was unable to meet her because "she was with the King in his chamber, where she is almost continually"; on a later occasion the ambassador's secretary attended the King in his chamber, and read him some *avisi*, but received no response "because his mother Madama arrived".²⁸ On 22 May 1521 Louise met Zuan Badoer, Venetian orator, and discussed with him a meeting she had held with his Imperial counterpart; there is ample evidence for her routine meetings with English diplomats in Paris.²⁹

Louise's role at court did not receive universal approval. A nuncio of the Duke of Bourbon apparently sought to dissuade the widowed Queen Eleanor of Portugal from marrying Francis: not only because he had "mal franzese" ("the French disease") but because she would be "subject to the

mother, who's an imperious woman".³⁰ Louise not only offered counsel to her son, but on one occasion at least employed another woman to do so, sending her daughter Marguerite of Angoulême (Margaret of Navarre), duchess of Alençon, to Spain during Francis' imprisonment there "so that she might speak to the King and tell him not to make accord with the Emperor, His Majesty [the king of England] wishing to aid his liberation".³¹ Francis made the accord in any case, but even after his release, Louise continued to be lobbied by ambassadors requesting that she encourage the king in one or other direction. In July 1526, Andrea Rosso, a Venetian secretary, reported on discussions with Louise in which she was requested "to solicit the King to make swift provisions. She said she would do so willingly".³² In April 1527, Sebastian Giustinian, Venetian orator in France, reported that he "went to Madama [Louise] and begged her to intervene with the Most Christian Majesty [Francis] that our Signoria should not be burdened with such a contribution of ten thousand Swiss [troops], it being already at such expense as it is".³³ There is no reason to disagree with Russell's assessment that during her son's captivity after Pavia she "directed foreign policy"³⁴: the evidence is that she took a substantive interest in it before and after, as well.

The reports of Venetian ambassadors in Paris testify to a substantial diplomatic role for Louise. In November 1528 she met Sebastian Giustinian, the city's envoy: he saw Anne de Montmorency (the Grand Master) first, then Louise and then the king; he had a similar series of meetings three months later.³⁵ Another Venetian diplomat, visiting in February 1529, was unable to see Louise "because she was indisposed", but thought it worthwhile mentioning this in his correspondence.³⁶ English diplomats travelling to the coronation of Charles V in Bologna later the same year met Louise *en route*.³⁷ In April 1529, Sanuto recorded letters from the Venetian ambassadors to France, which described Louise and members of the royal council counselling the king against an invasion of Italy ("era disposto di venir, ancor che molti del suo conseio et sua madre non lo conseiava, pur voleva venir"; "he was disposed to come, even though many members of his council and his mother did not advise it, still he wished to come").³⁸ Even if Sanuto's report does not represent the diplomats' precise words, the comment underlines that the concept of a king being counselled by his mother was well within the bounds of possibility for a member of the Venetian office-holding class. (This is all the more notable given the exclusion of women from the formal political processes of republican Venice.)

Both Margaret and Louise were constructed in the diplomatic context as mothers. In a congratulatory letter from the Venetian authorities following her son's 1515 victory against Swiss and papal troops at Marignano, Louise was described as "most happy mother of a most glorious son".³⁹ In correspondence with Cardinal Wolsey, Margaret called herself "votre bonne mere" ("your good mother") and welcomed the news that Wolsey "held [him]self my son".⁴⁰ Wolsey called Louise the "mother and nurische of peace".⁴¹ (I return briefly to the question of peace below.) In the metaphorical realm, such familial forms of address were a conventional sign of amicable relations. Margaret referred to Louise, for example, as "my good sister".⁴² However, expectations about maternal affection might also play badly in the diplomatic context. In May 1528, Louise's grandsons remained Imperial hostages. John Clerk, an English envoy, reported the following discussion with her:

I shewyd my lady the last day thatt she beyng a woman and off hyr age: and off that tendernesse towardes hyr chylderne shold rather then fayll knell down on hyrre knees to themperor to have hyrr chylderne. I fear me she skant tooke it in good parte. my thynkith I see a great lyklyhode off peace: iff ther wer a litil humylite on bothe sides: speciall on that syd: that hath most need. butt I promesse you we be heer farre from it.⁴³

One can only imagine what the "skant tooke it in good parte" meant in reality: it has a flavour of diplomatic understatement. However, the interest here lies in Clerk's expectations of an older woman (Louise was in her fifties): tenderness towards children and—albeit with a less explicit tie to gender in the text—humility. However, perhaps it was that very maternal status that enabled Louise to take honourably the drastic action of sacrificing French claims to the Duchy of Burgundy in the interests of saving the young princes. English diplomats, as Russell observed, were also scathing about Marguerite, Duchess of Alençon, when she travelled to Spain in 1525 following her brother Francis I's detention: they said that she came "like women to a spectacle, to be seen rather than to see".⁴⁴

Wolsey was not averse from the occasional dry observation on women: in 1521 he wrote to the king that: "Ye knowe well enough that women must be pleased".⁴⁵ Yet in the extensive Venetian diplomatic reports about negotiations with Louise and Margaret, only very rarely is any comment made on the specifics of their sex or gender. The comment of the Venetian orator Zuan Badoer in October 1516 that Louise "was indisposed due to

stomach pains, or the usual women's trouble" is unusual indeed in its explicit reference to the king's mother as a woman.⁴⁶

Before the Treaty negotiations began, therefore, both the protagonists had wide experience of diplomacy. Foreign ambassadors, by and large, accepted their role in foreign policy, though not without periodic negative comments.

WARFARE AND COUNSEL

More detailed examination of Margaret's correspondence reveals some of the strategies that she used as a woman engaged in counsel. In 1510, for example, as regent of Burgundy, Margaret was involved in a long-running conflict for control of the Duchy of Guelders with Charles II, its duke. In the context of a breakdown of negotiations with Charles and a need to reinforce the borders, Margaret expressed her reluctance to speak of warfare. "You know that I am a woman", she wrote to her father Maximilian, the Holy Roman Emperor, "and that it is really not my business to get mixed up in warfare".⁴⁷ In that particular case Margaret was concerned at a lack of support from their subjects. But in terms of her gender it was *speaking* of warfare that was Margaret's difficulty, not waging it. Whether or not she intended her statement to be ironic, its irony is apparent from reports both before and after that letter. In the summer of 1508, the Bishop of Feltre wrote to the Venetian authorities that "madama Margarita, [the Emperor's] daughter, has greatly routed the duke of Guelders; and the duke cannot be found; it's held that he has been taken and put to death".⁴⁸ In September 1512, a traveller from France reported to the Venetian authorities that "they have it that madama Margarita is come with ten thousand to twelve thousand combatants between Germans, Spaniards and Englishmen".⁴⁹ Later that same month, however, reports from Milan had it that "madama Margarita has been routed by the duke of Guelders".⁵⁰ The precise details of the conflict and the accuracy of these observers' reports do not need to concern us here: the point is that in recording the events of the Guelders Wars, Sanuto had no difficulty in crediting Margaret with the leading role. Yet, in her letter to her father, Margaret presented herself quite differently. It seems likely that this was a deliberate strategy to conform to expectations that women were inexperienced in war while simultaneously providing the information necessary for her father to make appropriate policy decisions.

She used a similar strategy to much greater effect a few years later. Expressing reluctance to comment on the Italian Wars in 1511, she explained that she “wished to be wise enough to give you good counsel; however, the said affairs are so great and heavy that they surpass my understanding”. She went on to explain that this was because she was “a woman not experienced in such affairs” (“pour ester femme non expérimentée en telz affaires”) and begged Maximilian to take what she had done in good part.⁵¹ Four years earlier, she had specifically consulted Maximilian about the need for “an old gentlemen experienced or practised in war” (“ung vieulx gentilhomme expérimenté ou fait de guerre”) to fill the office of commissioner of men-at-arms.⁵² It is tricky to disentangle questions of gender from questions of experience here. It was established in the counsel tradition and also in diplomatic theory that experience was important. However, relevant knowledge could also be gained through the study of history. One proponent of this approach was Justus Lipsius, who argued that there were limits to experience as a route to prudence (a virtue particularly associated by Aristotle with rulers).⁵³ Lipsius’ argument, in theory, could have been used to legitimize female counsel, but in practice there is no evidence of Margaret making such a case for herself. It must remain an open question whether Margaret believed that she was qualified to advise on war, and chose to conceal that, or whether she genuinely thought it not a woman’s place to counsel on military matters for lack of battlefield experience.

When Margaret did offer counsel on negotiations with France in February 1513, a topic that necessarily entailed reflection on military questions, she specifically constructed herself as *not* doing so in a letter underlining her lack of capability in the matter.

Monseigneur, it seems to me by the letter that you have lately written me ... that you desire to know my advice, and that of your privy council and loyal servants on the needs of Quintana. And because at present those to whom you desire that I should especially communicate this business [are not here], also that I do not yet understand the matter well, I determined to await the coming of the commander Loys Gillabert; but, Monseigneur, in the mean time I will not abstain from writing to you my little opinion on this affair, not in the form of advice nor of counsel, but as some little remonstrance to render my duty as I have always done, also as a most humble daughter should do.⁵⁴

The modesty of her style, however, is belied by the subsequent argument in which she offered assessments of financial and legal issues and of her rivals' advantages. It is perhaps no surprise that her court poet, Jean Lemaire de Belges, identified "rectitude of counsel" as one of Margaret's virtues in his "Couronne Margaritique", written before 1525.⁵⁵ Moreover, Maximilian was quite convinced of Margaret's capabilities as a counsellor. In 1516 he wrote to his grandson, the future Emperor Charles V:

We are not in doubt, bearing the honour and love that you owe to our most dear daughter, your aunt, that you will communicate with her your greatest and most arduous business, and that you will take and use her good advice and counsel, from which, by natural reason, you will always find more comfort, good counsel and aid, than from any other.⁵⁶

Foreign powers, too, thought it worthwhile to petition Margaret on military matters. In January 1523, Cardinal Wolsey advised Thomas Boleyn and Richard Sampson, ambassadors to the Emperor, that Henry VIII had written to Lady Margaret about the risk of Swiss troops entering French service, "desiring her to avaunce that matier with effect as moche as she can, trusting that the same shal do grete good for conteyning of the Swices and Almayns as is aforesaid".⁵⁷ In 1524, the Venetian ambassador to Milan clearly believed Margaret was handling negotiations with the English, for he reported that "the aforesaid king of England has requested 2,000 horses and 5,000 German [troops] from Madama Margarita".⁵⁸ A Venetian report of December 1525 has Margaret actively engaged in discussions about her nephew's imprisonment of the King of France: receiving advice from Charles, but also calling together her own Council in the Low Countries in order to deliberate, then writing to Charles with the advice that he should not free the king until he (Charles) had been crowned in Italy.⁵⁹ In February 1526, she was said to be raising troops in Flanders for a campaign against France; in October of that year she was apparently in discussions with Georg von Frundsberg regarding a 10,000 strong force of infantry for a campaign in Italy.⁶⁰ Once again, these reports demonstrate that outsiders perceived Margaret as taking a direct role in military affairs. Francesco Contarini, another Venetian envoy, reported in January 1529 that Ferdinand, King of the Romans, had written to Margaret to discuss the availability of troops for an Italian campaign.⁶¹

Yet in 1528 Margaret still expressed her unwillingness to be drawn on questions of war in the Low Countries, asking Charles to rely instead on the reports of her ambassadors.⁶² A correspondent of the Marquis of

Mantua, however, writing around the same time, reported news from the court of France that “Madama Margerita, following the truce with the French and English, has turned the forces against the Duke of Gelder [Guelders], to whom the Most Christian King [of France] has sent some troops in aid, His Majesty not intending, however, to contravene the clauses of the truce, because they are only for the defence of the said Duke and his interests”.⁶³ This person, at least, portrayed Margaret as an active director of military strategy. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that at least sometimes Margaret was doing one thing (deploying troops) and saying another (that of course she would defer to male opinion and expertise). In short, while Margaret’s counsel seems to have been solicited by her male relatives and praised by her courtiers, when she offered advice she tended to couch it in cautious terms, with modest allusions to her own lack of expertise or knowledge. In assessing the relationship between counsel and queenship, therefore, we should take into account the likelihood that there existed a gendered expectation that women should counsel discreetly and that their counsel may not manifest itself in the same ways to that of men. A woman who says she is reluctant to offer advice may very well be saying that as a matter of social convention.

Just as Margaret had taken an active role in military affairs, so had Louise. Reports of May 1515 from Marco Dandolo, Venetian orator in France, place her as a keen advocate for her son (who had succeeded to the throne in January of that year) engaging in an Italian campaign: “In conclusion, the Italian campaign will happen, and it will be very soon and very powerful, and the mother solicits it”.⁶⁴ In May 1520 Venetian diplomats sought to convince Louise to counsel the king about a Turkish incursion into Friuli.⁶⁵ Both before and during her son’s 1525–26 captivity, when she was Regent of France, Louise had been directly involved in preparations for a possible invasion of Italy. In September 1524, the Venetian orator in Milan reported that the King of France was in Avignon “there awaiting Madama the Regent, who is bringing with her many men, and also sufficient money”.⁶⁶ Two months later, in November 1524, Zuan Moro, Venetian Podestà of Crema reported that “it was said in camp that the King’s mother was in Savoy and had given the King’s Majesty to understand that he should not doubt that he will have sufficient money and troops”.⁶⁷ This was in the context of discussion about whether Francis I should himself go to Pavia (he did, and it turned out to be an ill-fated decision). Later the same month the Venetian procurator in Brescia reported that “it was said that Madama the king’s mother was sending the

King artillery and munitions”; in December reports had her sending “4000 young gentlemen”.⁶⁸ Given the calamity of Pavia for the French, however, and the subsequent disastrous campaign in Naples that put an end to Francis’ ambitions on the Italian peninsula, it is perhaps not surprising that by 1529 Louise was counselling against warfare, but the evidence of the earlier years shows quite a different picture.

WOMEN, PEACE AND DIPLOMACY

In light of the evidence for Margaret and Louise’s counsel on warfare, the very name of the “Ladies’ Peace” presents a historiographical problem. It highlights a typical, conforming gender role for these women. There is no corresponding “Ladies’ War” of the sixteenth century, although as I have shown both Louise and Margaret (not to mention other female rulers of the period) played significant parts in military campaigns. Peace-making was a quality often associated with women in the political culture of this period. An eclogue composed on Louise’s death described her as the “shepherdess of peace”; elsewhere she was called “mother of peace” and “assiduous curatrix of peace”.⁶⁹ Indeed, there is evidence from well before the treaty negotiations that this was not only rhetoric. In 1521 Louise sent a Franciscan friar as envoy to Margaret in an overture for peace. Yet Margaret’s response is telling: far from adopting the gendered role of conciliator she “did not burn to speak of peace”.⁷⁰ In 1522 Louise tried again, sending Margaret sixty wagons of wine with a request to settle their sons’ differences: again it did no good.⁷¹

The association of peace and femininity made women rather the ideal diplomats. Treatises on the office of ambassador in this period are clear: his first and principal role was the maintenance of peace.⁷² Yet in practice diplomats were often actively engaged in military affairs: attending in person at camp for ongoing negotiations about the detail of military alliances, raising troops, arranging special operations.⁷³ In fact, there are many parallels between the descriptions of Louise and Margaret and contemporary views of good qualities in male diplomats. In 1526 a French envoy reported Cardinal Wolsey’s comparison of Louise to Solomon:

And, not to speak of adulation, Solomon, in his great light of wisdom, did not comport himself more wisely in affairs as you comported yourself in the pursuit and conduct of the desired deliverance of the King’s person. In which you showed a profound prudence, long and assured experience, unparalleled conduct and marvellously great dexterity.⁷⁴

Prudence, experience and dexterity were precisely the virtues expected of male diplomats. For example, in 1525 Wolsey had praised a papal protonotary for his “diligence, industry, dexterity and prudence”; similar sentiments are to be found across correspondence and prescriptive sources.⁷⁵ It was long understood (from Aristotle) that experience was necessary though not sufficient for prudence, which he regarded as a virtue peculiar to rulers.⁷⁶ Clearly by this time prudence as a virtue had been extended to the ruler’s representatives, who might include women (because women could not rule in Aristotle’s preferred political system they could never become prudent). However, in the sixteenth century the word “prudence” also acquired a sense of ability and willingness to dissimulate that might serve well in diplomacy:⁷⁷ this was not a straightforward compliment.

Moreover, women were not the only diplomats who might lack practical experience relevant to counsel on military affairs. For example, the service of Italian diplomat Gregorio Casali was valued by the English crown precisely because he had knowledge that most English-born diplomats could not match, being “well expert in the manner of the wars of those countries” [the Italian states].⁷⁸ While a female diplomat of this period could not have military experience on the battlefield (though she might have ample experience in leading on logistics and supply), plenty of men found themselves in the same position, not least those from clerical backgrounds. Without overplaying the division of labour (plenty of clerics took to the battlefield), the sixteenth-century saw a rise of specialized soldier-diplomats whose advice might be grounded in experience, and one should be careful to distinguish between the counsel of these military experts and men in general. Some men, and perhaps particularly ecclesiastical men, might position themselves, or be positioned, differently in relation to the practice of diplomacy. Cardinal Wolsey’s success in negotiating the Treaty of London in 1518, which established him as a peacemaker, is a case in point.⁷⁹

The careers of Margaret of Austria and Louise of Savoy have much to tell us about the role of women as diplomats and counsellors. In certain circumstances women were valued negotiators and enabled male relatives to overcome an impasse. However, contemporary attitudes towards women also provided principals with an excuse to break treaties they had negotiated. There are too few treaties negotiated by women to judge whether they were in fact any more likely to be broken: it seems more likely that this was simply one in a range of excuses. While demand for experience made it more difficult for women to counsel specifically on

battlefield tactics, many male diplomats were unqualified on this front too. This was particularly true of churchmen, and the parallel between ecclesiastical and female diplomats and counsellors merits further study. Sometimes women, especially in roles as regents, were involved in military affairs, but even in such cases it was expected that their rhetoric should not highlight this role. A different and more modest language seems to have been required; allusions to motherhood were important. The paradox is that the same virtues were valued in both male and female diplomats. Prudence, experience and dexterity were not the easiest qualities for women to acquire in elite sixteenth-century society, but acquire them they could, and in doing so they might, given the right circumstances, match men in the practices of counsel and diplomacy.

NOTES

1. "This peace was called the women's peace, for because that notwithstanding this conclusion, yet neither the Emperoure trusted the Frenche kyng, nor he neyther trusted nor loued him, and their Subjectes were in thesame case." Edward Hall, *Hall's Chronicle*, 2 vols (London: Johnson et al, 1809), II, 762, cited in J. G. Russell, *Diplomats at Work: Three Renaissance Studies* (Stroud: Sutton, 1992), 139.
2. Neither woman was, strictly speaking, a queen. Margaret was Dowager Princess of Asturias, Dowager Duchess of Savoy and Elected Ruler of Franche-Comté; Louise was a king's mother. However, both had acted as regents and Bartolomeo Cavalcanti, a Florentine envoy, referred to Louise as "Regina", indicating that he at least understood her status to be analogous to that of a queen. Bartolomeo Cavalcanti, *Lettere edite e inedite*, ed. Christina Roaf (Bologna: Commissione per i testi di lingua, 1967), 39 (Bartolomeo Cavalcanti to Batista della Palla, 16 August 1529).
3. Russell, *Diplomats at Work*. Margaret's correspondence with her envoys regarding the negotiations is published in *Correspondance de Marguerite d'Autriche et de ses ambassadeurs à la cour de France*, ed. Ghislaine De Boom (Brussels: Lamertin, 1935).
4. Helen McCarthy and James Southern, "Women, gender and diplomacy: a historical survey," Chapter 1 of Jennifer A. Cassidy, ed. *Gender and Diplomacy* (London: Routledge, 2017) note the absence of studies of masculinity in early modern diplomacy, and that attention has primarily focused on recovering evidence of previously marginalized women's histories.
5. For example, Étienne Dolet, "Étienne Dolet on the functions of the ambassador, 1541," ed. Jesse S. Reeves, *American Journal of International Law* 27 (1933), 80–95, who considered the relative merits of lay and ecclesiastical diplomats.

6. Catherine Fletcher, *Diplomacy in Renaissance Rome: The Rise of the Resident Ambassador* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 81–102.
7. Fletcher, *Diplomacy in Renaissance Rome*, 98; for further Italian cases see Isabella Lazzarini, *Communication and Conflict: Italian Diplomacy in the Early Renaissance, 1350–1520* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 140–4; for Christina, and for Burgundian duchesses in the fifteenth century, Russell, *Diplomats at Work*, 138.
8. Carolyn James, “Women and diplomacy in Renaissance Italy,” Chapter 1 in Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James, eds. *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics since 1500* (London: Routledge, 2016), 13–29.
9. For example, James Daybell, “Gender, Politics and Diplomacy: Women, News and Intelligence Networks in Elizabethan England,” in Robyn Adams and Rosanna Cox, eds. *Diplomacy and Early Modern Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 101–19. The essays in Sluga and James, *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics*, offer a wide range of examples of women’s engagement in diplomacy through networks, marriage and in the court context.
10. Florian Kühnel, “‘Minister-like cleverness, understanding, and influence on affairs’: Ambassadors in everyday business and courtly ceremonies at the turn of the eighteenth century,” Chapter 7 in Tracey Sowerby and Jan Hemmings, eds. *Practices of Diplomacy in Early Modern Europe, c. 1410–1800* (London: Routledge, 2017).
11. On the Italian Wars, see Christine Shaw and Michael Mallett, *The Italian Wars 1494–1559: War, State and Society in Early Modern Europe* (Harlow: Pearson, 2012), with bibliography.
12. Russell, *Diplomats at Work*, 107 gives a detailed account based on a report to the Emperor by his envoys Rosimbos and Guillaume des Barres, dated 31 December 1528 at Malines. For the text see *Negociations diplomatiques entre la France et l’Autriche*, ed. Le Glay, 2 vols (Paris, 1845), II, 676–91, especially 682–3.
13. Russell, *Diplomats at Work*, 106. “Au partement de l’esleu Bayart de Malines, il print ung double de la mynute dressée pour monstrier à ladite dame d’Angosmois, protestant que si elle n’estoit trouvée bonne, qu’elle se pourroit reformer.” *Negociations II*, 687.
14. Russell, *Diplomats at Work*, 107.
15. “ladite paix ne se pouvoit par nulle autre main si honnorablement ne convenablement faire que par celles desdites dames, pour plusieurs raisons, singulierement pour trois: la premiere, pour ce que traicté de paix ne se peult ny doit faire entre lesdits princes, que il ne convienne que toutes injures et rancunes soyent abolyes, et que estans les reproches et injures entre iceulx princes venues si avant que jusques à envoyer cartelz, offrir le

combat, l'accepter et presenter camps, seroit difficile que ce qu'en est fait, traictans lesdits princes eulx-mesmes, ou faisant en leurs noms traiter, se puisse par eulx-mesmes abolir à leur honneur, et ne se pourroit ladite abolition procurer par personnes plus favorables ne convenables que lesdites dames, considéré leurs qualitez ... et ce luy [Francis] seroit impossible de soy condessendre au prouffit et faveur de l'empereur; ce que par la main de ladite dame sa mere il fera, sur laquelle il pourra prendre excuse des tous griefz, et lui en gecter le chat aux jambes, comme ayant traicté sans son sceu. Et la tierce raison est qu'il n'y a nulle autre tierce personne sur laquelle il puist avoir ne prendre meilleur cause ne fondement de agreer ce que il faindroit avoir esté traicté par sadite mere à son ignorance, sans son sceu, et soubz son bon plaisir, pour l'amour et reverence filiale, disant davantaige que de mettre la chose en la main du roi d'Angleterre et de son cardinal, il semble à l'experience du passé qu'il ne s'en ensuyvroit nul fruyt ...” *Negotiations*, II 682–3.

16. R. Doucet, *Étude sur le gouvernement de François I dans ses rapports avec le Parlement de Paris*, 2 vols (Paris, 1921–6), II, 290, cited in Russell, *Diplomats at Work*, 103.
17. “changer sur belles parolles de l’éluy Bayard par lettres de la régente, c’est volonté de femme et ne si fait point bon fier.” Charles V to the sieur de Montfort, dated at Siguenza, 16 March [1529]. Cardinal Granvelle, *Papiers d’Etat du Cardinal Granvelle*, 9 vols (Paris: Weiss, 1841–52), I 450, cited in Russell, *Diplomats at Work*, 109.
18. The best introduction to Margaret in English is the exhibition catalogue *Women of Distinction: Margaret of York, Margaret of Austria*, ed. Dagmar Eichberger (Davidsfonds: Brepols, 2005), which includes a short essay by Wim Blockmans, “Women and Diplomacy,” 97–101. On her patronage see also D. Eichberger et al, “A cultural centre in the southern Netherlands: the court of archduchess Margaret of Austria (1480–1530) in Mechelen,”. In *Brill’s Studies in Intellectual History* 118.1 (2003), 239–58 and D. Eichberger and J. Anderson, “Margaret of Austria’s portrait collection: female patronage in the light of dynastic ambitions and artistic quality,” *Renaissance Studies* 10 (1996), 259–79. Jane de Iongh, *Margaret of Austria: Regent of the Netherlands* (London: Cape, 1954) remains the most recent full-length English biography; Ursula Tamussino, *Margarete von Österreich: Diplomatin der Renaissance* (Graz: Styria, 1995) is a useful synthesis of more recent work.
19. “Come è uno aviso de li, che madama Margarita era andata in Germania con assa’ provision per far el nepote, re Catholico, Re di romani.” Marin Sanuto, *Diarii* 58 vols (Bologna: Forni, 1969–70), vol. 26, col. 474. Advice from Milan, 14 February 1519.
20. Sanuto 39, col. 177.
21. Russell, *Diplomats at Work*, 100, 103.

22. "savìa donna". Sanuto 40, col. 291.
23. "sapiantissima dona". Sanuto 29, col. 166. The description appears in another Venetian *relazione*, that of Antonio Giustinian (September 1520).
24. As Helen Matheson-Pollock notes in Chap. 4 of this volume, Louise rather eclipsed the childless wife, then widow, of Louis XII, Mary Tudor, despite the fact that Mary technically held the title of queen. As for Margaret, recent English-language studies of Louise are rather few. The best short survey, with bibliography, is Kathleen Wellman, "Louise of Savoy: The Mixed Legacy of a Powerful Mother," in Elena Woodacre and Carey Fleiner eds., *Royal Mothers and their Ruling Children* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 175–203. Dorothy Moulton Mayer, *The Great Regent: Louise of Savoy 1476–1531* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1966), based on archive research, is a fuller but unreferenced biography. In French see Paule Henry-Bordeaux, *Louise de Savoie: "Roi" de France* (Paris: Perrin, 1971).
25. "dal canto mio io mi affaticharò in tutte le cosse ch'io cognoscerò potervi adjutar per il ben et intertenimento de la vera et intiera amicitia fra il mio ditto signor et fiol e vostra Illustrissima Signoria". Sanuto 21, col. 254. Letter of 13 October 1515.
26. "Madama so madre è una sapientissima dona, e il Re so fiol li ha gran reverentia, et sempre in strada li parla con la baretta in man. L'è vero, quando l'è in camera si mete la baretta in capo." Sanuto 25, col. 200. Sanuto's summary of the *relazione* of January 1518.
27. For the background to *relazioni* see Filippo de Vivo, *Information and Communication in Venice: Rethinking Early Modern Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 37, 57–70.
28. "era col Re in camera dove stà quasi di continuo": Sanuto 29, col. 620 and 'non li fece risposta, perchè sopravene Madama sua madre' col. 645. Reports from Badoer, the Venetian orator to France, who was with the court in Calais.
29. Sanuto 30, col. 297. Catherine Fletcher, *Our Man in Rome: Henry VIII and his Italian Ambassador* (London: Bodley Head, 2012), 25 and 106; for a contemporary assessment of her interactions with councillors at court, see Sanuto 39, col. 291.
30. "sottoposto a la madre, ch'è e femena imperiosa". Sanuto 39, col. 305.
31. 'aziò parli al Re e li dichì non si acordi con l'Imperator, volendo questa Maestà aiutar la sua liberation', Sanuto 40, col. 61. Letter from the Venetian ambassador in England, 14 September 1525.
32. "volesse sollicitar il Re a far le provision preste. Disse lo faria volentiera." Sanuto 42, col. 218.
33. "andò da Madama pregandola volesse operar con la Christianissima Maestà che la Signora nostra non fosse agravata di tal contribution di 10 milia squizari, essendo sopra tanta spexa com la è." Sanuto 44, col. 586.

34. Russell, p. 100.
35. Sanuto 49, cols 123–4; col. 506.
36. Sanuto 49, col. 443.
37. Thomas Wall, *The Voyage of Sir Nicholas Carewe to the Emperor Charles V in the year 1529* ed. R. J. Knecht (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press for the Roxburghe Club, 1959), p. 49.
38. Sanuto 50, col. 67.
39. “felicissima madre de uno gloriosissimo fiol”. Sanuto 21, col. 120. Letter of 18 September 1515.
40. Russell, *Diplomats at Work*, 98. Wolsey called Margaret of Austria his “mother”: *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII* (hereafter *LP*), ed. J. S. Brewer, J. Gairdner and R. H. Brodie, 22 vols (London: HMSO, 1862–1932), III 1766, 1904 (BL, Cotton MSS, Galba, B. VII. 385) literally “me donnes tiltre de mere et q[ue] vo[us] vous tenez po[ur] mon filz”; *LP* III 1954 (BL, Cotton MSS, Galba, B. VII. Unnumbered folio of 10 January 1522), in which Margaret says she will be guided by Wolsey’s “par votre bon avis et conseil” and calls herself his “votre bonne mere”.
41. “The mother and nurische of peace” *LP* III 1696 (BL, Cotton MSS, Calig. D. VIII. fol. 124r).
42. In a letter to Philippe de Lalaing, her envoy in France. *Correspondance de Marguerite*, 12.
43. *LP* IV 4270 (The National Archives, State Papers 1/48 fol. 21v).
44. Russell, *Diplomats at Work*, 110.
45. *State Papers Published under the Authority of Her Majesty’s Commission: King Henry the Eighth*, 11 vols (London: Record Commission, 1832–50), I, 12.
46. “era indisposta per dolori di stomaco, o sia mal solito a le done”. Sanuto 23, col. 21.
47. “Et au regard de moy, Monseigneur, vous sçavez que je suis femme et que ce n’est point bien mon cas de moy mesler de la guerre, veu qu’il y a petite assistance des subjectz de par deça, ainsi que en semblable cas, j’ay bien expérimenté.” *Correspondance de l’Empereur Maximilien Ier et de Marguerite d’Autriche sa fille, Gouvernante des Pay Bas* ed. Le Glay (2 vols, Paris: Renouard, 1839), I, 358, letter of 23 December 1510.
48. “madama Margarita, sua fia, havia dato una rota al ducha di Geler grandissima; et il ducha non si trova, si tien sia stà preso e fato morir.” Sanuto 7, col. 598. This from Sanuto’s summary of the bishop’s letter, which was received in Venice early in August 1508.
49. “hanno che madama Margarita era venuta con 10 mila in 12 mila combattenti tra todeschi, spagnoli et inglesi”. Sanuto 15, col. 45. A deposition from an “explorer come from France”, received in Venice 11 September 1512.
50. “madama Margarita havea auto una rota dil ducha di Geler”. Sanuto 15, col. 92.

51. "Monseigneur, je voudroie ester bien saige pour vous donner bon conseil; touteffois lesdits affaires sont si grans et si pesants qu'ilz trapassent mon entendement; si vous supplie, Monseigneur, y avoir bon regard à ce que n'y soyez surprins ... et jaçoit qu'il ne m'apartiendroit me mesler si avant de vosdites affaires, pour ester femme non expérimentée en telz affaires, néantmoins le grant devoir que j'ay à vous m'a enhardy à faire ce que cy devant en ay fait et faiz présentement, vous suppliant, Monseigneur, le prendre de bonne part et besongnier, pendant qu'il en est temps." *Correspondance de l'Empereur I*, 411, letter of 22 July 1511.
52. *Correspondance de l'Empereur I*, 49. The office under discussion was "commissaire des monstres et revues de la gendarmerie".
53. Justus Lipsius, *Six Bookes of Politiques* (Amsterdam: Teatrum Orbis Terrarum, 1970), 13–14; on Aristotle see below, note 76. I am grateful to Joanne Paul for these references.
54. "Monseigneur, il me semble par la lettre que m'avez dernièrement escripte ... que désirez sçavoir mon advis et de ceux de vostre privé conseil et léaulx serviteurs, sur le besoingne de Quintana. Et pour ce que à present ceux à qui désirés que spécialement je communique cette affaire (ne sont pas ici), aussy que je ne sçay encores bien comprendre la matère, suis délibérée attendre la venue du commandeur Loys Gillabert; mais, Monseigneur, cepandant ne me seroie abstenir vous escrire mon petit advis en cest affaire, non pas par forme d'advis ny de conseil, mais de quelque petite remontrance pour rendre devoir comme j'ay tousjours fait, ainsy que très humble fille doit faire." *Correspondance de l'Empereur II*, 221–4 (221), 14 February 1513. Pedro de Quintana was the Imperial envoy to France.
55. Jean Lemaire de Belges, *Oeuvres*, ed. J. Stecher, 4 vols (Louvain, 1891), IV, 10–167 (80).
56. "Nous ne faisons aucun doubte, en portant l'honneur et amour que devez à nostre très chière fille, vostre tante, que vous ne lui communiquez vos plus grands et arduz affaires, et que ne prenez et usez de son bon avis et conseil, de laquelle, par raison naturelle, trouverez toujours plus de confort, bon conseil et ayde, que de nul autre." Le Glay, *Correspondance II*, 341.
57. *State Papers I* 119 (? January 1523; received February).
58. "il prefato Re anglico havea rechiesto a madama Margarita 2000 cavalli et 5000 alemani" Sanuto 36, col. 608, and see also for Margaret's military role col. 612.
59. Sanuto 40, col. 556.
60. Sanuto 40, col. 775; Sanuto 43, cols 126, 157–8.
61. Sanuto 49 col. 454.
62. *Negotiations I*, 687, letter of 31 December 1528.

63. “Da la corte di Franza si ha, per lettere di 10 del presente ... che madama Margerita, poi la tregua fatta con francesi et inglesi, havea convertito le forze contra il duca di Gelder al quale il re Christianissimo havea mandato alcune zente in soccorso, non intendendo però Sua Maestà di contravener alli capitoli de la tregua, perchè erano solo per defensione del ditto Duca et di le cose sue.” Sanuto 48, col. 447
64. “*Conclusive*, l’impresa si far per Italia e sarà prestissima e molto potente, et la madre il sollicita”. Sanuto 20, col. 255.
65. Sanuto 28, col. 557. Sanuto’s note of letters from Antonio Justinian, orator in France, dated 15 May 1520.
66. “aspectando li Madama la Regente, quale conduceva seco molta gente portando assà danari”. Sanuto 36, col. 620.
67. “se diceva in campo che la madre dil Re era in Savoia et havea facto intender a la Maestà dil Re che non dubitasse che l’haveria danari et gente assai”. Sanuto 37, col. 153.
68. “se diceva che Madama madre del Re mandava al Re artellarie et munizion” (Sanuto 37, col. 164); and in December, from Crema “se diceva che in campo si aspectava 4000 gioveni gentilomeni che mandava la madre dil re di Franza”. Sanuto 37, col. 366.
69. “Et n’oubliez force branches d’Olive/Car elle estoit la Bergere de Paix” Clément Marot, *Oeuvres lyriques* ed. C. A. Mayer (London: Athlone Press, 1964). ‘Eglogue I de Louise de Savoye, Mère du Roy’, 336. Russell, *Diplomats at Work*, 138.
70. Sanuto 31, col. 144, summary of report from Gasparo Contarini, 20 July 1521; Sanuto 31, col. 192, summary of report from the same, 27 July 1521: “Ha inteso, madama Margarita *etiam* lei non ardisce parlarli di pace.”
71. “La matre dil re Christianissimo ha mandato a donare a madama Margarita carrete 60 de bono vino, *cum* ricercarla a componer Cesare con il figliolo, et che lei faria il medemo; ma non hanno operato cosa alcuno.” Sanuto 32, col. 469, letter from the proveditor of Brescia, February 1522.
72. See for example Ermolao Barbaro, “De Officio Legati,” in *Nuova collezione di testi umanistici inediti or rari XIV*, ed. Vittore Branca (Florence: Olschki, 1969), 157–67 and Dolet.
73. See my *Diplomacy in Renaissance Rome*, 92–93, 117–18.
74. “Et, sans parler par adulation, onques Salomon en sa grand lumière de sapience ne se comporta plus saigement en affaire que vous estes comportée en la poursuite et conduit de la désirée deliverance de la personne du Roy. En quoy avez monster une profonde prudence, longue et assurée experience, conduit non pareille et dextérité merueilleusement grande.” G. Jacqueton, *La politique extérieure de Louise de Savoie* (Paris: Bouillon, 1892), 431. This was in the contest of ensuring the envoy Sir Richard Wingfield arrived at the Imperial court with a suitable letter for Margaret.

75. Fletcher, *Our Man in Rome*, 18, citing *Vetera Monumenta Hibernorum et Scotorum: Historiam Illustrantia*, ed. Augustinis Theiner, (Rome: Typis Vaticanis, 1864), 549 (LP IV 1368); *Diplomacy in Renaissance Rome*, 54.
76. Leah Bradshaw, "Political Rule, Prudence and the 'Woman Question' in Aristotle," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 24 (1991), 557–73.
77. John Jeffries Martin, "Inventing sincerity, refashioning prudence: the discovery of the individual in Renaissance Europe," *American Historical Review* 102 (1997), 1323–5.
78. Fletcher, *Our Man in Rome*, 31–2, citing *State Papers* VI 316–17 (LP IV 456).
79. Peter Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal: The Rise and Fall of Thomas Wolsey* (London: Pimlico, 1990), 93–102 and 145–50. Gwyn doubts the sincerity of Wolsey's commitment to peace, but given the continuation of war in Italy for thirty years after the Ladies' Peace one could doubt Louise and Margaret on that front too.

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Counsel as Performative Practice of Power in Catherine de' Medici's Early Regencies

Susan Broomhall

This chapter explores how Catherine de' Medici (1519–89), queen consort to Henri II of France (1519–59), negotiated political status during her early regencies. Scholars have largely focused on Catherine's activities as a widow when she acted as a regent and counsellor to her sons, Charles IX (1550–74) and Henri III (1551–89), and emphasized her development of maternal rhetoric that situated this phase of her political intervention.¹ However, Catherine's first experiences of providing counsel and establishing authority as a political interlocutor occurred during the reign of her husband. As queen consort, Catherine was vested by Henri with regency on several occasions while he undertook military campaigns. This chapter studies these periods in which counsel—both as Catherine sought and offered it—proved a highly dynamic performative practice that enabled her to establish authority as a political agent.

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Historians have generally regarded Henri's reign as a time when Catherine wielded little power, overshadowed by the dominating figure of his long-time mistress, Diane de Poitiers (1499–1566), and his favoured senior official, the *connétable* Anne de Montmorency (1493–1567).² However, a closer examination of Catherine's first positions of delegated authority indicates that over the course of these occasions, she increasingly articulated her expectation, and capacity, for political participation. But the position of a queen consort as a regent and counsellor to the realm was a difficult one. Queens were frequently foreigners to the realm, as was Catherine who had been raised as a member of the Medici dynasty in Florence and Rome. The trustworthiness of these women to act in their marital realm's interests raised doubts, often even after the birth of sons, since their allegiances were perceived to be divided between natal and marital dynasties. In addition, prior to these regencies, Catherine had remained in the background to political machinations of the court and her personal abilities as a political participant were largely unknown. Correspondence with the king and his leading courtiers was thus an important site in which Catherine employed a practice of giving and receiving counsel to establish her capacity for political action.

This chapter argues that analysis of the practice of counsel in Catherine's correspondence is critical to understanding her political development, following scholarship that has highlighted the critical importance of eloquent and expressive language in speech and letters for Catherine's political agency.³ These letters demonstrate how the queen first had to show Henri and his counsellors that she could be a trusted ally, who accepted her place in the political hierarchy, by seeking wisdom from the counsel of leading men at court. Then, over time, Catherine employed her letters to articulate her new status as a counsellor to these same men and to powerful women at court on a wide variety of contemporary concerns—from courtly etiquette to military affairs, religious matters and taxation. The practice of counsel in these letters was a production of power, in which Catherine's epistolary performances of seeking, accepting and learning from counsel given by Henri and his officials were increasingly counterbalanced by specific recommendations and advice to the same leading men and offers to act as a counsellor to them more broadly. She did so in a context in which elite letters employing expressions of authority and emotional states claimed status for correspondents in the political hierarchy of the court and kingdom.⁴ These highly performative texts demonstrate how the queen carefully crafted particular strategies regard-

ing counsel for specific letter recipients, and increasingly shaped ideas about what counsel she could provide and the political matters on which it could be offered.

SEEKING COUNSEL AS THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL WISDOM

Catherine's regencies came about principally as a result of her husband's desire to lead France's military campaigns in this final phase of the Italian Wars (1494–1559). Her first appointment came just a year after Henri acceded to the throne in 1547, when he embarked on a tour of the eastern frontiers of the kingdom. This included the newly acquired Piedmont, but concerns about the logistics of hosting the whole court on tour required the queen and most of the court to remain behind in Macon, then Lyon.⁵ Provision was made, therefore, in July 1548, for formal administration to be carried out during these weeks by Catherine and a council that was comprised of those close to the new king: Jean, Cardinal of Lorraine (1498–1550) and Claude de Lorraine, the Duke of Guise (1496–1550), the Chancellor François Olivier (1487–1560), Jacques d'Albon, Seigneur de Saint-André (c 1505–62) and Philippe de Cossé-Brissac, the Bishop of Coutances and Grand Almoner of France, Henri II's former tutor as a child (d. 1548).⁶

Catherine appeared to be given a more substantial remit, though, when Henri went with Montmorency to lead the campaign on the Rhine in 1552. However, Catherine's assumptions about her power as a regent were dashed when she had the specific terms of the declaration of her regency read to her. Here, she discovered her presidency of the privy council was to be shared with the Chancellor Jean Bertrandi, known to be in the political orbit of Diane de Poitiers. Bertrandi had replaced Olivier, a humanist figure interested in reforming the institution of the Church, who had diplomatically resigned his place as Keeper of the Seals in early 1551 against the growing power of the more hard-line religious policies of Diane and her allies.⁷ The queen's joint tenure of the role with Bertrandi represented a form of oversight and control of Catherine's actions by the king's mistress. In addition, Catherine was required to share the responsibility for raising troops with Admiral Claude d'Annebault (c 1495–1552) and all other decisions were to be taken by majority council vote.

Catherine and those around her perceived Henri's appointment of his wife as an agent of his authority to be ambiguous. The Admiral, d'Annebault, wrote to Henri that "the queen wanted to see the terms of the power that

you had left for her, and had it read to her ... she was not at all satisfied".⁸ He too wanted to have clarified who precisely was in charge of war affairs. André Guillard du Mortier (c 1495–1568), the pre-eminent intendant of finances and a member of the privy council, reported to Montmorency how, after hearing the terms of her regency, Catherine was evidently disappointed and told du Mortier that she had seen the power given to Louise de Savoie (1476–1531) when she had been regent for her son François Ier (1494–1547), and "the late Lady had such amplitude that she could not wish for more, and moreover, she had had no Companion".⁹ Du Mortier therefore proposed to Montmorency that Catherine's status be clarified. Catherine herself insisted that although not a mother as was her predecessor Louise, she, a dutiful wife, could be trusted with the role alone for "she had been in any case determined to use it soberly and according to what her Lord had told her of his particular intentions, either orally or written".¹⁰ Emphasizing the importance of accepting counsel as key to her trustworthiness as regent, Catherine told courtiers that "she would be loathe to fill a chapel without writing of it to the King to know if he agreed or not".¹¹ To be trusted as *the* leading courtly official in Henri's absence—without a Companion—the queen would need to prove her capabilities, and the first of these was to demonstrate her ability to grow as a political agent by seeking and accepting counsel.

In the suite of letters Catherine wrote between April and July 1552 therefore, the subject of counsel was pivotal to her demonstration of ability to lead the Council and country as regent. Catherine's autograph letters, demonstrating the high degree of personal attention that she gave to these matters, adopted a submissive tone as she sought assurances from Montmorency that the king was happy with her conduct.¹² At the end of April, Catherine thanked Henri's senior official for

the assurance that you give me of his contentment, which is so much what I desire in all the world, ... as to what you write to me of my power, I am at ease that it be in a way that they know what you write to me is true – that I am in the good graces of the King.¹³

On 20 May, Catherine wrote to Montmorency again, showing her compliance with Henri's wishes by indicating how much she was listening to the views of the Council. Indeed, she expressed anxiety that she was taking up "the majority of the time of Monsieur the Keeper of the Seals [Bertrandi] and those of the Council for fear that there will be some error".¹⁴

Catherine's letters regularly discussed feelings, crafted particular social and familial identities, and created moods designed to engage and move her readers for political effect.¹⁵ She insisted on her willingness to satisfy Henri and Montmorency: "I hope that you will be satisfied with everything achieved as it is ... I will not be easy until I know that King and you are content".¹⁶ In doing so, the queen reflected a wider trend of female-authored epistles of the period in which explicit emotional vocabulary and discussion about women's feelings and the imagined sentiments of others was a hallmark.¹⁷ While men could write about feelings too, they had other mechanisms to persuade readers to their views. Female authors however strategically deployed emotional language and created particular moods in their letters to achieve effect and affect in recipients, as Catherine did here in seeking reassurance that she acted according to the counsel of her husband and his appointed counsellors.

Yet even in this seemingly most compliant of letters to her husband's leading official, there were hints that Catherine held firm opinions of her own. Montmorency had written to Catherine about the actions of the wily negotiator Maurice, Elector of Saxony (1521–53). Following a stunning Imperial attack in March that had left the French doubtful of Maurice's allegiance, Maurice had since renewed his attentions to Henri. Catherine seconded Montmorency's concerns: "I am of your opinion that we must not believe in words, but in effects".¹⁸ In so saying, she aligned herself with Montmorency's own views but she continued more forcefully, "and I must say to you, my *compère*, that I no longer want to think of him", "I want so much for us to have our revenge on them".¹⁹ Catherine sought to demonstrate her strong allegiance to the French kingdom and her determination to represent its political interests. However, the tone of these remarks projected a confidence and decisiveness that was, thus far, rarely apparent in her correspondence with Henri's chief counsellor.

Foremost in these first missives were her expressions of desire to satisfy, by listening to Henri's counsel and by learning from the men of his council. She emphasized her determination to learn her role, telling Montmorency that she "lost no time in learning the state and charge of a *munitionnaire* ... I assure you that I am going to be a past mistress of this; for from one hour to the next I study nothing but this".²⁰ Reinforcing her status as a submissive recipient of the wisdom and opinions of Henri's trusted officials, Catherine concluded the letter with solicitation once again of Montmorency's counsel "for I govern myself in this according to your good counsel and advice".²¹

In Catherine's first significant test as a temporary leader, she adopted a much-needed role as learner, ostensibly accepting the counsel of Henri and his leading officials as well as keeping Bertrandi and the Council involved in all decision-making. In doing so, she demonstrated to her husband that she was willing to accept his determination of her power and status, to work within the boundaries that he had set and to do so effectively. In line with her submissive tone, the emotions that Catherine expressed in her letters emphasized her humility in accepting the advice that Henri, her Companion, the Council and senior men at court such as Montmorency gave to her and her fears of failure and of disappointing them in turn. As such, the queen identified her ability to accept counsel readily and willingly, indeed even to seek it out, as key evidence of her suitability to act as regent, a role she could perhaps in future be trusted to take on alone.

COUNSEL AS POLITICAL ALLIANCE

Catherine's correspondence in this period was not limited to the inner circle of Henri and Montmorency, but encompassed a wide range of officials with whom she was required to interact. In these letters, the queen adopted a different tone and rhetoric that reflected her newfound authority but this had to be carefully balanced with establishing confidence and friendship among the kingdom's leading men whose compliance would be required to achieve her goals. Female regency was a relatively rare occurrence in recent French political memory and the last had been a mother protecting the realm for her son, not a queen consort who had been raised beyond the kingdom.²² This was also Catherine's first engagement with such men personally. As such, the queen had to negotiate her political status, as a woman and as an unique interlocutor. Providing and seeking counsel, rather than issuing direct demands and orders, provided a mechanism through which Catherine could expect action from powerful men without undermining the status of her recipients.

In late April 1552, Catherine wrote to the Lieutenant General of the King in Paris, Cardinal Charles de Bourbon (1523–90), both to keep him informed of her decisions and carefully offering her own suggestions on how he should proceed in regards to a number of preachers in Paris whose critical views of affairs of State risked inflaming tensions in the city. Catherine commenced her letter respectfully addressing Bourbon as "my cousin", a term which implied rank and political status rather than a blood relationship. She coupled repeated reinforcements throughout the letter of her personal relationship to Bourbon with a confident, didactic tone.

You understand, my cousin, how easy it is, under the guise of zeal and devotion, to move a people to tumult, and that it is easier to put a stop to it at the beginning.²³

Catherine had her own views to offer Bourbon about what to do, but she first recommended that he write to the King to seek his counsel on the matter. She then framed the counsel for Bourbon that she gave in the letter, namely to interrogate the priests and their accomplices secretly in order to avoid a public scandal, as more than simply her own opinions, “having conferred with my cousin the Admiral and others that the King has left here near to me”.²⁴ However, some of Catherine’s advice, including the suggestion that Bourbon engage another preacher to remonstrate the right of the King’s decisions to the people, was clearly expressed as her own ideas (“it seems to me”).²⁵ Catherine softened the appearance of counselling a senior official further by seemingly approaching Bourbon through her emotions, “begging” Bourbon “as affectionately as I can, that, with the lords of the Council established here, you consult immediately about this matter”.²⁶ In various ways Catherine alternated between statements that appeared to shy away from firmly telling Bourbon precisely what to do and others that clearly demanded action: “this is all that I wanted to say about it, leaving all the rest to what you and your company can better judge of the importance and consequence of the thing to put a stop to it, letting me know what you will do”.²⁷ Thus, in several different ways, Catherine proceeded cautiously to give counsel, in recognition of the extraordinariness of her position both as an individual whose voice was new and as a woman formally involved in the official structure of French political hierarchy.

Affection continued to frame Catherine’s “concerns” for Bourbon in a further letter five days later. She wrote both letters in her own hand, a practice that emphasized Bourbon’s importance to her and the time she had personally invested in attending to him. She reminded the cardinal that his diocese owed funds for the ongoing military campaign—the very issue against which the preachers had been speaking.²⁸ Catherine adopted a supportive tone, suggesting that she was warning Bourbon to supply the funds “so that there is no fault on your side”:

I wanted to write of this again by the present letter, begging you, as affectionately as I can, to make known in effect the goodwill and singular affection that you carry for my lord, and in consequence, to the good and prosperity of his affairs, that you do not fail, in his need, to provide the sum that your diocese must provide, so that it can be in the hands of the Receiver General before the deadline.

To encourage him further, Catherine visualized for Bourbon how much fulfilment of his financial obligations would be emotionally satisfying, for, in doing so, Catherine argued, Bourbon would be “giving pleasure to the King”.²⁹ Thus, in a letter that sought his compliance about a monetary matter, Catherine made positive feelings and gentle counsel paramount.

Bourbon was a key ally for Catherine in Paris, and her affectionate terms contrasted the far more matter of fact way she reminded others of their need to contribute to Henri’s war campaign in letters that were often copied by the secretary of state, Jean du Thier, rather than in her own hand.³⁰ She continued to write to Bourbon, throughout the months of her regency that followed, of her challenges in securing the passage of the edict through the *Parlement* of Paris that would provide Henri with further sums for his campaign.³¹ In her letter of 13 May 1552, the queen wrote of her frustrations and fears regarding how Henri would perceive her leadership if she could not obtain this legislation for him. She had written a special letter by express courier from Châlons to the *Parlement*, demanding that it proceed without delay to the publication of the edicts. Catherine asked Bourbon to use his influence to intervene directly, “begging you, my cousin, ... to make the court understand the risk of unhappiness that they could give to the King”.³² Catherine’s earlier decision to counsel Bourbon on spiritual and financial matters rather than demand too forcefully reflected her need for Bourbon as an ally in her negotiations in *Parlement*. In this matter, she invoked him as a colleague of high political status, whose counsel (and influence) she now sought to help her negotiate with the *Parlement*. Importantly, in responding to Catherine’s solicitation for advice, Bourbon would be engaging in a political relationship with Catherine that acknowledged the powerful status of each.

Catherine’s correspondence with Bourbon during this period demonstrates how offering and seeking counsel played a key role in establishing particular political relationships for the queen. She subtly began to assert her authority over crown and parliamentary officials, demanding consideration as a wife who both represented the king and was united in authority with him, although she was not always immediately successful. Her specific “advice” for Bourbon, by contrast, was carefully balanced with revelations of feelings that suggested a tone of intimacy, encouraging him to participate in an exclusive group of men on whom she could draw for counsel when required.

COUNSELLING A KING

Towards the end of May 1552, Catherine wrote directly to Henri, the husband and monarch she represented. By contrast to the submissive tone that had characterized her first letters as regent to Montmorency, in which she actively sought his advice and that of her husband, now Catherine presented an assured analysis of a particular political matter. This was the proposition made to her by Ferdinand de Saint Severino, Prince of Salerno (1507–68), to participate in the war alongside Henri, with an eye to securing the realm of Naples for himself if their campaign was successful. Catherine assured her husband that, as Henri's "very humble and very obedient wife", she would transmit accurately what Salerno had conveyed in order to give Henri time to consider his response before Salerno spoke with him directly.³³ However, her choice of words and the tone of the letter demonstrated a growing capability to assess the political situation for herself. Indeed, she concluded her summary report, saying, "Now, sir, this discourse that I have made is not to make you think that I take these proposals at face value".³⁴ Catherine's analysis of Salerno's ideas was populated with phrases such as "in my opinion" and "in my judgement" that confidently asserted her own point of view.³⁵ This was a woman marking out her ability to analyze the political terrain and, as a result, to offer counsel to a king.

Catherine's confidence, and the trust that Henri placed upon her, were noted by those at the court. Sir William Pickering complained at the end of May that the ambassadors had been told not to attend the king at camp but to address the queen and Council in whatever they had to convey from their masters.³⁶ Noblemen were received at court by Catherine and sought audiences with her to benefit their causes. Catherine, for example, encouraged Henri to favour the young prince, Alfonso (1553–97), son of Ercole II d'Este, Duke of Ferrara, who had fought for the French without the permission of his father. Catherine made clear that she intended to do so and argued that this was her loyal duty as a courtier, and as a wife, since "all those who want to do you service must love and honor him, and me also, as she who wanted this like no other. I will make efforts to honor him as much as I can".³⁷ These were no longer issues and approaches on which Catherine was seeking Henri's advice. Instead, she was informing him how she intended to proceed, and in doing so, providing a subtle form of counsel to her husband about those international allies whom Henri might himself judge in highest regard.

Catherine's growing political confidence was heightened by Henri's advice to her that was now sent addressed directly in letters to "My Friend" as well as through Montmorency.³⁸ Henri was in need of supplies at camp, but he deftly directed his dissatisfaction towards the privy council rather than Catherine: "I beg you, My Friend, to order the men of my Council, to whom you will make known my intention, so that they should waste no time on other things ... being impossible, as I knew, that you could have done more about it than you have".³⁹ Henri's instructions to Catherine recognized her skills and intentions, whilst also demanding that she act. In these letters he showed respect for her own actions and abilities by entrusting some action to her without copious detail. In discussing how Catherine should respond to Salerno's proposal for joint military action, for example, Henri presented suggestions on how Catherine should handle relevant ambassadorial meetings, concluding: "you will know well how to add other good remonstrations ... and tell me straightaway what you can draw from him".⁴⁰ The phrasing of Henri's letter appeared to attest to a newly discovered respect for Catherine's political capacities. He presented his instructions as a form of advice for his regent but, importantly, stopped short of directing Catherine precisely. In doing so, the king provided his wife with leeway to act according to her own perceptions of the situation in which she found herself. Moreover, he made clear that he relied on her information about their encounter to decide how best to handle Salerno's proposition.

Such shifts in the phrasing of Henri's counsel for his regent may have been subtle developments but the growing trust in Catherine's capacity that they suggested nonetheless caused alarm among those who were habituated to power at the king's side. Montmorency, for example, evidently perceived—and sought to halt—a change in Catherine's status with the king. He warned her not to overstep the boundaries of her authority by acting independently, using the guise of helpful counsel to a political ingénue.

I know that the thing in the world that you desire the most is to satisfy only the King, I did not want to be remiss, for the old and devoted service and obedience that I hold for you, in warning you that it seems to me, as the King is so close to you, that you must not enter into any expense nor make any ordinances without first letting him know and knowing his pleasure.⁴¹

Montmorency framed his advice as a consideration of Catherine's desire to please her husband, for, he insisted, keeping Henri informed of her every move would be a "thing from which I am sure he will receive great contentment, as I know he has with all that you have done until now in the charge that he has left to you".⁴² However, Montmorency clearly perceived the limitations he was demanding Catherine make in her political action as a difficult piece of advice for her to hear. Yet, he argued, it was his duty to give her counsel when she most needed it, such as now when she might risk becoming overconfident:

because it has always pleased you to do me the honor of commanding me to give you advice on what I thought to be most to his satisfaction, I have proceeded to send you this little note about it, that I beg you most humbly, Madame, to accept with the sincere intention of he who wrote it to you.⁴³

Catherine's earlier requests for Montmorency's counsel now gave him licence to present a carefully worded warning—as a form of advice—to her. Catherine's actions as regent demonstrated sufficient skill that Montmorency sought to contain the potential threat to his role as the pre-eminent counsellor to the king.

Catherine appeared to take Montmorency's thoughts to heart, but not quite as he expected. In a letter to the Duke of Guise, just over a week later, she asked her recipient to secure funds to support the military statesman Laurent de Maugiron (1528–88). Significantly, in wording that mirrored Montmorency's own, Catherine explained to Guise that, "the King being so close", she would no longer "bother with an ordinance".⁴⁴ Catherine had subverted Montmorency's phrasing to achieve her own goals. She did not seek the king's counsel in her actions and instead used the fact that he was shortly to return as a reason to act immediately rather than through the regular legal channels. Indeed, Catherine advised Guise "to do it promptly ... to avoid any inconvenience".⁴⁵

Henri returned to court in July 1552, and Catherine's time as regent was over for the time being. She had begun to learn how to counterbalance the presentation and exercise of her own actions with protestations of her obedience to her husband, both to Henri himself and to his officials with whom she negotiated. Once again, epistolary solicitation, offering and acceptance of counsel were critical aspects of these interactions. Henri's own correspondence with his wife acknowledged her capacity and carefully relaxed the level of detail of his ongoing counsel for her as a

consequence. As a result, the last month of her regency in 1552 had become a testing time, in which Catherine's growing ascendancy with the king had come to threaten his leading advisers, who provided their own counsel about how she should act in order to please the king, with an eye to limiting her influence.

COUNSEL FROM THE KING'S TRUSTED REPRESENTATIVE

In the summer of 1553, Catherine was once more regent as Henri determined to engage personally at the war front. She was again supported by Bertrandi, du Mortier and the career statesman and close confidante of the king, Claude d'Urfé (1501–88).⁴⁶ Now Catherine's letters began to display the fruits of her military education, as she advised his leading officials how best they could support Henri and the ongoing military campaign.

At the end of July, Catherine wrote to Montmorency about the capture of Thérouanne and Hesdin in which a significant number of France's noblemen had been taken prisoner. She offered her own firm opinions that Montmorency should "advise the King to no longer permit himself to put loyal people in places that count for nothing, for the prisoners that they have from these two places will give them more reputation than the towns that they have taken".⁴⁷ She situated her counsel as that of a concerned and loving wife who feared for her husband's safety and shared his victories and defeats:

for you can well imagine that there is no creature who feels more the loss of the King and has regret at the joy of his enemies than me, or who with a better heart prays to God that all things will go according to his will and yours.⁴⁸

In her next letter, Catherine reiterated her concerns for Henri's welfare, "as a wife and as a person who will have nothing" if he were killed or kidnapped himself.⁴⁹ In this context, she forcefully recommended that Montmorency use his influence to counsel the king not to place himself in danger at the front: "do not permit the King to go where you are".⁵⁰

Meanwhile, with Henri away from court, Catherine was engaged in a round of administration conversations to maintain the war effort at home.⁵¹ Counsel could be a useful tool for other recipients from whom Catherine sought financial help. To the *capitouls* of Toulouse, Catherine wrote expressively, thanking them for "the goodwill and affection that you

hold for the king's matters" and placing herself as a mediator for them with the king, "I did not fail to let him know of it".⁵² She then counselled them gently to provide their commitment of funds for Henri's military campaign: "I beg you that, in continuing this goodwill, you give order to hasten the recovery of the said *deniers* ... and the more you use diligence to do it, the more you will be doing a service and one most agreeable to me".⁵³ But when the *capitouls* delayed, Catherine's next letter, written by her secretary of finances Louis Burgensis, turned from tender counsel to assertive direction: "I beg, and yet order, you by the present letter that at soon and as diligently as you can, do it".⁵⁴ Clearly, Catherine expected that the leading men around the nation would look promptly to their financial obligations to support their monarch in the war effort.

When there were protests about the payment of a further levy required in Paris, Catherine offered her thanks that the men of *Parlement* had sent their advice on the situation to her and the council. Significantly, Catherine distinguished herself in each phrase from the men of Henri's council,

My lords, you could not have done better than to give advice about it to me and to the men of the King's council established here, and to advise as to the expedient that is necessary for this ... which, with the men of the council, I found as good, prudent, and deliberated as is possible.⁵⁵

Through choices of phrasing such as "it seems to me", Catherine positioned herself as an independent political agent able to speak individually of her opinions. She proceeded to assert her own views and to demonstrate her capacity to provide concrete assistance when required: "advising you further that I am writing presently to sieur de Bois Dauphin that, if those of the town need some light artillery, powder, and balls, although I think they have enough, it will be delivered to them".⁵⁶ However, she warned them to handle the situation carefully and delicately so as not to flare up popular tensions. Finally, Catherine reiterated that her position received the full support of her husband and offered her counsel as that of the "king and I".⁵⁷

In the summer of 1554, Henri left court, this time for Marienbourg where Montmorency had just taken the town (soon to be renamed Henribourg in the king's honour) after a four-day siege. Catherine was once again made regent and able to offer military counsel in the king's service. She became a regular conduit for passing on the good news of the king's victories through his political network, useful both for crown

propaganda and demonstrating her own access to intelligence, which gave weight to her views. For example, the queen informed the Duke of Guise that Henri expected her to gather together the council to “understand and act diligently on all that the King has written to them about his finances and the necessary provisions for his army”.⁵⁸ In a letter to the Bailiff of Avesnes, Catherine wrote confidently about logistics and advised how the provisions she offered might be used:

If we have the means to provide you with arquebuses from here which you say you need most, and since leaving, 10 *enseignes* of the regiments of the Count of Arembourg have arrived here to give help and aid to the frontiers in case of need. You could continually throw men outside to gauge the path of the enemy and advise us of it, ... today we have heard nothing of their conduct, except that the duke told us that the enemy sent their baggage towards France.⁵⁹

Catherine was progressively signalling her more significant political status that came from recognition by Henri, demonstrating to her interlocutors that she was involved in the kingdom’s military campaign as a key communicator between political and military operatives.

Elite women were vital to these communication networks, acting as connecting nodes of political, dynastic, social and emotional information among elite families.⁶⁰ In mid-August 1554, Catherine sent Madeleine de Savoie (1510–86), the wife of Anne de Montmorency, a missive that Catherine had devoted the personal attention of writing in her own hand, expressing her condolences on the death of Madeleine’s mother, Anne Lascaris (1487–1554). First to be addressed in the letter was, however, key military news. Catherine assured Madeleine that her husband was safe and sound and that Dinan had been taken without an assault.⁶¹ Catherine then responded to a request for advice about what was acceptable for Madeleine to wear during mourning for her mother. The question of attire was a significant aspect of female courtly conduct conveying time-honoured rituals and reflecting hierarchies and status at court. Moreover, it vested power in usually mature women who were sought out for their advice about the complex cultural rules that were specific to each European court.⁶² Catherine expressed humility at being asked her counsel on such matters of etiquette: “As to your mourning, my cousin, I would like you to ask advice of another who knows better than anyone what duchesses like you must wear for their mothers”. Having diminished her own ability

to counsel on such a delicate matter of etiquette, Catherine then proceeded nonetheless to accede to the status Madeleine bestowed on her to be able to determine French courtly rituals. Indeed, she asserted her authority by recommending that Madeleine could ignore the conventions of ritual, at least while at home: "I advise you, since you will be at home, to dress yourself as much to your ease as you can".⁶³ These communications were infused with recognition of Catherine's increased status and power as a political agent at the court. Montmorency's wife was now seeking the queen's counsel on a matter of French courtly etiquette, significant given that Catherine was herself a stranger to these local conventions.

In letters across her social and political networks during her regencies in the summers of 1553 and 1554, Catherine increasingly demonstrated her ability to manage the tactical and logistical aspects of governing the kingdom. In advising others of the progress of military endeavours at the front, she showed herself to be a key and trusted conduit for current information and the actions of the king, raising her importance in France's political intelligence networks. From this heightened position of authority, Catherine offered Henri's senior officials counsel on how best they might support their monarch—to secure supplies for his campaigns and to control the restless towns from which such funds were to be obtained with subtlety and force if required. At the same time, she had become an important source of advice for the court's leading women on matters of etiquette, taking her place as a repository of counsel on the distinctive practices of French courtly ritual.

SEEKING COUNSEL AS A PRACTICE OF POWER

In August 1557, Henri, again on campaign having left Catherine to administer the kingdom, suffered a terrible defeat at Saint-Quentin against imperial forces. It fell to Catherine to raise new funds from the Parisians for further troops. The dynamic performance of counsel that Catherine had practised in her letters to Henri and his officials had a new audience, one that had thus far been less receptive to the recommendations in her letters: the *Parlement* of Paris. Now, in a time of need, she would claim to seek their wisdom to assist her.

Catherine's aim was to bring to an end lengthy negotiations at the *Parlement* over subsidies that Henri had sought in order to maintain France's military engagement. Now, in defeat, the situation was more urgent than ever. As Giacomo Soranzo, the Venetian ambassador, reported

in the days following, Catherine came, theatrically dressed in black and with an entourage of lords and ladies, to expound “in the most august and most imposing form of words, the state of need of the moment”.⁶⁴ She expressed fears that those in the countryside could little bear further financial imposition, while those in France’s towns could. Catherine laid bare the level of financial support that was required—300,000 *livres*, 25,000 of which was needed within two months—but declined to offer any advice of her own to the *Parlement*.⁶⁵ Instead, she stated her desire to retire from the meeting room, respecting the freedom of the gentlemen of the *Parlement* to deliberate without her. Catherine had made her problem the *Parlement*’s problem to solve. It was strategic and powerful. *Parlement* immediately voted to “satisfy the desire of Her Majesty”.⁶⁶ Additionally, 100 of the most significant individuals each offered to provide 3,000 francs straightaway.

In exchange, the men of *Parlement* asked for Catherine’s political favour, to lend her services with the King to support their privileges. Accepting their promises, Catherine structured a relationship in which the *Parlement* would depend upon her counsel and support, “assuring them that she would do everything to recommend them”.⁶⁷ Moreover, she visualized an ongoing relationship between the Valois dynasty and *Parlement*, “promising to make the Dauphin, her son, their procurator and intermediary with the King”.⁶⁸ Catherine’s presentation had made a powerful impression and helped to establish conceptually both herself and her son, François, as political agents who could counsel France’s most powerful parliamentary body how to interact with the king. As Soranzo concluded, “all around the town, people spoke of nothing other than the prudence of Her Majesty and the happy manner that she had proceeded in this enterprise”.⁶⁹ In Henri’s stead, Catherine had achieved a remarkable feat, surpassing his expectations for financial support from an often hostile political body. She had done so by respectfully seeking the counsel of the *Parlement* as to how the kingdom could best be protected. Further, she had sealed the compact for finances by offering herself as a unique mediator and well-informed counsellor for *Parlement* in their negotiations with the monarch.

CONCLUSION

The practice of counsel in all its multiple, dynamic dimensions was fundamental to Catherine’s development as a political agent during her husband’s reign. It was in her regencies as a queen consort that can be discerned the

origins of epistolary strategies that would operate throughout Catherine's long, later career as a counsellor to her sons. Demonstrating a willingness to seek and accept counsel was critical to her achievements as regent at this time. Catherine first solicited advice from her husband, his leading officials and the privy council whom he had left to work with her, bearing witness to her willingness to submit to, and learn from, her superiors in the political world. These were coupled with expressions of Catherine's fears of failure that played to contemporary expectations of female political capacity, and required France's political leaders, from Anne de Montmorency and the Cardinal of Bourbon to the *Parlement* of Paris, to engage with her across a range of issues.

However, subtle changes in the language of her letters through progressive appointments as regent for her husband marked Catherine's growing confidence to bear witness to her intimate and trusted association with the king by sharing knowledge of his actions and desires. Employing counsel as a performative practice of power, as regent, Catherine successfully managed to quell sedition in 1548, raise troops for her husband's campaigns in 1552, communicate the successes and failures of the military campaigns of 1553 and 1554, calm Paris after Henri suffered terrible defeat at Saint-Quentin in 1557, and secure new funds from the Parisians for further resources. To do so, Catherine used her newly authoritative status to establish herself as a unique political interlocutor and military intelligencer who could provide the kingdom's leading men and women with constructive counsel regarding their relationship with the king and the court in both specific and general terms. Finally, demonstration of Catherine's political capability laid the groundwork to offer ongoing counsel as a queen consort after the conclusion of discrete periods of regency. This was, however, a situation that would—due to Henri's unexpected death in the summer of 1559—never be realized.

NOTES

1. Katherine Crawford, "Catherine de Medicis and the Performance of Political Motherhood", *Sixteenth Century Journal* 31, 3 (2000): 643–73; Elizabeth McCartney, "In the Queen's words: Perceptions of Regency Government Gleaned from the Correspondence of Catherine de Médicis", in *Women's Letters Across Europe, 1400–1700: Form And Persuasion*, eds. Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 207–22; Denis Crouzet, "'A strong desire to be a mother to all your subjects': A Rhetorical Experiment

- by Catherine de Medici”, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38, 1 (2008): 104–118; Crouzet, “The Regency of Catherine de Medici: Political Reason during the Wars of Religion”, in *Sacred and Secular Agency in Early Modern France: Fragments of Religion*, ed. Sanja Perovic (London: Continuum, 2012), 37–51.
2. On Catherine’s political subordination at this period, see Ivan Cloulas, *Catherine de Medicis* (Paris: Fayard, 1978), 110–11; R.J. Knecht, *Catherine de’ Medici* (London: Longman, 1998), 42–3. On the role of Diane de Poitiers in political affairs, see Cloulas, *Diane de Poitiers* (Paris: Fayard, 1997) and Susan Broomhall, “‘The King and I’: Rhetorics of power in the letters of Diane de Poitiers,” in *Women and Power at the French Court, 1483–1563*, ed. Broomhall, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018).
 3. Crouzet, *Le haut cœur de Catherine de Médicis* (Paris, Albin Michel, 2005); Broomhall, “Ordering Distant Affections: Fostering Love and Loyalty in the Correspondence of Catherine de Medici to the Spanish Court, 1568–72,” in *Gender and Emotions in Medieval and Early Modern Europe: Destroying Order, Structuring Disorder*, ed. Broomhall (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 67–86; Broomhall, “‘My daughter, my dear’: The correspondence of Catherine de Medici and Elisabeth de Valois,” *Women’s History Review* 25, 4 (2015): 548–69.
 4. Following Judith Butler’s discussion of the construction of gendered selves through the ongoing practice of acts as “performativity”, see Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 1999).
 5. Maurice Scève, *The Entry of Henri II into Lyon: September 1548*, ed. Richard Cooper, vol. 160 (Tempe, Arizona: Medieval and Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1997), 8, 10–12.
 6. Cloulas, *Catherine de Médicis*, 110.
 7. Henri Estienne, *Traité préparatif à l’Apologie pour Herodote*, ed. Bénédicte Boudou, vol. 1 (Geneva: Droz, 2007), 443.
 8. “Il est souvenu à la reyne de vouloir voir le Pouvoir que vous luy auez laissé, & se l’est fait lire ... elle ne paroist guere satisfaite”, 11 April 1552, *Lettres et mémoires d’estat*, ed. Guillaume Ribier, vol. 2 (Paris: François Clozier et la veuve Aubouyn, 1666), 387. All translations are my own.
 9. “feu madite Dame eut une ampliation telle que l’on n’y esut sçeu rien adjouter: & de plus elle n’auoit point de Compagnon”, [1552], *Lettres et mémoires d’estat*, 2: 388.
 10. “que quand ledit pouvoir eust esté selon la forme si ample qu’il auoit pleu au Roy le de luy dire qu’il estoit, elle se fust toutefois bien gardée d’en user autrement que sobrement, & selon ce que ledit Seigneur luy eust fait entendre son intention en particulier, soit de bouche, ou par escrit”, Ibid.

11. “qu’elle seroit bien marrie de pourvueoir à une simple Chapelle, sans en escrire au Roy pour sçavoir s’il l’aura agreable, ou non”, *Ibid.*
12. On the attention given to, and political significance of, autograph letters of female monarchs, see Carlo M. Bajetta, “Editing Elizabeth I’s Italian Letters,” *Journal of Early Modern Studies* 3 (2014): 41–68.
13. “la haseurance que me donés due contantement, qui ayst tent set que je désire au set monde ... quant à set que me mandés de mon pouvoyr, je susy bien ayse, qu’i souyt de fason que l’on conese que set que me mandés ay vray que je suys au la bonne grase deu Roy”, [End April] 1552, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis*, ed. Hector de La Ferrière, vol. 1 (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1880), 52.
14. “la pluspart du temps Monsieur le garde des sceaux, et ceux du Conseil pour la peur et crainte que j’ay qu’il y ayt aucune faute”, 20 May [1552], *Ibid.*, 1: 56.
15. See references in endnotes 1 and 3 above.
16. “j’espère que le tout bien acheminé et estably, comme il est, vous en serez satisfait ... n’y perdray point ma peine jusques à ce que je sçache comme le Roy et vous en serez contens”, 20 May [1552], *Ibid.*, 1: 56.
17. James Daybell, “Female Literacy and the Social Conventions of Women’s Letter-Writing in England, 1540–1603,” in *Early Modern Women’s Letter Writing, 1450–1700*, ed. Daybell (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 59–76; Daybell, *Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Broomhall, “Letters make the family: Nassau family correspondence at the turn of the seventeenth century”, in *Early Modern Women and Transnational Communities of Letters*, eds. Julie D. Campbell and Anne R. Larsen (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009), 25–44. For the same practices among a different social group, see Broomhall, “Channelled affections: Pressure and persuasion in letters to Huguenot refugees in England, 1569–1570,” in *Feeling Exclusion: Religious Conflict, Exile and Emotions in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Giovanni Tarantino and Charles Zika (London: Routledge, forthcoming).
18. “suis bien de vostre advis qu’il ne faut plus croire en paroles, mais en effects”, 20 May [1552], *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis*, 1: 56.
19. “et faut que je vous dire, mon compère, que je ne veux plus penser à luy”; “j’ay belle envie que nous ayons nostre revanche sur eulx”, *Ibid.*
20. “n’a pas perdu temps à apprendre l’estat et charge de munitionnaire; ... je vous assure que je m’en vais maistresse passé; car d’heure à autre je n’estudie que cela”, *Ibid.*
21. “car je m’y gouvernay selon vostre bon conseil et advis”, *Ibid.*
22. Few detailed studies have attended to Louise de Savoie’s activities as regent, with the exception of Guillaume Jacqueton, *La Politique extérieure de Louise de Savoie: Relations diplomatiques de la France et de l’Angleterre pendant la captivité de François Ier* (Paris: Emile Bouillon, 1892).

23. “Vous entendez, mon cousin, comme un peuple est facile, sous telles couleurs de zèle et dévotion, à s’esjouvoir et faire tumulte, à quoy il es plus aisé de pourvoir au commencement”, 21 April 1552, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis*, 1: 50.
24. “après en avoir conféré avec mon cousin l’Admiral et aultres que le Roy a laissez icy auprès de moy”, *Ibid.*
25. “Il me semble”, *Ibid.*, 1: 51.
26. “vous priant, aultant affectueusement que je puis, qu’avec les sieurs du Conseil, establis par delà, vous ayez à incontinent consulter et adviser sur cette affaire”, *Ibid.*
27. “qui est tout ce que je vous en sçauerois dire, remettant le surplus à ce que vous et vostre compagnie pouvez mieux juger de l’importance et conséquence de la chose pour y pourveoir, et après me faire entendre ce que vous aurez fait”, *Ibid.*
28. 29 April 1552, *Ibid.*, 1: 51.
29. “afin qu’il n’y ait aucune faulte de vostre costé, je vous en ay bien voulu faire cette recharge par la présente, vous priant, autant affectueusement que je puis, que, pour faire cognoistre, par effet, à mon dit seigneur la bonne volonté et singulière affection que vous liu portez, et par conséquent au bien et prosperité de ses affaires, vous ne faillez, au besoin, au fournissement de la somme que doit poirter votre diocèse, de sorte qu’elle puisse estre es mains du recepueur général dedans ledit terme fixé ... vous ferez ung plaisir au Roy mon dit seigneur, tel et si à propos que plus grant ne se pourroit estimer pour le moment”, *Ibid.*, 1: 52.
30. See, for example, her letter to the Parlement of Paris, 13 May 1552, *Ibid.*, 1: 55–6 and 24 May 1552, *Ibid.*, 1: 58; to the Bishop of Valence, 20 May 1552, *Ibid.*, 1: 56–7. On the role of such personnel at this period, see N.M. Sutherland, *The French Secretaries of State in the Age of Catherine de Medici* (London: The Athlone Press, 1962).
31. 13 May 1552, *Ibid.*, 1: 55.
32. “vous priant, mon cousin, y vouloir ... faire entendre à la dite court quelle occasion de mal contentement elle pourra donner au Roy ... dont vous m’advertirez”, *Ibid.*
33. “vostre très humble et très obéyssante femme,” 26 May 1552, *Ibid.*, 1: 60.
34. “Or, monseigneur, ce discours que je vous en fais n’est pour vous faire penser que je prenne tels propos pour argent comptant”, *Ibid.*, 1: 59.
35. , “à mon advis”, “à mon jugement,” *Ibid.*
36. 26 May 1552, Calendar of state papers, 1547–1553, Ed. VI, p. 214 cited in *Ibid.*, 1: 60.
37. “teus seos qui aunt anvie de vous fayre servise le douyent aymer et haunauer et de moy, come selle qui a pleulx sete volanté que neul aultre, je méteré pouvine de l’annorer et carese de teur set que je pouré”, End May 1552, *Ibid.*, 1: 61.

38. "ma mie", 8 June 1552, *Lettres et mémoires d'estat*, 2: 415. See also on this form of address by Henri at this period, Sutherland, *French Secretaries of State*, 76.
39. "ie vous prie, Ma Mie, ordonner aux gens de mon Conseil, auquel vous ferez à tous entendre mon intention, qu'ils ayent à ne vaquer à autre chose", "estant impossible, comme j'ay sçeu, que vous y'eussiez plus fait que vous auez", *Lettres et mémoires d'estat*, 2: 415.
40. "et autres bonnes remonstrances que vous y sçavez bien adjouster ... de ce que vous pourez tirer de luy, vous m'advertirez incontinent", *Ibid.*, 2: 416.
41. "ie sçay que la chose du monde que vous desirez le plus, est de satisfaire seulement au Roy, ie n'ay voulu manquer, pour l'ancienne & devote servitude & obeissance que ie vous porte, vous advertir qu'il me semble, estant ledit Seigneur si prochain de vous, qu'il sera doresnavant, que vous ne devez entrer en aucune despense, ny plus faire ordonnance d'aucuns deniers, sans premierement le luy faire sçauoit & entendre son bon plaisir", 30 May 1552, *Ibid.*, 2: 414.
42. "chose dont ie suis seur qu'il receura grand contentement, comme aussi connois-je qu'il a de tout ce que vous auez fait jusques-icy en la charge qu'il vous auoit laissée", *Ibid.*
43. "pour ce qu'il vous a tousiours pleu me faire cet honneur de me commander vous donner aduis de ce que ie penseray estre plus à sa satisfaction, ie me suis aduancé de vous en faire ce petit mot, que ie vous supplie tres-humblement, Madame, vouloir prendre en aussi bonne part comme est sincere l'intention de celuy qui le vous escrit", *Ibid.*
44. "car, le Roy estant si près, je ne me mesle plus d'ordonnance", 9 June 1552, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis*, 1: 63.
45. "il faut donc faire promptement pour les choses qui se offrent pour éviter pour inconueniens", *Ibid.*
46. Lettres patents of 15 August 1553, *Ibid.*, 1: 80.
47. "consellé byen au Roy qu'i ne permete plux de metre de lyeule personnes au plase qui ne valet guière, car les prisonier qu'il ont de ses deus plase leur donnera plux de reputayon que lé ville qu'il ont prinse", End July 1553, *Ibid.*, 1: 77.
48. "car vous pouvés panser qu'i n'i a créature qui sante plux la perte deu Roy ay aye regret à la jeoye de ses canemys que moy, ni qui de milleur ceur prie Dieu que teutte chause allaynt selon sa volonté et la vostre", *Ibid.*, 1: 77–8.
49. "en femme et an personne qui n'ayra rien," [15–20] August 1553, *Ibid.*, 1: 78.
50. "ne permere que le Roy alle où vous aystes", *Ibid.*, 1: 79.
51. See for example her letter to the treasurer, Monsieur de Lezigny, about the King's needs, 3 September 1553, *Ibid.*, 1: 81.
52. "la bonne volonté et affection que vous portez ès affaires du Roy ... je n'ay failly à le luy faire entendre", *Ibid.*

53. “je vous prie que en continuant ceste bonne volonté vous donnez ordre de diligenter le recouvrement des dictz deniers ... et de tant plus vous y userez de dilligence, d’autant vous lui ferez service à propos et à moi très agréable”, Ibid., 1: 81–2.
54. “je vous prie et néantmoins ordonne par la présente que le plus tost et à la meilleure diligence que fère ce pourra, vous aiez à fère”, 9 September 1553, Ibid., 1: 83.
55. “Messieurs, que n’eussiez sceu mieux faire que d’en donner advis à moy et aux gens du conseil du Roy monseigneur estant icy establys, aussy d’adviser à l’expédient qui pour ce estoit nécessaire, amplement desduict par vostre lettre, lequel avec les gens du dict conseil j’ay trouvé aultant bon, prudent et délibéré qu’il est possible”, 28 September 1553, Ibid., 1: 86.
56. “vous advisant au surplus que j’escrrips présentement au sr de Bois Dauphin que, si ceux de la ville ont besoing de quelque artillerie légère, pouldre et boulez, combien que je pense qu’ilz en ayent assez, qu’il leur en face délivrer”, Ibid.
57. “le Roy et moy”, Ibid.
58. “entenden et pourvoient dilligemment à tout ce que ledit seigneur [leur] a escript, tant pour le fait de ses finances que aultres provisions nécessaires pour le fait de son armée”, 17 July [1554], Ibid., 1: 91.
59. “Sy n’avons nous aussy le moyen de vous furnir harcquebuserye d’icy dont dictes avoir le plus de besoing; et depuys vostre partement sont arrivez ichy dix enseignes du régiments du conte d’Arremberghes pour icelles donner secours et ayde aux frontières en cas de besoing. Vous pourrez continuellement jecter gens dehors pour entendre le chemin des ennemys et nous en advertir; ... ce jourd’huy n’avons riens entendu de leur conduyte, synon que ledit duc nous a fait entendre que lesdits ennemys envoioient leurs bagages vers France”, mid-July 1554, Ibid, 1: 90.
60. See, for example, Elaine Chalus, “Elite Women, Social Politics, and the Political World of Late Eighteenth-Century England,” *Historical Journal* 43 (2000): 669–97; Elizabeth Horodowich, “The Gossiping Tongue: Oral Networks, Public Life and Political Culture in Early Modern Venice,” *Renaissance Studies* 19 (2005): 22–45; Jane Couchman, “‘Give birth quickly and then send us your good husbands’: Informal Political Influence in the Letters of Louise de Coligny,” in *Women’s Letters Across Europe, 1400–1700: Form and Persuasion*, eds. Jane Couchman and Ann M. Crabb (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 163–84; Claire Walker and Heather Kerr, eds, *‘Fama’ and her Sisters: Gossip and Rumour in Early Modern Europe* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015).
61. Mid-August 1554, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis*, 1: 92. See also the detailed description of the battle of Renty, sent to the Bishop of Bayonne and Madeleine de Savoie, on 17 August 1554, Ibid., 1: 93–4.

62. See Broomhall, "Gendering the Culture of Honour at the Fifteenth-Century Burgundian Court," in *Women, Identities and Communities in Europe, 1400–1800*, eds. Broomhall and Stephanie Tarbin (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 181–93.
63. "Quant à vostre deuil, ma cousine, je vous veodrès demander conseil pour heune autre, quy savez myeulx que personne commant le doyyent porter de leurs mère les deuchesés comme vous; mais je vous conseille, tant que vous serés chez vous, de vous habiller le plux à vostre ayseque vous pourrez", mid-August 1554, *Lettres de Catherine de Médicis*, 1: 92.
64. "dans la plus auguste et la plus imposante forme de paroles, elle exposa l'état des besoins du moment", 14 August 1557, cited in Armand Basset, *La Diplomatie vénitienne: Les princes de l'Europe au XVIe siècle* (Paris: Henri Plon, 1862), 481.
65. *Ibid.*, 482.
66. "satisfaire aux désirs de Sa Majesté", *Ibid.*
67. "les assurant qu'elles les aurait toujours por recommandés", *Ibid.*
68. "promettant de faire du Dauphin son fils leur procureur et intermédiaire auprès du Roi", *Ibid.*
69. "Par toute la ville, on ne parle d'autre chose, sinon que de la prudence de Sa Majesté et de la manière heureuse dont elle a procédé dans cette entreprise", *Ibid.*

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Mary Stuart and Her Rebels-Turned-Privy Councillors: Performance of the Ritual of Counsel

Alexandra Nancy Johnson

In August 1561 Mary Queen of Scots sailed to Scotland to assume her personal reign after the death of her husband, Francis II. She had become Scotland's monarch within a week of her birth in 1542, on the sudden death of her father James V. Taken to France for safety at the age of five to avoid danger of kidnap by the English, she was then educated at the Valois court as the dauphin's betrothed. The year after her marriage, she became Queen of France in 1559 on Henri II's death. Later that year, Scottish magnates overthrew her regent,¹ and ran Scotland as a semi-republic. On arriving back in Scotland, Mary quickly had to gain control of her kingdom and her subjects' obedience and loyalty. In addition to the difficulties faced by sixteenth-century female sovereigns, she had the added challenge of ruling a *primus-inter-pares* kingdom of over-mighty and sometimes duplicitous noble magnates.

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Mary immediately established Holyrood Palace in Edinburgh as her official residence and the seat of her government and court. One of her first acts was to appoint her privy council, choosing those former rebel leaders to serve as her privy councillors. While still in France, Mary held detailed meetings with Scottish magnates when they travelled to France in April to invite her to return to Scotland. At that time she also began to formulate plans for those particular individuals whom she would have serve as the chief advisers for her personal reign, with these becoming the “faythful counsale”.² Yet even before those important April meetings, Mary was already amassing particular components that she would require at Holyrood for royal ceremonial.

The chapter studies how Mary created an important conciliar space at Holyrood. The ceremonial use of space is a new area of scholarly focus within court studies and royal residences, looking at specific areas within a royal room or zone within the palace and their monarchical and political implications.³ However, “conciliar space” or designated space for counsel in the Marian court, has, remarkably, not yet been properly investigated. Accordingly, this chapter will argue that Mary’s designated space for counsel facilitated the offering of advice for the governance of her kingdom, and that she refreshed Stewart conciliar practice via allowing access to and performance in her bedchamber at Holyrood Palace, her primary residence. Both by honouring her most intimate advisers and by providing a formal setting for her ritual of counsel,⁴ this space enhanced interaction between monarch and advisers and was an important means to gain the loyalty of her former rebels.

SCOTLAND’S CONCILIAR TRADITION

Mary expressed the importance of receiving good counsel during interviews with English ambassadors in February 1561. Shortly before, she had taken the decision to return to Scotland to assume her personal reign, following Francis’ sudden death on 5 December 1560. When Sir Nicholas Throckmorton and the Earl of Bedford came to Fontainebleau to bring Elizabeth I’s condolences, Mary granted them a series of audiences. Regarding these interviews during February and early March, Throckmorton reported to Elizabeth I’s Chief Minister, William Cecil, that Mary was waiting for her nobles and that, until they arrived from Scotland, she stated that she was “without counsel”.⁵

At that time, an English agent in Scotland also noted the importance Mary seemingly placed on receiving counsel from her nobles. In his February 1561 despatch to Cecil, Thomas Randolph assessed the political climate in Scotland at that time. With great speculation already shown over marriage prospects for the just-widowed Mary, Randolph also reported the following about the Scottish queen: “To show her subjects how ... tender is there a weal and honour of her country, she will not apply her mind to marriage ... until she be in place to have the advice of her nobles, and ascent [*sic*] of her people”.⁶ To ensure dynastic succession, a timely marriage was an essential component of stable government. However, for some female monarchs, marriage was not an area for which advice would be willingly received or offered. As Stephen Alford highlights, Cecil often noted the difficulties faced when trying to encourage Elizabeth I to marry.⁷ The position of the Tudor queen contrasted with Mary’s active engagement in seeking her nobles’ counsel, as Randolph’s February 1561 despatch shows.

During the months before her August return to Scotland, Mary was offered counsel by a number of sources. Led by the Paris-educated lawyer John Lesley, a party of northern Catholic magnates travelled to France in April and advised Mary to arrive in Aberdeen where she would be supplied with an army. Reaching Mary just a few days later, the Protestant party was led by her half-brother Lord James (later the Earl of Moray).⁸ Further, ongoing advice would continue to arrive from her de Guise uncles. Mary rejected the Catholic advice as a formula for religious and civil war. From her lengthy interviews with Lord James lasting over five days, she decided that his counsel was the way forward for the conduct of her personal reign. This was also the conclusion of her uncle, Cardinal Charles de Guise.⁹ However, once back in Scotland, Mary would rely less on his advice and, according to John Guy, the Cardinal de Guise felt “Mary was doing too much thinking for herself”.¹⁰ Even before leaving France, she already declined his advice to leave her sizeable jewellery collection temporarily in his safe-keeping, retorting that he seemed to show greater concern for her jewels than for her person.¹¹

During the April meetings in France, Mary began to select her chief advisers, or “faythful counsale”, as they sometimes became known.¹² These would include her half-brother Lord James (later the Earl of Moray) and William Maitland of Lethington (who would also serve as her first minister). Some of Randolph’s despatches suggest that the fifth Earl of Argyll was another of Mary’s “faythful counsale”.¹³ Then, within three

weeks' of her return to Scotland, Mary appointed her privy council which included the "faythful counsale".¹⁴ Significantly, her privy councillor appointments were the same privy council who had served her mother as regent, prior to her overthrow.¹⁵ Jenny Wormald criticizes Mary for not bringing new blood into her privy council.¹⁶ In fact, Mary pointedly chose those same magnates who had then gone on to lead the October 1559 rebellion that overthrew her regent, because Mary could then hold them accountable.¹⁷ Critically, a further factor played strongly in her choices. These privy council selections noticeably reflected her recognition of the importance to uphold and honour what these Scottish magnates had come to expect over the course of the Stewart dynasty's rule since its founding in 1371: Scottish nobles considered it their right to counsel the monarch of this *primus-inter-pares* dynasty, by virtue of their birth.¹⁸ Wormald's criticism does not take into account this tradition. In contrast, honouring Scotland's good ancient noble blood was a tenet proposed regularly in contemporary accounts, even by John Knox.¹⁹

Although Scotland's privy council was only established during Mary's minority,²⁰ Scotland had a long-established tradition of conciliar government. Stewart monarchs had relied on a close circle of personal advisers such as James IV's "daily council", as Trevor Chalmers states.²¹ Further, in his study of James IV's 1508 household list, William Hepburn underscores that the knights and squires on the 1508 household list were also important figures in James' council and government. For example, Hepburn's analysis shows that the third Earl of Argyll played an important governmental role. He also was hereditary master of the king's household, with concomitant levels of access.²² When Mary formed her government in September 1561, her privy council was composed predominantly of earls, the highest noble rank in Scotland in that period.²³ Further, several of these privy council earls also assumed their positions as hereditary great officers of state. These included the third Earl Marischal, the fourth Earl of Bothwell as Lord High Admiral and the seventh Earl of Erroll as Lord High Constable of Scotland.²⁴ Even Knox stressed the importance of these positions of natural-born counsellors.²⁵ As these examples show, a central factor in Mary's privy council appointments was her continuation of the tradition that Scottish magnates counselled the monarch.

Mark Loughlin favourably assesses Mary's particular style of governing as "perhaps one of the most beneficial of the many French influences that can be discerned at work during her reign".²⁶ In France she had known the practice of the monarch holding a *conseil* each morning with his closest advisers.²⁷ For example, Henri II's closest advisers had included Mary's

uncle, the Cardinal de Guise, and Anne de Montmorency, Constable of France. In addition, they both served in the highest household offices, with Montmorency as Grand Master of Household and the cardinal having earlier been Henri's Master of the Horse.²⁸ These morning *conseils* took place in Henri's bedchamber during his daily arising or *lever*.²⁹ Robert Knecht points out that the king's council of affairs was begun by Francis I and comprised only a few intimates of the king.³⁰ In this Valois practice, the king would seek counsel from his chief advisers on important governmental matters. Usually he would not attend the meetings of the privy council which took place in the council chamber during the afternoon. Mary then instituted this *conseil* practice in Scotland for her personal reign, with her *conseils* taking place in her bedchamber.³¹

Unlike the Valois monarchs, Mary also attended privy council sessions.³² Wormald criticizes Mary for distancing herself from her privy council, by remaining in her private apartments on Holyrood's second floor. However, Wormald's criticism overlooks Lynch's favourable assessment of Mary's attendance at privy council meetings. Wormald also incorrectly classifies Mary's state apartments as being her "private apartments".³³ The council chamber, where Mary and her privy council met, was located on the first floor at Holyrood. It formed part of Mary's state apartments which also comprised her ballroom in another wing of the palace, along with her public suite on Holyrood's second floor (outer chamber, inner chamber or bedchamber, cabinet and garderobe). It is thus important to recognize that these apartments, far from being private, apolitical spaces, in fact functioned as staging areas for political discourse, access to which allowed Mary to display political favour.

Significantly, Mary's senior household did not include privy councillors or immediate family members of councillors.³⁴ This position differed greatly from usual European practice and seemed a deliberate choice by Mary. At his morning *lever*, the Valois monarch was surrounded by his senior household. These were the individuals who also advised him on governmental matters during these *conseils*. For example, as well as holding senior household positions, Henri II's closest childhood friends became his chief political advisers and were thus present for his *conseils*. However, this was not the case for Mary's *conseils*. Critically, gender was not the cause of this difference. In fact, Elizabeth I chose several wives of privy councillors to serve in senior positions within her household. Similarly, Mary Tudor's household and privy council had such an overlap.³⁵ In the Tudor household this overlap may have been partly coincidence, but it appears that the Scottish queen deliberately avoided it.

Unlike other monarchs, Mary seemingly adopted a policy to not overlap membership of her senior household with her privy council (and their family members). Lynch considers it a practical solution that Mary's privy councillors were predominantly Protestant, whereas she chose Catholics for her senior household.³⁶ This differentiation, between her household and privy council (and their wives), has further significance. Usually it was the senior household members who would enjoy the closest access to the monarch. However, Mary singled out her "faythful counsale" and other privy council for royal favour, granting them such close access for these *conseils*. In doing so, she achieved a politico-religious balance in the spaces immediately surrounding the monarch: within the same sacrosanct rooms, councillors and household functionaries were designated distinct spaces.

Early in Mary's personal reign, her privy council was set up to operate on a rota system, with groups of councillors each serving for three-month terms annually.³⁷ This rota allowed these territorial magnates to also attend matters in their locales. In addition, the queen had her privy council travel with her during the frequent progresses and justice ayres around Scotland. Lynch highlights that Mary's own strong attendance at privy council meetings contrasted with that of James VI, apart from his final years in Scotland (before moving to London in 1603).³⁸ This is also in stark contrast to Elizabeth I's non-attendance of privy council meetings, as noted by Stephen Alford.³⁹

In addition to the "faythful counsale" (Lord James, Maitland and, occasionally, Argyll), others of Mary's privy council might be deemed as acting in the capacity of special advisers when she needed detailed advice on territorial matters.⁴⁰ Contemporary sources occasionally mentioned that other privy councillors were present in her bedchamber for these *conseils* and not exclusively her "faythful counsale".⁴¹ This gives some suggestion that there was no absolute demarcation between the "faythful counsale" and her other privy councillors (and others). Instead, as contemporary accounts show, a more informal offering of advice could also take place in Mary's bedchamber during these *conseils*. For instance, for the period of Maitland's long absence during his 1563 travels abroad, Julian Goodare notes that Mary sought counsel from Maitland's father Sir Richard Maitland (who later would also serve in her privy council) and also from Henry Sinclair, Bishop of Ross.⁴² Emphasizing her conciliar style of government, Loughlin praises "Mary's grasp of the central importance of the council" and "her clear enthusiasm for this particular method of government".⁴³

MARY'S PLANNING IN FRANCE

Mary gave much strategic thought to the creation of the conciliar space in which the ritual of counsel took place, and rich furnishing was a central backdrop. She had substantial financial provision through the Valois dowry drawn up shortly before her marriage. In the event that Francis II should pre-decease her, she would be entitled to furnishings befitting a queen of France.⁴⁴ A likely time for her selection of Valois dowry furnishings to be taken to Scotland to grace Stewart palaces would have been in late February 1561. Her last visit to Fontainebleau was at that time, and she could easily visit the palace's wardrobes to make her choices.⁴⁵ For all this, the extant records indicate not a haphazard furnishings selection but instead a careful, methodical approach by Mary or her senior household, in readiness for furnishing Holyrood. When the Valois dowry furnishings arrived at Holyrood, an unpacking inventory was taken in November 1561. Significantly, this inventory's furnishing entries included a great number of beds of estate and related furnishings,⁴⁶ all of which were power symbols unique to the monarch's bedchamber. Clearly she intended her bedchamber to be a setting for the offering and receiving of royal counsel.

Some of the categories listed on the November 1561 inventory can reveal the strategy underlying the pre-planning that Mary seems to have made in France, to ready her Holyrood performance space and also to provide for her personal reign's future furnishing requirements. For example, the November 1561 unpacking list indicates what could be considered a very well-stocked haberdashery shop, with dozens of yards of luxurious fabrics in various colours along with ornamentation such as costly fringes and lace ("passementerie") to create a magnificent decorative finish.⁴⁷ A study of administrative accounts indicates that the pre-planning in France quickly paid off. By October 1562, this "haberdashery shop" at the Holyrood wardrobes was already called upon to provide many of the components for the gold-embroidered black velvet bed of estate that her Valois-trained artisans would make in late 1562 for her Holyrood bedchamber.⁴⁸

To understand the sheer magnitude of all that Mary brought from France, one usefully can compare Mary's flotilla of sixteen ships with the number of Valois galleys on two occasions during James V's reign. James V returned to Scotland with his bride Madeleine, the eldest daughter of Francis I in May 1537. Tragically Queen Madeleine died six weeks later and, in early 1538, Francis I arranged James' marriage to Marie de Guise.

For each of those voyages from France, the bride also brought a sizable wedding trousseau including tapestries and beds of estate but, for both, only three ships were necessary. By contrast, almost all of Mary's additional freight was intended for her bedchamber as a performance space.

CREATING CONCILIAR SPACE AT HOLYROOD

Mary made substantial changes to Holyrood at the beginning of her personal reign, despite not carrying out any actual *ex-novo* building works to the palace that had been built by her father, James V. One of the most important changes was to the roles performed by the inner chamber at Holyrood's great tower where her state apartments were located.⁴⁹ This change enabled her to alter the role of the monarch's bedchamber so that it would also serve as her audience chamber. In most courts, this audience chamber role would be fulfilled in its traditional location which, at Stewart palaces, was the room immediately preceding the monarch's bedchamber.⁵⁰ Critically, as shown in Randolph's despatches to Cecil, Mary had her Holyrood bedchamber serve a further role, as a setting for her *conseils*.⁵¹ In this room she would meet with her chief advisers and take counsel. The use of "architecture as politics" had great relevance for interior architecture as well as for exterior architecture in this early modern period and, in particular, for the architectural planning and distribution of the rooms of royal state apartments.⁵² Accordingly, an understanding of the role and significance of the monarch's bedchamber is crucial, in order to evaluate the powerful effect of Mary having her Holyrood bedchamber serve as setting for such consultation. In the sixteenth century the ruler's bedchamber was deemed the inner sanctum within the palace, with the room carrying such exalted status whether the sovereign was an anointed monarch or the potentate of a rich and powerful Italian state.⁵³

This use of architecture as politics also involved considerations such as the position of specific rooms within the palace's sequence of rooms, for which the monarch's bedchamber carried great importance. In this early period, political significance attached to where a particular room was positioned within the palace and the degree of access thereto. Continuing through the reign of Francis II, the Valois monarch's bedchamber was situated fully within the palace's public zone, to which court members had access. Stewart palaces had a similar placement in the sixteenth century; in both cases, the bedchamber was the innermost room within the state apartment's public suite of rooms.⁵⁴

As shown by contemporary accounts, the ceremonial performance of the ritual of counsel took place in Mary's bedchamber and innermost sanctum.⁵⁵ In contrast, this would not be achieved, for example, at Tudor palaces where the monarch's bedchamber was located deep within the private zone of the palace.⁵⁶ In his May 1520 despatch to Cardinal Wolsey, the English ambassador Sir Richard Wingfield highlighted this difference, when writing about an invitation from Francis I to attend a courtly evening in his bedchamber at Fontainebleau.⁵⁷ Simon Thurley stresses the honour shown by the Valois king with such an invitation. In contrast, because of its location, access to the Tudor monarch's bedchamber was restricted to only the most senior figure within the monarch's household staff, the groom of the stole.⁵⁸ Thus, even chief courtiers and advisers to Henry VIII were distanced by several rooms from the monarch's inner sanctum.

Thurley mentions that the privy chamber was sometimes used for Henry VIII's audiences during the later years of his reign, as an alternative to the presence chamber.⁵⁹ At those times, Henry would thus combine the functions of audience chamber and the taking of counsel in his privy chamber. It was also in this room that he conducted his daily life, surrounded by those of his inner circle.⁶⁰ Thus, the several roles performed by Henry's privy chamber were not totally dissimilar to those that Mary had her Holyrood bedchamber serve. However, for female Tudor monarchs, spatiality was such that the privy chamber was populated just by females; thus the presence chamber would be the likely setting for their audiences and consultation.⁶¹ In his assessment of Mary Tudor's room usage and spatial distancing, John Murphy even states that "The private apartments of the queen were not and could not be the sort of place where men could freely associate with their sovereign".⁶² These spatiality differences arose because of the boundaries in a palace's public and private zones, further highlighting the workings of architecture as politics.

Thurley notes the considerable number of rooms that intervened between the presence chamber and the monarch's bedchamber at Tudor palaces. Monique Chatenet also points to the significance in the number of rooms, if any, that separated the presence chamber from monarch's bedchamber and related distancing aspects, further underscoring that access was measured by the number of rooms distancing the monarch's bedchamber.⁶³ A monarch honoured a courtier, ambassador or other visitor to the royal palace by the degree of access he granted, as highlighted by Sir Richard Wingfield's despatch about the honoured invitation to Francis I's bedchamber.⁶⁴ The importance of the degree of access granted

is also noted by Stephen Alford. Writing about counsel-giving to Elizabeth I by her privy councillors, he emphasizes that “For a counsellor distance from Elizabeth was a kind of state of non-existence ... For any counsellor access and audience were everything”.⁶⁵ By having her Holyrood bedchamber serve as setting for this ceremonial performance of the ritual of counsel, Mary bestowed the greatest honour on those in her governmental inner circle from whom she sought counsel.

The political use of space within a room was another means Mary employed to further intensify this honour of her advisers being allowed access in such close proximity, within the monarch’s most sacrosanct space at Holyrood. A powerful example of her application of this political use of space can be found in several contemporary sources which indicate that she adopted the Valois monarchs’ arrangement of furniture of estate for her Holyrood bedchamber.⁶⁶ That particular Valois arrangement and grouping of furniture of estate⁶⁷ facilitated the ceremonial that was an important component for performance of the ritual of counsel, taking place in this sacrosanct room.⁶⁸ Henri II’s architect Filibert Delorme set out these principles of Valois arrangement, concerning the specific placement within the monarch’s bedchamber of the bed and chair of estate and their special relationship with the fireplace.⁶⁹ Chatenet stresses the importance of the fireplace as a representation of monarchical authority, a principle applicable to state apartments across Europe since the medieval period.⁷⁰ Nicolas Le Roux highlights that royal ceremony played an essential role in the “mechanisms that upheld the monarchy” and, further, it became a vehicle to enable expression of various facets of royal authority.⁷¹ With its powerful massing of furniture of estate and its coupling with the fireplace, Delorme’s prescribed arrangement thus enabled Mary to achieve maximum impact for this room’s important ceremonial roles as audience chamber and setting for her *conseils*.

SETTING THE CEREMONIAL STAGE

Mary honoured those she received for special counsel, creating an appropriate setting for performance of the ritual of counsel.⁷² Her Holyrood bedchamber presented exceptional opportunities for the depiction of her power, sovereignty and authority that were unique to that room, with these power representations playing a central role in creating this ceremonial space. This room performed the important role of housing the monarch’s bed of estate, heightening the distinction of invitation into this sacrosanct

room. Hugh Murray Baillie underscores that, in this early modern period, the monarch's bed of estate equated to a throne.⁷³ Thurley also highlights the important ceremonial role of the monarch's bed of estate.⁷⁴ The presence of this bed of estate, with its representations of monarchy, was a central element at Holyrood in the performance of royal ceremonial and the ritual of counsel. In short, the spaces which she determined the political centre of her kingdom had to be suitably decorated for their purpose.

Even when serving as the monarch's audience chamber, the palace's presence chamber would contain only two pieces of furniture of estate.⁷⁵ In the case of Elizabeth I for example, the presence chamber also seems to have been the setting for her meetings with chief ministers and advisers⁷⁶ and contained only the chair of estate and buffet of estate. Mary's Holyrood audience chamber (bedchamber) had the full complement of the three furniture of estate pieces in place. Thus she could mass these important representations of power in the room that served as the monarch's innermost sanctum.

A study of the November unpacking inventories of Mary's Valois dowry furnishings indicates the great number of magnificent furnishings depicting monarchical power that she had brought from France to furnish her state apartments in Scotland.⁷⁷ As this November 1561 inventory reveals, the great number of beds that she selected from the Valois wardrobes to take to Scotland is some indication of the importance she attached to these beds of estate, in performing important ceremonial roles for her Holyrood bedchamber. In fact, Mary's beds were not the first examples of beds of estate at Stewart palaces to come from Valois wardrobes. Shortly after the marriage of James V and Francis I's eldest daughter, Madeleine in Paris on 1 January 1537, her father instructed her to select as many items of gold plate, crystal, beds of estate, tapestries and other furnishings from royal wardrobes as she desired, to grace her new home in Scotland. These Valois furnishings travelled with the royal party to Scotland, on board Francis' galleys in May 1537. Scottish chroniclers noted the magnificence and great value of the trousseau. A detailed study of inventories and other contemporary accounts shows that James V and his consort had, in total, four beds of estate.⁷⁸

James' four beds of estate provide a useful yardstick against which to evaluate Mary's considerable wardrobe holdings coming from France. The November 1561 inventory taken at Holyrood shows that she arrived with fourteen Valois beds of estate.⁷⁹ She was not returning to empty and unfurnished palaces in Scotland. That might otherwise go some way to

justify the requirement for such a great number of beds of estate, along with several dozen tapestry sets and other luxurious furnishings coming from France. Over the course of her personal reign, Mary's holdings of beds of estate would further increase each time she had her Valois-trained artisans create additional furniture of estate, such as the black velvet bed of estate with gold embroidery that was created in her Holyrood workrooms in autumn 1562.⁸⁰ As this comparison of inventories indicates, the four beds of estate needed by James V and his consort seemed an insufficient number for Mary's requirements. Critically, if Mary had intended another room to be setting for her *conseils* and audiences, there would have been far less importance for this great number of beds of estate.

Ceremonial ritual, including the ritual of counsel, demanded magnificence. In that context, beds of estate were important representations of magnificence, an important characteristic employed to signify the monarch's power during the sixteenth century. Furthermore, as the palace's inner sanctum, the ruler's bedchamber constituted the pinnacle in the hierarchy of furnishings and, also, was the apex of magnificence in this early modern period. Thurley underscores that luxurious textile furnishings and ornamentation were a central feature of this portrayal of magnificence.⁸¹ In his late fifteenth-century treatise, *The Governance of England*, Sir John Fortescue set out the principles necessary for good governance. One of his principles stated the importance for the monarch to buy "riche hangynges" for his palaces, including beds of estate and tapestries.⁸² Mary demonstrated her understanding of Fortescue's dicta in her deployment of the "riche hangynges".

To calculate the staggering value for the "riche hangynges" of Mary's many Valois beds, the cost for an earlier Stewart bed of estate offers useful comparison. James IV created a lavish bed of estate for Margaret Tudor at the time of their marriage at Holyrood in 1503.⁸³ All the hangings and furnishing components of this bed of estate were made entirely of costly cloth of gold. For this precious fabric, threads of gold were woven together to create decorative motifs.⁸⁴ Treasurer's Accounts show that the total cost for this bed of estate equated to almost one-third the total costs for building his new Holyrood Palace.⁸⁵ In fact Thurley emphasizes that the bed of estate was probably the most costly single furnishing piece in a royal palace.⁸⁶ As such, it must be considered a centrepiece in the political space, and a political statement in itself. Its great cost arose particularly because sizeable quantities of very costly fabric were required for all the components of such a bed of estate, including curtains.⁸⁷ The above numbers of Stewart

beds of estates and cost comparatives well illustrate the magnificence that Mary achieved for her bedchamber, in its role as hierarchical pinnacle for the magnificence of royal furnishings. As innermost sanctum, the exclusivity of her bedchamber was heightened by the distinction of its luxurious textile furnishings. It was these Valois dowry furnishings, chosen in France in early 1561, that enabled Mary to achieve the stage sets necessary for her performance of ceremonial in her Holyrood bedchamber.

Michael Lynch highlights that key elements of Mary's monarchical agenda included amity with England and stability of her kingdom through achievement of lasting peace.⁸⁸ A review of the descriptions provided in the November 1561 inventory of her Valois dowry furnishings reveals their close links to the monarchical agenda she set for her personal reign. As an example, the November 1561 inventory descriptions show that one of her Valois beds ("*lit*") was ornamented with "chifferis of A".⁸⁹ By a close scrutiny of the works accounts of her 1566 decorative programme, this bed can be further identified. During October 1566, the Holyrood wardrobes distributed violet damask for curtains, violet taffeta for a coverlet and silver "passmenterie" for ornamentation of the "*lift damytie*". In addition, cloth of silver was sent from the royal wardrobes to make bedpost covers for the "*liftz damytie*", which also received silver "passmenterie" for ornamentation. The bed's name denoted amity and, providing further description, the inventory entries noted that the bed was ornamented with motifs of the letter "A".⁹⁰

Mary expressed the wish to meet Elizabeth, even in initial discussions in Scotland with the English ambassador Thomas Randolph.⁹¹ Amity also featured regularly in Maitland's despatches to Cecil.⁹² Mary first expressed her great desire for this amity with England during her February 1561 audiences at Fontainebleau with Throckmorton.⁹³ Significantly, these meetings also coincided with the likely time of her selections from the royal wardrobes for those furnishings she would take to Scotland as part of her Valois dowry. By spring 1562, elaborate preparations were underway in England and Scotland for this milestone meeting between the two monarchs and their courts that was scheduled to take place in Nottingham during summer 1562.⁹⁴ Though the English called off this meeting at the last moment, it would have been similar to the 1520 Field of Cloth of Gold held near Calais, as an occasion for the gathering of the two courts following cessation of hostilities between France and England.⁹⁵ Just as the splendid beds of estate that Henry VIII and Francis I brought for this meeting, this *damytie* bed would be a clear choice to take to Nottingham for this landmark meeting between Mary and Elizabeth.

As the wardrobe accounts show, the *damytie* bed was a central part of Mary's decorative works programme in advance of the December 1566 baptism of Prince James. Elizabeth was godmother, sending the Earl of Bedford to attend the week-long baptism celebrations at Stirling Castle as her deputy.⁹⁶ Significantly, this particular time also coincided with plans for renewed efforts towards amity. Even in the period prior to Mary's arrival back in Scotland, Maitland had been recognized as the chief architect of this policy to achieve amity with England.⁹⁷ He and his fellow chief advisers would come to offer Mary counsel on achieving amity with England in the very room that served as setting for her *damytie* bed of estate. This *damytie* bed, brought from France, was clearly a powerful symbol of Mary's ceremonial and provides an outstanding example of her strategic use of furnishings to symbolize her monarchical agenda.

CONCLUSION

When returning from France, Mary quickly obtained her subjects' loyalty. Evaluating all that she achieved in the six years of her personal reign, John Guy praises Mary for "[being] able to hold together a fairly unstable kingdom" for as long as she did.⁹⁸ An important way she could achieve this was through the *conseils* with the "faythful counsale" in her bedchamber—a space that was neither private nor limited to household attendants, but rather refashioned as a conciliar space. Loughlin favourably assesses that Mary "further developed her ancestors' successful methods of conciliar government".⁹⁹ Though the privy council met downstairs in Holyrood's council chamber, it was the *conseils* taking place upstairs in her bedchamber with chief advisers that played a key role in this furthering of Stewart conciliar government. As demonstrated by this chapter's study of diplomatic despatches and royal inventories, Mary used her final months in France to devise strategies to facilitate the future governance of her kingdom. During February and March 1561 she set into motion the important preparations to create this Holyrood space for counsel. With these preparations in place, she then waited for her next step until April, when she began choosing her chief advisers. It was the honoured setting of Mary's Holyrood bedchamber that would foster this dialogue of counsel. In this room, former rebels would be turned into loyal Crown servants.

NOTES

1. Marie de Guise Lorraine, dowager queen consort and Mary's mother.
2. *Scottish Historical Review* (SHR), II (1905), 157–62.
3. For Valois usage of space for diplomacy, see Monique Chatenet, "The king's space: the etiquette of interview at the French court in the sixteenth century," in *The Politics of Space: European Courts: ca. 1500–1750*, eds. Marcello Fantoni, George Gorse and Malcolm Smuts (Rome, 2009), 193–208, especially at 198. For Tudor use of space, see Tracey Sowerby, "Material culture and the politics of space in diplomacy at the Tudor court," in *Beyond Scylla and Charybdis: European Courts and Court Residences outside Habsburg and Valois/Bourbon Territories, 1500–1700*, eds. Birgitta Johannsen and Konrad Ottenheim (Copenhagen, 2015), 47–55. For uses of space to project an image of power, see Jeroen Duindam, "Palace, city, dominions: the spatial dimension of Habsburg rule," in Fantoni, Gorse and Smuts (eds.), *The Politics of Space: European Courts ca. 1500–1750*, (Rome, 2009), 59–90, especially at 64.
4. For discussion of ritual and politics, see David I. Kertzer, *Ritual, Politics, and Power* (New Haven and London, 1984), 77–8, 84–7, 89–90, 101; Sean Wilentz, *Rights of Power* (Philadelphia, 1985). For discussion of ceremony and ritual at the Tudor court, see Sydney Anglo, *Spectacle, Pageantry and Early Tudor Policy*, (Oxford, 1969). For Valois ritual, see Monique Chatenet, "Henri III au Louvre. Distribution et mobilier du logis du roi en 1585," *Revue de l'art*, 169 (2010), 1–7. For ceremonial and the ritual of diplomacy, see Birgitta Johannsen and Konrad Ottenheim, "Introduction," in *Beyond Scylla and Charybdis: European Courts and Court Residences outside Habsburg and Valois/Bourbon Territories, 1500–1700*, eds. Birgitta Johannsen and Konrad Ottenheim (Copenhagen, 2015), 14–20.
5. For Throckmorton's despatches in this early period, see *Calendar of State Papers Foreign, III*, ed. Joseph Stevenson (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1865), 566, 573–6. Further see *CSP Foreign, III*, 423, 472–3.
6. *Calendar of State Papers Scotland (CSP Scot), I*, ed. J. Bain (Edinburgh: H. M. General Register House, 1898–1952), 518–19. Randolph would become England's first resident ambassador to Scotland at the commencement of Mary's personal reign.
7. Stephen Alford, *Early Elizabethan Polity: William Cecil and the British Succession Crisis, 1558–1569* (Cambridge, 1998), 97–8.
8. Sir James Melville of Halhill, *Memoirs of His Own Life* (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1827), 88–9.
9. For assessment of the quality of Mary's political tutelage under the Guises, see also Mark Loughlin, "Career of Maitland of Lethington c.1526–1573" (PhD Diss., University of Edinburgh, 1991), 100, n. 214.

10. John Guy, *My Heart Is My Own: The Life of Mary Queen of Scots* (London, 2004), 175.
11. Antonia Fraser, *Mary Queen of Scots* (London, 1994), 129.
12. *SHR*, II, 157–162. Among those coming to France was Argyll’s half-brother, who also carried a letter from Argyll to Mary, offering her his loyalty: Jane Dawson, *The Politics of Religion in the Age of Mary, Queen of Scots: The Earl of Argyll and the Struggle for Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2002), 114, n.4
13. For example, see *CSP Scot*, II, 57. Describing Mary’s chief advisers as “the triumvirate”, Jane Dawson also points out that, with his vast land-holdings and network of clan kinship, Argyll brought great territorial power to Mary’s group of special advisers; in contrast, neither of the queen’s other two choices had such territorial power and wealth: Dawson 2002, especially 114, 137.
14. *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland (RPC) First series 1545–1625*, I, eds. John H. Burton and David Masson (Edinburgh: H. M. General Register House, 1877–1898), 157–158.
15. Michael Lynch, “Introduction,” in *Mary Stewart: Queen in Three Kingdoms*, ed. Michael Lynch (Oxford 1988), 9–19; Michael Lynch, *Scotland: A New History* (London 1991), 210–18; Pamela Ritchie, *Mary of Guise in Scotland, 1548–1560: A Political Study* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2002), 126. The Privy Council Register does not survive from the period of Guise’s regency.
16. Jenny Wormald, *Mary Queen of Scots: A Study in Failure* (London, 1988), 114–20. Refer also to Loughlin, “Career of Maitland of Lethington,” 116.
17. For discussion of Mary’s privy council choices, refer also to Loughlin, “Career of Maitland of Lethington,” 115.
18. Roger Mason, “Beyond the Declaration of Arbroath: kingship, counsel and consent in late medieval and early modern Scotland,” in *Kings, Lords and Men in Scotland and Britain, 1300–1625: Essays in Honour of Jenny Wormald*, eds. Stephen Boardman and Julian Goodare, (Edinburgh, 2014), 265–82, especially 278; Julian Goodare, *The Government of Scotland, 1560–1625* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 87–9.
19. For example, Knox, *History of the Reformation*, II, 20.
20. Efforts to establish a privy council began in March 1543. Also see Goodare, *Government of Scotland*, 128–48.
21. Trevor Chalmers, “The King’s Council, Patronage and the Governance of Scotland, 1460–1513” (PhD Diss., University of Aberdeen, 1982), especially 87–103.
22. William Hepburn, “The Household of James IV, 1488–1513” (PhD Diss., University of Glasgow, 2013), 88–94, especially 91.
23. The second earl of Arran also held a French dukedom, that of Châtellherault.

24. William Hepburn sets out the heritable positions for James IV's reign, with many originating under earlier Stewart monarchs: Hepburn, "Household of James IV," 91–2. Many of these heritable offices dated from the fifteenth century and even earlier, thus highlighting the governmental role of Scotland's ancient nobility. The important role in government would diminish for some of these heritable offices during James VI's personal reign: Julian Goodare, "Scottish politics in the reign of James VI," in *The Reign of James VI*, eds. J. Goodare and M. Lynch (Edinburgh, 2008), 39.
25. Knox's assessment of Mary's privy council appointments further highlights the ancient nobility's importance: for example, Knox, *History of the Reformation*, II, 20.
26. Loughlin, "Career of Maitland of Lethington," 114–115.
27. Monique Chatenet, *La cour de France au XVIe siècle. Vie sociale et architecture* (Paris, 2002), 115, 344 n. 49; Robert Knecht, *French Renaissance Court* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008), 64–7.
28. For some of their various positions held, see Jean Solnon, *La cour de France* (Paris: Fayard, 1987), 28–32.
29. Chatenet, *La cour de France*, 113–15. "Lever" was the term to denote the morning's daily arising of the Valois monarch.
30. Knecht, *French Renaissance Court*, 64–5.
31. No extant sources indicate that Mary had any form of *lever* in Scotland.
32. Lynch, "Introduction," 9. Lynch notes, however, that Elizabeth I also frequently neglected sessions of her privy council.
33. Wormald, *Mary Queen of Scots*, 120–121; Lynch, "Introduction," 9.
34. Lynch, "Introduction," 9–10. The only exception was Margaret Fleming, granddaughter of James IV, who served as *Dame d'Honneur* (a title equating to the queen's most senior lady-in-waiting) and was married to the fourth Earl of Atholl, one of Mary's privy councillors. In January 1567, Maitland married Margaret's younger sister Mary Fleming. These two ladies were sisters of the hereditary Lord Chamberlain, the fifth Lord Fleming: see *Scots Peerage*, VII, ed. J. Balfour Paul (Edinburgh, 1904–1914), 541. By contrast, Lord Fleming was not a member of Mary's privy council (*RPC*, I, 157–58.) Had Mary's personal reign continued longer, this separation between household and privy council might have lessened.
35. For a detailed study of the households of Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I, see Charlotte Merton, "The Women Who Served Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth: Ladies, Gentlewomen and Maids of the Privy Chamber, 1553–1603" (Unpublished PhD Diss., University of Cambridge, 1991). For overlap in Mary Tudor's household and council, refer also to Appendix B: Mary I's Privy Councilors on November 17, 1558, in Alice Hunt and Anna Whitelock eds. *Tudor Queenship: The Reigns of Mary and Elizabeth* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 253–4. For overlap in Elizabeth

- I's household ("chamber") and council, refer also to Natalie Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 66–72.
36. Lynch, "Introduction", 9–10.
 37. *RPC*, I, 511–12.
 38. Lynch, "Introduction", 9.
 39. Stephen Alford, "William Cecil and the British Succession Crisis of the 1560s" (PhD Diss., University of St Andrews, 1997), 27.
 40. William Kirkcaldy of Grange was identified as a possible fourth counsellor for Mary in a letter of April 1561 written by Mary's half-brother, Lord James (earl of Moray), following his meeting with her in France: *SHR*, II (1905), 157–62. In fact, Kirkcaldy held various offices under Mary and later served in her privy council. However, for various meetings with Maitland, Moray and Argyll in Mary's bedchamber, Randolph's despatches did not mention Kirkcaldy as also being present. For discussion of other possible counsellors, also see Melville, *Memoirs*, 88–9.
 41. For example, Knox, *History of the Reformation*, II, 43.
 42. Julian Goodare, "The first Parliament of Mary, Queen of Scots," *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 36 (2005): 55–75, especially at 67–8.
 43. Loughlin, "Career of Maitland of Lethington," 115.
 44. *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland (APS)*, II, eds. T. Thomson and C. Innes (Edinburgh, 1814–1875), 511–14. For discussion of Mary's dowry, see Mark Greengrass, "Mary, Dowager Queen of France," in *Mary Stewart: Queen in Three Kingdoms*, ed. Michael Lynch (Oxford, 1988), 171–94, especially 172–4.
 45. *CSP Foreign*, III, 566, 573–7.
 46. These are set out in the November 1561 inventories: Joseph Robertson (ed.), *Inventaires de la Roynne Descosse douairière de France. Catalogue of the Jewels, Dresses, Furniture, Books and Paintings by Mary Queen of Scots; 1556–1569* (Bannatyne Club, 1863), 29–48.
 47. Robertson, *Inventaires*, 42–8.
 48. For example, *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland (TA)*, XI, ed. T. Dickson and J. Balfour Paul (Edinburgh: H. M. General Register House, 1977–1907), 203.
 49. For ease, the term "state apartments" is used here rather than the contemporary term "lodgings" ("*logis*"). Similarly, the term "bedchamber" is used here, rather than the contemporary term "chamber" ("*chambre*") to denote the monarch's ceremonial bedchamber.
 50. See also brief commentary on the planning of the chamber in John Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces: The Architecture of the Royal Residences during the Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Periods* (East Linton, 1999), 131–38.

51. This is further discussed in Alexandra Nancy Johnson, “Mary Stuart’s inner chamber, as an embodiment of power,” in *The Interior as an Embodiment of Power. The Image of the Prince and its Spatial Setting, 1400–1700*, eds. Krista de Jonge, Stephan Hoppe and Stefan Breitling (PALATIUM, forthcoming).
52. Jean Guillaume, “Avant propos,” in *Architecture et Vie Sociale. L’Organisation Intérieure des Grandes Demeures à La Fin du Moyen Age et à La Renaissance*, ed. Jean Guillaume (Paris, 1994), 7–10.
53. Sergio Bertelli assesses that “the ruler’s bedroom, the *cubiculum*, was the actual and figurative centre of the palace, where his authority was exercised through attendant officials, magistrates, courtiers, pages and soldiers; the degree of physical nearness to the Duke’s bedroom corresponded to their place in this court hierarchy”, Sergio Bertelli et al., *Italian Renaissance Courts* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1986), 14.
54. For example, Knecht, *French Renaissance Court*, 68.
55. For example, *CSP Scot*, II, 32; Knox, *History of the Reformation*, II, 43.
56. Simon Thurley, *The Royal Palaces of Tudor England: Architecture and Court Life, 1460–1547* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), 135–41.
57. *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII (LP)*, III, ed. J.S. Brewer et al. (London, 1862–1932), no. 835. Also see discussion in Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 140. In addition, Glenn Richardson highlights the benefits, addressing this privileged setting from the perspective of the individual invited by the Valois monarch: Glenn Richardson, “‘As presence did present them’: Personal gift-giving at the Field of Cloth of Gold”, in *Henry VIII and the Court: Art, Politics and Performance*, eds. T. Betteridge and S. Lipscomb (Farnham: Routledge, 2013), 47–64.
58. Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 137–8.
59. The privy chamber and its suite of rooms (the “outward chambers”) were situated between the public suite and the private bedchamber suite (or “secret chambers”). For discussion of the privy chamber, see further Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 135–43.
60. Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 138–9.
61. Elizabeth I occasionally used her bedchamber to see diplomats, as during the 1564 visit by Sir James Melville, Mary’s special envoy. Though granted access to the innermost area of the palace, this lengthy interview was conducted in strictest formality. In his *Memoirs*, Melville noted that Elizabeth did offer him a cushion upon which to kneel, for his interview lasting several hours: Melville, *Memoirs*, 124–5. Further see Sowerby, “Material Culture”, 49–51.
62. John Murphy, “The illusion of decline: the Privy Chamber, 1547–1558,” in *The English Court: From the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, ed. David

- Starkey (London, 1987), 140. For usage at Whitehall during the reigns of Mary and Elizabeth, see Simon Thurley, *Whitehall Palace: An Architectural History of the Royal Apartments, 1240–1698* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1999), 53–74.
63. Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 127–8 and 135–41, especially 138–139; Chatenet, *La cour de France*, 144–50. Further see Bertelli, *Italian Renaissance Courts*, 14.
 64. For access and spatiality at English palaces, see Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 136–9. For access and spatiality at Valois palaces, see Knecht, *French Renaissance Court*, 68. Chatenet provides a comparison of Tudor and Valois palace room distribution: Chatenet, *La cour de France*, 183–4.
 65. Stephen Alford, “Counsel and Compulsion in Early Elizabethan Politics.” Paper presented at The Politics of Counsel and Council in Britain, c.1400–1700, University of St. Andrews, 27 October 2012, 9. I am indebted to Professor Alford for a copy of his unpublished paper.
 66. Robertson, *Inventaires*, 148, 163.
 67. The bed, chair and buffet comprised this furniture of estate, with each denoting monarchical status. For furniture of estate at Tudor palaces, see Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 234–43. For furniture of estate at Valois palaces, see Chatenet, *La cour de France*, 144–50; Knecht, *French Renaissance Court*, 76–7.
 68. For the important ceremonial role played by furniture of estate at Valois palaces, see Chatenet 2009, 198. For chairs and cloths of estate and their ceremonial role at Tudor palaces, see Maria Hayward, “Symbols of majesty: cloths of estate at the court of Henry VIII,” *Furniture History*, 41 (2005): 1–11; “Seat furniture at the court of Henry VIII: a study of the evidence,” in *Upholstery Conservation: Principles and Practice*, ed. Gill, K. and Eastop, D.D.M. (London: Routledge, 2001), 115–32.
 69. Delorme’s dicta was subsequently presented in his 1567 treatise, quite possibly the first architectural treatise written outside of Italy: Philibert Delorme, *Premier Tome de l’Architecture (1567)*, ed. Jean Marie Pérouse de Montclos (Paris, 1988), Book IX, Chapter I, 260–1.
 70. Chatenet, “The King’s Space,” 198.
 71. Nicolas Le Roux, “Henri III and the rites of monarchy,” in *Europa Triumphans, I*, eds. J. R. Mulryne, Helen Watanabe-O’Kelly, Elizabeth Goldring and Sarah Knight (London, 2010), 116.
 72. Pursuing the political usage of interior space and architecture, Mary deployed her bedchamber’s furniture of state and its ceremonial placement to create a structure to facilitate the dialogue of counsel that would take place in Holyrood’s innermost sanctum. Another form of structure to facilitate counsel is presented in Chap. 9 of this volume, where Hannah Coates discusses the four concepts (*parrhesia*, *ethos*, *decorum* and *kairos*) to be used for the effective proffering of advice.

73. Hugh Murray Baillie, "Etiquette and the planning of state apartments in Baroque palaces," *Archeologia*, 101 (1967): 169–99, especially at 186–7.
74. Thurley 1999, 296.
75. These particular furniture of estate pieces are discussed in Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 234–43; Chatenet, *La cour de France*, 144–7.
76. Thurley, "The King's Space," 53–74.
77. Robertson, *Inventaires*, 28–40.
78. Thomas Thomson (ed.), *Collection of Inventories and Other Records of the Royal Wardrobe and Jewelhouse and of the Artillery and Munition in Some Royal Castles. MCCCC.LXXXVIII.-M.DC.VI* (Edinburgh, 1815), 45–6; John Lesley, *History of Scotland from the Death of King James I in the Year of 1436 to the Year 1561* (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1830), 152.
79. Robertson, *Inventaires*, 29–31.
80. For example, *TA*, XI, 203.
81. Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 11–23 and 234. For Valois palaces, see Chatenet, *La cour de France*, 148.
82. Sir John Fortescue, *The Governance of England: Otherwise Called the Difference between an Absolute and a Limited Monarchy*, ed. C. Plummer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885), 125.
83. Helen Matheson-Pollock's Chap. 4 in this volume provides discussion of Margaret Tudor, as part of a comparative study of counselling offered by Tudor princesses who were foreign queen consorts.
84. Henry Havard, *Dictionnaire de l'ameublement et de la decoration, depuis le XIIIe siècle jusqu'à nos jours. Ouvrage illustré de 256 planches ... et de 2500 gravures, II* (Paris: Maison Quantin, 1887–1890), 185–6.
85. *TA*, III, 213–214; Dunbar, *Scottish Royal Palaces*, 57.
86. Thurley, *Royal Palaces*, 234.
87. For example, Val Davies, *State Beds and Throne Canopies: Care and Conservation* (London: Archetype in Association with Historic Royal Palaces, 2003), 4.
88. For Mary's political agenda, see Lynch, "Introduction," 8–23.
89. Robertson, *Inventaires*, 30. For 'lit' (the French-equivalent of the word 'bed'), various contemporary spellings included "lift", "lict" and "liftz".
90. Robertson, *Inventaires*, 168, 172.
91. *CSP Scot*, I, 551.
92. For example, Loughlin, "Career of Maitland of Lethington," 156.
93. *CPS Foreign*, III, 573–6.
94. Some of the detailed arrangements are highlighted in Randolph's despatches, for example at *CSP Scot*, I, 618–21.
95. For this meeting between Francis I and Henry VIII, see Jocelyne Russell, *Field of Cloth of Gold: Men and Manners in 1520* (London, 1969).
96. Robertson, *Inventaires*, 168, 172; Michael Lynch, "Queen Mary's triumph: the baptismal celebrations in Stirling in December 1566," *SHR*, XXIV (1990), 1–21.

97. Loughlin, "Career of Maitland of Lethington," 153.
 98. John Guy, *My Heart is My Own*, 10.
 99. Loughlin, "Career of Maitland of Lethington," 152–3.

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The Moor's Counsel: Sir Francis Walsingham's Advice to Elizabeth I

Hannah Coates

On 30 March 1586, Bernadino de Mendoza, Spanish ambassador in Paris, wrote to Philip II of a recent incident at the English court. In response to a report that the Spanish king was preparing a “great naval force” which was perhaps intended for England, Elizabeth I “turned to Secretary Walsingham ... and said a few words to him ... after which she threw a slipper at Walsingham and hit him in the face”.¹ This incident and others like it have been regularly repeated by historians to exemplify Elizabeth's famous temper and in particular her stormy relationship with her principal secretary.² However, the type of relationship implied by these accounts does not explain how Elizabeth and Walsingham managed to work together for nearly twenty years despite having very different political outlooks and personalities.

Appointed one of Elizabeth's principal secretaries in 1573, Sir Francis Walsingham attended daily on the queen, acting as the point of contact between the monarch and the council. As a privy councillor, he offered Elizabeth advice on the thorniest issues of the day. In this capacity,

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Walsingham is known for his outspoken and often critical counsel.³ Historians have been baffled by Elizabeth's tolerance, and generally attribute it to her wisdom and forbearance. In Sir John Neale's words, "there was no greater tribute to the tolerance, sagacity, and masterful nature of Elizabeth than her choice of ministers such as Walsingham".⁴ In contrast, other historians have been scathing about Elizabeth's abilities, and laid the credit for her successes at the door of her long-suffering advisers, Lord Burghley and Walsingham.⁵

Neither of these approaches, however, really helps access the reality of counselling Elizabeth. The vast majority of Walsingham and Elizabeth's interactions cannot be directly recovered as, given his daily attendance, these were mainly verbal and thus have left few archival traces. Perhaps it is largely for this reason that historians' treatments of their relationship have relied on the colourful accounts of (usually Spanish) diplomatic observers. Historians have been less cautious about repeating such accounts than the eyewitnesses themselves, who acknowledged that there may have been a performative aspect to the queen's outbursts, as she attempted to demonstrate her antipathy to Walsingham's policy preferences.⁶ There evidently were disagreements over the general thrust of policy with Walsingham repeatedly lamenting Elizabeth's "indisposition to deale effectually", that is, her preference for a reactive, opportunistic policy as opposed to committing to a course of action and seeing it through to the end.⁷ There were also serious breaches around specific issues from time to time, such as over Walsingham's close contact with the Dutch in the mid-1570s. However, there is also substantial evidence of a more amicable relationship.

Walsingham's absences on diplomatic business or sick leave provide an opportunity to address this academic neglect of an important political relationship. The letters he sent to Elizabeth during these periods stood in for his physical presence, and as such he chose his words and arguments extremely carefully.⁸ Elizabeth's letters to Walsingham, of which fewer survive, were sometimes the product of collaborative practices of composition: some may have been dictated to a secretary, some written on her behalf by a secretary or adviser, and some written by the queen herself. The strategy Elizabeth used could convey subtle gradations of meaning to the recipient.⁹ It is important to remember also that the letters between Elizabeth and Walsingham, as with all epistolary exchanges, did not exist in isolation, instead this correspondence must be seen in context, as one component with which they constructed and maintained their relationship.¹⁰

This chapter will consider the ways in which Elizabeth and her secretary were able to navigate this most complex of relationships, with particular emphasis on the ways in which they did or did not adhere to aspects of contemporary expectations of counsel.

* * *

Elizabeth and her advisers had all benefitted from the early sixteenth-century humanist educational program advanced by writers like Erasmus and Sir Thomas Elyot.¹¹ As a result, they shared a substantial bank of knowledge and expectations, derived from a curriculum of texts composed by writers from the ancient world and contemporary thinkers writing in the same vein. Erasmus and other writers on the upbringing of princes emphasized that princes must be well-educated both morally and academically before they could be advised properly.¹² One of the central tenets for princes and their advisers was that rulers would and should take counsel, as monarchs could not be experts in all things and might not always rule virtuously.¹³ However, rulers were free to appoint their counsellors and were not obliged to accept the proffered advice.¹⁴

In the context of debates about the legitimacy of female rule, some writers used the expectation that a monarch would be counselled to allay men's fears. John Aylmer, for example, defending queens regnant against John Knox, stressed that the potential evils of female rule were limited in Elizabeth's case by "built-in safeguards for her natural deficiencies ... in the form of counsel".¹⁵ However, as Victoria Smith has argued, "Elizabethans did not react homogenously to the prospect of female monarchy". Smith argues convincingly that both Nicholas Throckmorton and Thomas Randolph, Elizabethan diplomats, responded pragmatically, accepting Elizabeth's importance in her own government without wishing to limit her role. Randolph and Throckmorton's conduct suggests that they saw themselves as counselling a monarch, not controlling a queen.¹⁶

Walsingham occasionally appeared to share some of the contemporary anxieties about female rule. In a document attributed to him, he remarked that "her *Majestie* beinge by sexe fearefull, cannot but be irresolute, Irresolucion beinge an ordinarie Companion to feare".¹⁷ On many occasions, Walsingham was exasperated by Elizabeth's irresolution, and her parsimony, which were seen as stereotypical feminine failings.¹⁸ He never again linked these so explicitly to her sex, however, and his concerns about Elizabeth's flaws did not prevent him from obeying her instructions or accepting her centrality to the political process.

Additionally, at least on some level, Walsingham saw Elizabeth as his intellectual equal, and their letters show that, whatever their differences on policy, they shared a common vocabulary of politics, drawn from their shared educational experiences. Walsingham sometimes used Latin sayings in a gesture to this common language. On 10 August 1581, trying to persuade Elizabeth to commit herself to financially support the Duke of Anjou's campaign in the Netherlands, he argued that if the expense was likely to be more than England could bear that would be a sound reason for refusal, "for *that* ultra posse, non est esse" (i.e. what is beyond possibility cannot exist).¹⁹ Latin tags also feature in Walsingham's correspondence with his male colleagues.²⁰

Elizabeth certainly did not accept that her authority could or should be limited by her male advisers, and made efforts to assert her independence and restore distance between them. Linda Shenk has demonstrated how, particularly through her university orations, Elizabeth sought to "eliminate the proximity between learned subject and learned prince". In these speeches to the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, Elizabeth "eradicated the shared right to power that civic humanism had created" and by 1592 she had "devised a language that collapsed the humanist paradigm of wise counsel into a posture of love and obedience".²¹ The ideological chasm identified by Patrick Collinson between a queen who felt thus and a group of councillors who felt that monarchy was a "public office" and that "as a public officer the monarch is accountable, certainly to God and perhaps to others" was a considerable source of friction.²²

However, these tensions could be navigated by shared knowledge of the expected forms for offering advice, especially a shared knowledge of rhetorical techniques: how to present advice and persuade an audience. Their tutors had taught Elizabeth and her advisers that true rhetoric should be moral, and tend to the good of the audience, and the speaker should be a good man.²³ Four interlocking and mutually-informing concepts were understood to be particularly important in proffering effective and wholesome advice: *parrhesia* (free/frank speech), *ethos* (the speaker's character), *decorum* (social and rhetorical appropriateness) and *kairos* (timing or opportunity).²⁴ Found in the works of classical writers, especially Aristotle, Isocrates, Cicero and Plutarch, these ideas were developed and adapted by sixteenth-century writers and rhetoricians including Elyot, Thomas Wilson and George Puttenham.²⁵ Importantly, it was up to the audience to judge the speaker's success at meeting these criteria.²⁶ When Walsingham advised Elizabeth, then, he had to choose his time correctly;

select and phrase his arguments with due regard to the matter, occasion and audience; and manipulate her perception of his character in order to persuade her that his advice was honourable and useful—in Cicero's terms *honestum* and *utile*.²⁷ Walsingham had certainly internalized many of these concepts. In a letter of advice to one of his nephews, Walsingham advised the young man to direct his conduct according to “the rule which Tully [Cicero] calls the rule of honesty, accounting no act as good that proceedeth not from that fountain”.²⁸

In practical terms, Elizabeth's humanist education gave her the tools to hear counsel intelligently, with an ear tuned for techniques and references, ready to engage critically on an intellectual and technical level with those advising her. Walsingham's education gave him the tools to deliver advice in accordance with the established conventions.²⁹

* * *

Elizabeth did not usually receive advice from her council in corporate fashion. Instead, Walsingham and each of his colleagues had an individual relationship with the queen based on her appreciation of their abilities and on personal affection. This concept of direct personal service was reinforced by the language of the oath that new privy councillors took on their appointment. Each swore to “beare trew fayth and allegiance” to the queen and to advise her “as maye best seme in your conscience” for her safety and the good of the commonwealth. No mention was made of the new councillor's responsibilities to his colleagues.³⁰ Ultimately, it was Elizabeth who had the power to set the parameters of counsel. However, she did not have matters entirely her own way. She presided over a group of active and capable advisers who, influenced by their own training, saw advising her as necessary even when their opinions were not solicited. It was necessary, therefore, for the queen to develop her own mechanisms for retaining control and asserting her primacy over her counsellors. These priorities probably had more to do with Elizabeth's character than her sex. All monarchs have idiosyncrasies in the ways in which they chose to rule and take counsel. Being female may have made it more likely that she would be side-lined and therefore provided a spur to her desire to introduce means for preserving her freedom of action and independence but was not necessarily the deciding factor. Like other elite women, Elizabeth could use her education to justify her intervention in (and in this case control over) traditionally male-dominated spaces and practices.³¹

A key aspect of Elizabeth's practice was the appointment of small groups of advisers to discuss particular issues, apart from the council as a whole. Natalie Mears has termed these "probouleutic groups".³² For Walsingham, by 1575 at least, this practice was an accepted part of counselling the queen. He assumed she would delegate specific councillors to debate, for example, what should happen to recently apprehended plotters.³³ Elizabeth thus exerted significant control over who would be presenting her with counsel.

Despite all of his efforts to counsel and persuade Elizabeth, Walsingham nonetheless acknowledged the practical truth that it was Elizabeth's "wyse iudgment" that would determine the course to be taken, though his experience of her abilities sometimes left him baffled by her decisions.³⁴ In 1578, the only explanation he could find for her deafness to the needs of the Dutch was: "[w]here the advice of faithfull counselors cannot prevaile with a prince of her *Majesties* iudgment, it is a signe that god hath closed up her *Majesties* hart from seeing & executing that *which* may be for her safety; *which* we that love her ... cannot but with griefe thinck of".³⁵

It seems that the pattern of their advisory relationship was for Walsingham to discuss the issue of the moment with the queen, sometimes arguing strongly against her preferred course of action, but ending with his acceptance of her decision and obedience to her wishes. In 1586, Walsingham conveyed to Sir Amias Paulet, gaoler of the queen of Scots, Elizabeth's order to seize Mary's money and dismiss her servants, apparently in the hope that these indignities would induce a final decline in his prisoner. Walsingham disapproved of these instructions, but told Paulet that as he was away from court owing to illness, "I cannot debate the matter with her *majesty* as I would". His advice to Paulet was that the queen's "pleasure being suche I do not see why you should nowe any longer forbear the putting of the same in execution, Yf afterwardes thin-conveniencēs happen ... her *majesty* can blame none but herself for yt".³⁶ Walsingham gave advice to Elizabeth because it was his duty as a loyal counsellor. However, once he had discharged this duty, if she refused his advice, the responsibility for the consequences was hers alone.

This throwing up of hands shows how Walsingham and his colleagues tried to navigate the tricky line between serving their monarch and serving God and the commonwealth. Their education and training endowed them with a strong sense of their responsibility to all three: they were answerable to God for their conduct of their offices as lesser magistrates but they were also bound by oath and by traditional ties of deference to obey their mon-

arch.³⁷ In Walsingham's words, rulers were those "whome god hathe appointed watchmen over that peece of his house", who had a duty to uphold the Protestant religion in their dominions and to work with princes of the same religion to further the Gospel.³⁸ He had his own responsibilities in this regard. For example in 1578, Walsingham justified his concern over recent events in Scotland on the grounds of "the good I wish to that state, and benefite of bothe the Realmes, and the dutie I owe to th'advancement of the Kingdome of God and maintynnce of the same within this Isle".³⁹ Walsingham here conflated the good of Protestantism and the good of England and asserted his duty to champion both.

What is clear from Walsingham's career is how central Elizabeth was to the processes of government, whether he liked it or not. In August 1575 Walsingham complained to Burghley that the councillors' letter to the English agent in Scotland had been "tourne in peeces" by Elizabeth because she thought it "tempred with too mych fleame [phlegm]". Walsingham had been commanded to "drawe an other of an other temper", a course of action of which he strongly disapproved: it was "so seasoned with choller, as I thinke we may take owre leave of the amytye of Scotelande". Despite this, he did in fact write it.⁴⁰ Walsingham's strong opposition to a particular course of action never prevented him from obeying his monarch. As he put it: "seinge I am borne a subiecte & not a prynce I am tyed to the condition of obedience & commaundmente".⁴¹ This was not qualified by that prince's gender. He certainly was not always happy about Elizabeth's instructions, but he did nevertheless obey in the end. He accepted that her decisions ultimately depended on God, but that he had a responsibility to encourage her to act in the best interests of the reformed religion, England and her own safety, using rhetorical techniques to urge this on her but not to force her to act.

* * *

A close analysis of even Walsingham's most critical letters reveals that he self-consciously constructed his approaches to Elizabeth, being careful to ensure that these complied with contemporary views of a counsellor's role, his rhetorical training and Elizabeth's preferences. Even his famous frankness was a rhetorical choice. A rhetor's *ethos* or self-presentation could play an important role in persuading their audience. Following Cicero, Thomas Wilson, author of the *Arte of Rhetorique* (1560), saw that "style serves as the foundation for ethical proof as it both embodies and develops the

[adviser/speaker's] character".⁴² In 1575 Walsingham referred self-deprecatingly to his style of advising Elizabeth, but he hoped that she, "seeynge the grownd of this my zeale will most graciously incline to pardon my rude & plaine (thoughe dutifull) maner of writynge".⁴³ He self-consciously constructed the persona of an honest "dutifull" adviser through his style.

Frankness was key to Walsingham's self-presentation and almost certainly his self-perception: he saw himself and tried to make Elizabeth see him as an honest, impartial, wise and discreet adviser who had the interests of his country and queen at heart. Accordingly, Walsingham consistently identified his advice with the opinions of "men of iudgement" and those who put her interests first, as opposed to those who, transported with partiality, most certainly did not.⁴⁴ In 1578 he lamented Elizabeth's unwillingness to assist the Dutch with the words: "By whose advice her *Majestie* is directed to deale so hardly with those of this country ... I knowe not: but sure I am, that the *alienation* of these peoples hartes from her ... will breede so great *perill* to her highness self, and so great mischief to the whole Realme ... as she will curse them that were the aucthors of the advice, whom she shall *perceave* that they had more regard to som *particuler* proffit ... then to her highnes saufties as in true course of duty they are bound".⁴⁵

Even early on in his career Walsingham did not shy away from giving his opinion with relatively little sugar-coating. In one letter of March 1575 in which he urged her to secure Scotland's friendship he bluntly told Elizabeth that if she ignored the advice of her best counsellors and things went badly "the burden of the error wilbe only cast on *your* *majestie*". He even went so far as to suggest that her failure in this regard might "breede an alienation" in her subjects "in that you laye them open to so many manifest perils".⁴⁶

There was much that was true in Walsingham's self-presentation. He did believe that his advice was the most beneficial for Elizabeth and England. The problem was that Elizabeth did not always agree. Walsingham usually conflated the interests of England and Elizabeth with the interests of international Protestantism, in contrast to Elizabeth's notorious reluctance to play the role of Deborah. Sometimes this led the queen to suspect that his affinity with his coreligionists abroad led him away from his duty to her. If Mendoza is to be believed, in 1579 Elizabeth told Walsingham "to begone and that the only thing he was good for was a protector of heretics".⁴⁷ It was important, therefore, that Walsingham portray himself as dispassionate,

as “passion” was a word with highly negative connotations. As opposed to sober and considered counsel, passion was emotional, impulsive and selfish. One of Walsingham’s most obvious characteristics was his emotional, as well as ideological, commitment to his cause. He acknowledged that he was “choleric”, or passionate, but this was a trait that he regarded with suspicion in others, as is apparent from his scathing references to those “carried away with passion”.⁴⁸ How did he reconcile these competing forces?

That his fears for the interconnected fates of Protestantism, England and Elizabeth were genuine, rather than merely rhetorical positions designed to scare the queen into agreeing with his preferred policy is apparent from the words he used to describe his reactions to the vicissitudes of Elizabethan politics. In 1580, in the space of one letter Walsingham used the word “grief” to describe his feelings about both the state of Anglo-Scottish relations and the death of his young daughter.⁴⁹ In some ways, the fact that he took political setbacks so much to heart may have made his plain counsel more acceptable to Elizabeth. When he could convince her that his criticism or lecturing was occasioned by genuine concern for her safety and her service Elizabeth could tolerate it, even if she disagreed with him: his *ethos* as a concerned counsellor justified his *parrhesia*. One aspect of Ciceronian *decorum* involved being true to yourself: one’s internal disposition must match one’s external expressions.⁵⁰ Therefore, Walsingham could use his “choleric” character to justify his impassioned advice, which was also justified by the dangers he saw in England’s political situation.

Walsingham’s “frank” persona explains the relatively plain style of his letters: his plainness implicitly served as an assertion of his good faith and honesty and the quality of his advice. Thus a decision not to use heavily patterned language or rhetorical flourishes was intended, paradoxically, to have a persuasive effect.

Walsingham’s plainness may also have been intended to evoke the ideal of the “familiar letter”, an epistolary genre beloved of humanists, and used by them to construct and express their friendship.⁵¹ In a familiar letter “plain writing equals plain emotion, plain truth”, and was therefore often characterized by a “‘conversational’ tone, intimate language, and emotional expression”, because plainness was supposed to be best among friends.⁵²

Walsingham recognized that the timing and content of approaches to the queen were vital in determining their success: a keen awareness of opportunity or *kairos* could be the difference between success and failure, and approaches had to be governed by what was appropriate (*decorum*) between a queen and her adviser—something Elizabeth had the power to decide.

Walsingham often provided detailed advice to others about how to approach Elizabeth on matters of both patronage and politics, showing his sensitivity to these issues. In a letter to William Davison concerning Davison's suit for a fee farm, Walsingham told him that because Elizabeth was "presently so disquieted with ... theis affaires of Scotland I could therefore fynd no apt tyme to move hir yet therein".⁵³ Walsingham therefore advised him to write directly to Elizabeth explaining just how necessitous his situation was, "Whervppon I will take occasion to deale with her earnestly againe" now that Davison had given him "ground to worke vppon".⁵⁴

Similarly, in 1586 to overcome Elizabeth's reluctance to pay James VI a pension, Walsingham urged the English agent in Scotland, Thomas Randolph, to "caule often & earnestly vppon vs to hasten the sending ... of the promised pencion". This was one of Sir Francis's techniques for "managing" Elizabeth; asking other royal servants to write to her or the council urging the preferred course of action. He justified this to Randolph on the grounds that "we do no more here ... then we are vrged vnto by necessity".⁵⁵

Previously, in 1581, in response to what he considered an over-optimistic assessment of the loyalty of people of the north of England from the Earl of Huntingdon, Walsingham wrote that though he was glad of Huntingdon's view, he feared that despite their "good show of liking of the present state" they "would be found very dangerous and doubtful in obedience" if given the opportunity, and "therefore I wish her Majesty still to doubt the worst, and the worst accordingly to be provided for".⁵⁶ Walsingham made full use of the potential of the secretaryship for controlling the flow of information to Elizabeth in order to paint the grimmest possible picture of her situation in the hope that this would persuade her to act in earnest. Of course, the fact that Walsingham worked so hard to manage the information that reached Elizabeth confirms her centrality in the political process and his acceptance of this in practice.

Elizabeth sometimes suspected that Walsingham was not entirely honest with her, as Walsingham himself realized. He admitted that sometimes she "dothe suspect that I alleadge reasons and suggestions not altogether agreeable with truthe".⁵⁷ When Elizabeth's suspicions were aroused in this way, she could prevent Walsingham from succeeding in his persuasive efforts, denying their validity when his behaviour did not match his claim to frankness (*parrhesia*), as we shall see.

As well as paying attention to the presentation of his advice, Walsingham also tailored its content to his audience. One of the striking aspects of Walsingham's written advice to Elizabeth is his habitual omission of argu-

ments based on the interests of international Protestantism, despite his claims to frankness. In several letters of advice to Elizabeth in 1575 in which he urged her to ally herself with the Scots he made no mention of the countries' shared religious outlook despite the fact that Walsingham felt the emotional and ideological pull of this himself.⁵⁸ Knowing such arguments would cut no ice with Elizabeth, he instead focused on the practical dangers facing her. France and Spain were against her and willing to intervene in Scotland to harm her, so securing the northern border was supremely necessary.⁵⁹ This was part of Walsingham's rhetorical training, to select appropriate arguments for his audience, just as much as Elizabeth used her own training to discern the merits and flaws of the various pieces of advice she received.

Sometimes, in particularly delicate situations, Walsingham declined to proffer advice to Elizabeth at all. In 1578 he told Sir Christopher Hatton that "yf I stooede (as I heere I doo not) in her majesties good grace ... I would then discharge my dewtie, playnly vnto her" by urging her to seize the opportunity for amity with Scotland offered by the contemporaneous Scottish embassy to her court. However, he added that "my state standinge as it doth, havinge no hope to doo good, I thincke it wisdome to forbear to offend".⁶⁰ This shows the importance of Elizabeth's consent to being counselled, and Walsingham's yielding to this practical consideration.

A close personal bond was also an important component in their relationship, reinforcing the mutual understanding between them. Princes were expected to "listen affably" to advice proffered in the "spirit of good counsel" which was "friendship".⁶¹ Plutarch has been identified as especially influential, joining *parrhesia* and *kairos* into the view that frank speech from a true friend was justified by its timing and that friend's motivation.⁶² Walsingham was evidently an admirer of Plutarch. He enjoined his nephew, for instance, "read you the lives of Plutarch and join thereto all his philosophy."⁶³ Walsingham's strong personal relationship with Elizabeth provided a firm foundation for criticisms and disagreements. After his appointment as principal secretary, Walsingham was soon recognized as one of the most influential men at court.⁶⁴ He soon overtook the senior secretary, Sir Thomas Smith, and Smith's replacement, Dr. Thomas Wilson, never attained the same level of influence, despite his rhetorical expertise.⁶⁵ Despite their abilities, neither of these men were personally close to the queen.

When he criticized Elizabeth in September 1581, for example, Sir Francis could trade on his intimacy with her to remove the sting. He began this letter with a reference to the "Laws of *Ethiopia* [*sic*], my native soil".⁶⁶ This referred to the nickname of "Moor" or "Ethiopian" which Elizabeth

had bestowed upon him. Neale described those lucky enough to receive one of these as Elizabeth's "close friends".⁶⁷ Indeed, a list of these men bears out their close political and personal ties to the queen. In particular, Lord Burghley was Elizabeth's "Spirit" and the earl of Leicester her "Eyes". When Walsingham acquired his nickname it was a sure sign that he was included in Elizabeth's inner circle. Traditionally, historians have explained this in terms of Walsingham's dark colouring, with Neale calling him "dark-featured".⁶⁸

This explanation is not entirely satisfactory. In the context of the fifteenth-century *reconquista* and the ongoing conflict between Spain and the Ottomans in the Mediterranean, it seems a wry nod to Walsingham's Hispanophobia. Perhaps more importantly, Moors could not disguise their difference or alter it. In *Titus Andronicus*, Aaron boasts that blackness "scorns to bear another hue". The conceit was reinforced in Scripture: "The blacke More ... [cannot] change his skin [any more than] the leopard his spots".⁶⁹ Elizabeth herself played on this quotation to acknowledge Walsingham's honesty and integrity. As early as 1578, Leicester wrote to Walsingham that she had "expressed very great favour with many favourable words towards you; and ... she willed me to say thus to you, that, [a]s she doth know her Moor cannot change his colour, no more shall it be found that she will alter her old wont, which is, always to hold both ears and eyes open for her good servants ...".⁷⁰ "Moor" encapsulates both Walsingham's political position, and something of his relationship with Elizabeth: it could be light-hearted and apparently affectionate.

Walsingham's privileged relationship with the queen was also demonstrated through his participation (with some success) in the practice of presenting extravagant and carefully chosen New Year gifts.⁷¹ She also bestowed the expensive honour of five royal visits upon Walsingham over the course of his career.⁷² The queen felt no qualms about snubbing the houses of those of whom she was not fond, so Elizabeth's visits to Walsingham were concrete indicators of her favour.⁷³

This favour was predicated upon her appreciation of Walsingham's abilities and the fact that she could trust him to act in her best interests. At the outset of his career, as resident ambassador in Paris, Walsingham had impressed Elizabeth with his "wisdom & discretion". So much so that Elizabeth was reluctant to send his replacement, who was "but a symple man & she liketh not that he should deale" in the ongoing negotiations for her marriage.⁷⁴ In normal circumstances, therefore, Walsingham's personal bond with Elizabeth, his experience

and capabilities, and his sensitivity to the norms of counsel and his queen's preferences prevailed. These techniques helped to mitigate sometimes unpalatable advice and navigate the gulf between Elizabeth and Walsingham's conceptions of counsel, allowing them to arrive at a *modus vivendi*. Similar techniques also helped to reinstate normal relations after significant breaches caused by deviations from the norms of counsel.

* * *

Serious clashes occurred periodically in Walsingham's relationship with Elizabeth. The two issues around which many of their difficulties revolved were the questions of whether England should lend assistance, covert or overt, to the Dutch rebels, and whether Elizabeth's projected marriage to the Duke of Anjou was a viable option. Each of these issues led to Walsingham journeying abroad to negotiate directly with the regimes involved which, fortunately for historians, resulted in a correspondence with his colleagues and queen back in England. By examining these incidents, we can shed light on the causes of these breaches and their solutions, which in turn opens a window onto the nature of Elizabeth's relationship with her principal secretary.

In his capacity as principal secretary, Walsingham often acted as an intermediary between Elizabeth and the representatives of foreign rulers. In some cases, he even corresponded with these rulers directly. Sometimes, his own conception of what was necessary for England and Elizabeth came into conflict with Elizabeth's expectations of her advisers. It was one thing to advise a client on how to obtain their fee farm and another to advise a foreign ruler on how to handle Elizabeth. It was this that drew the queen's ire in 1576, in the context of Walsingham's relationship with the Prince of Orange.

Anglo-Dutch relations were particularly fraught at the time, as a result of Orange's seizure of the ships belonging to the Merchant Adventurers in order to extort a loan to fund his anti-Spanish campaigning. Walsingham's whole position on the Dutch question aroused Elizabeth's suspicion and irritation, and she believed that Walsingham was at least partly to blame for this inflammatory act.⁷⁵ She imparted her suspicions to Burghley who did his best to alleviate them. Despite Burghley's involvement, the key factor in resolving this crisis of confidence was a face-to-face meeting between Walsingham and the queen. The former described to Burghley how he had had "longe tavlke" with Elizabeth about the issue and had found her "verry well cavlmed ... and wyllyng ynowghe to heare what I

could say". To Burghley, and presumably to Elizabeth in their conversation, Walsingham protested his innocence and that "as I never gave the advyce [to seize the ships], so dyd I never allowe of the fact".⁷⁶

Walsingham actually opposed the Dutch action, mainly because it would alienate the queen and other potential supporters of their cause in England.⁷⁷ However, Walsingham *was* providing detailed advice to Orange on other matters through the prince's advisers.⁷⁸ Hence a long letter to Monsieur de Villiers, one of Orange's semi-official agents in his relations with England. Through Villiers, Walsingham advised Orange on how to assuage Elizabeth's wrath. The prince, Walsingham suggested, should write to Burghley, Leicester and other key figures bemoaning Elizabeth's "evil opinion" of him and promising to do all in his power to recover her favour. He should ask these disparate figures to intercede with the queen on his behalf, or else, devoid of her favour, "he must either be enforced to abandon the cause by retiring into Germany, or to reconcile himself with Spain upon any conditions, or to yield those countries absolutely into the French King's hands".⁷⁹ Walsingham astutely calculated that Elizabeth's fear of French dominance in the Low Countries might induce her to mitigate her displeasure with Orange, when presented by these, her loyal advisers. In years to come, he would continue to stress the menace of a French-controlled Netherlands to persuade Elizabeth to support the rebels herself.⁸⁰ Here, again, Walsingham selected arguments to suit the audience, though in this case Elizabeth denied the appropriateness of this.

Elizabeth's annoyance was understandable. Walsingham was, after all, supposed to be *her* secretary and not pursue his own agenda. As Conyers Read noted, though "it can hardly be said that Walsingham was guilty of treachery to the Queen in writing such a letter", it was true that "his sympathies with the cause of the Dutch Protestants were leading him far away from his duties as the royal amanuensis".⁸¹ She seems, however, to have been mollified by his assurance that he was not involved in the wilder excesses of the Dutch cause. Walsingham saw the Protestant, anti-Spanish Orange as England's natural ally against their common enemy, Philip II. For Walsingham, therefore, his actions were an extension of his duty to preserve his own prince and country, but to Elizabeth Walsingham's behaviour did not match his claims about his *ethos* as a loyal servant. The breach was mended, however, by a frank exchange between queen and adviser, as we have seen. In fact, in 1577, Walsingham was knighted by Elizabeth, a public statement of her confidence in him, although his enthusiasm for the Dutch cause drew him into trouble again the following year.⁸²

The occasion this time was his joint embassy to the Netherlands with Lord Cobham in 1578. Whether it was not writing in enough detail about their negotiations, or not meeting Anjou (in his guise as protector of the Dutch) quickly enough, the envoys felt they could do nothing right. Elizabeth was particularly irate when Cobham and Walsingham raised a loan of £5000 for the Dutch on their own private bonds.⁸³ Walsingham was driven into a deep despair by her unwillingness to grasp the offered opportunity to provide for her security and by her refusal to accept his advice on the matter. He complained to Burghley that the “persons *that* wysshe best and the cavyes *that* woorke best are the most myslyked”.⁸⁴ He hoped, however, that Elizabeth would change her mind when he and Cobham had been able to explain their views to her in person.⁸⁵

Elizabeth was angry that her ambassadors had exceeded their remit, offering concrete financial support to the Dutch, at a time when she was very reluctant to do such a thing herself. Perhaps in particular she was angry with Walsingham, the more experienced diplomat, her trusted adviser, for his disobedience, his apparent putting of Dutch interests before hers. Walsingham was frustrated with her prevarication, and upset by her denunciations of her ambassadors in their absence.⁸⁶ As their queen, she was supposed to uphold their “credit”, not threaten to hang them on their return.⁸⁷ Additionally, she would not accept their assessment of the necessity of aiding the Dutch, a cause close to his heart and, in his mind, essential to the safety of Protestantism, England and herself. However, she remained willing to comfort and listen to her envoys, especially Walsingham.

A long letter of instructions on 8 August from Elizabeth acknowledged that “although yow may conceave that we have had misliking of some parts of *yowr* proceedings ... and therwith both *the* L[ord] Cobham and yow maybe in *yowr* mindes somewhat greeved; yet considering we are well assured of bothe *yowr* good willes and faithfull meanings in all *yowr* actions, we could not that yow shuld dismaye *yowr* selues ...”. She reassured Walsingham in particular that she would hear him out: “And yow Walsingham shall at your retorne know what we have misliked in *yowr* actions at *which* tyme we will not refuse like a good Mastress to heare *yowr* aunswere with *owr* accustomed favor”.⁸⁸ This document, a draft mostly in Burghley’s hand, maintains a balance between formality and informality. It employed a formal greeting at the outset; it used the royal “we” rather than in her less formal letters where Elizabeth used “I”; and it is primarily concerned with instructions on how to proceed. However, it is also concerned with the fears and complaints of her ambassadors. It therefore conveys both her displeasure and her willingness to mend the breach.⁸⁹

One of the key mechanisms that enabled Elizabeth and her principal secretary to work together so successfully was the queen's willingness to listen not only to his counsel but to his justifications of his behaviour. On these two occasions in the 1570s when Walsingham allowed his sympathies for the Dutch rebels to run away with him Elizabeth made time to talk out their differences.

The year following his embassy to the Low Countries, Walsingham attracted Elizabeth's ire for his opposition to her projected marriage to the heir to the French crown, the Duke of Anjou. Walsingham's own correspondence indicates that he was in deep disgrace in late 1579, and, though the causes of his absence from court are not entirely clear, it is likely that it was related to Elizabeth's suspicion that he had had a hand in John Stubbs' pamphlet opposing the match.⁹⁰ After the marriage negotiations fell through, Elizabeth sent Walsingham to Paris to negotiate an Anglo-French league instead, and several letters written during this embassy exemplify both Walsingham's style of counsel and the ways in which he was able to escape censure.

Walsingham had grown intensely frustrated with Elizabeth's procrastination and reluctance to commit herself to either the league or the marriage. Anglo-French amity was particularly important at this time, when a joint military venture to break Spanish power in the Netherlands was under discussion. In turn, Elizabeth had been annoyed with her secretary's behaviour, especially towards Anjou himself. This had been at least partly mitigated by an earlier exchange of letters, which had seen Elizabeth inform Walsingham that her "mislike conceived of my dealinge *with the duke* is in part qualified" and lay "open vnto me *your* disposition touching *the* charge committed vnto me".⁹¹

Walsingham responded by promising to use this latter favour "as a lodestarre *the* better to direct my course".⁹² This metaphor perfectly encapsulates Walsingham's attitude to Elizabeth's wishes: they were a lodestar, not a map: he would use them as his guiding principles while taking whatever means presented themselves to achieve his instructions. He also defended his actions, asserting that he had never "swarued" from the purpose of his embassy. Given this, he hoped that Elizabeth, in the "goodnes of *your* owne princely nature, and *the* vprightnes in *your* owne princely iudgment" would "rest satisfied".⁹³ Despite his criticisms of her conduct of the negotiations, Walsingham ended this letter with a prayer that God would ensure all turned out "to *your* highnes particuler contentment & *the* comfort of *your* best affected subiectes".⁹⁴ This letter shows Walsingham's obedience

to the queen's wishes and, with a judicious compliment, his dependence on her willingness to see the best in his actions, as she usually was.

Despite clearing the air in this way Walsingham remained deeply exasperated by Elizabeth's conduct. On 12 September he sent a long letter full of criticism of his queen, presented in his usual plain style. Walsingham accused Elizabeth of maintaining a "sparing and improvident course".⁹⁵ He piled error upon error into a damning indictment of Elizabeth's conduct: her unwillingness to spend had "lost Scotland" and was risking her hold on England, prevented her from concluding any meaningful foreign alliance, and was an invitation for the Queen of Scots to alienate her impecunious gaoler's loyalty. Walsingham presented himself as a loyal counselor reluctantly delivering hard truths, the central element of his *ethos*, playing on his nickname to assert that if she continued her course "no one that serveth in place of a Councillor, that either weigheth his own credit, or carrieth that sound affection to your Majestie as he ought to do, that would not wish himself in the farthest part of Ethiopia ...".⁹⁶

Elizabeth defended herself robustly against Walsingham's reproach that she was keeping him and his colleagues in the dark, while relying on other agents. She demanded, "[c]an you wittingly do me so much wrong as to suppose I am readier to make strangers acquainted with my mind and let you run another course?" She also complained of what she considered the unreasonable behaviour of the French: "it is too much that all our charge, care and expense is so far neglected, and we are said but to beguile". However, she added that as his mission now seemed "vain", Walsingham could request to return home, "which I wish not least to see".⁹⁷ Even at this moment of tension between them, Elizabeth still wanted her secretary back at court—and she used the more informal and intimate "I" to explain this.

Walsingham was careful to justify his counsel to Elizabeth in terms of their personal relationship and his concern for her and England. Walsingham asked Elizabeth that "if any thing shall escape my pen, that may breed offence" she would "ascribe it love, which can never bring forth evil effects, though sometimes it may be subject to sharp censures".⁹⁸ He alluded to the integrity of his motivation: "if either ambition or riches were the end of my strife, my grief [at her displeasure] would be the less", and often emphasized his duty to Elizabeth, apologizing for having "spoken in the heat of duty".⁹⁹ In, for example, claiming that the queen's actions had put her "in peril of the loss of England", Walsingham deployed discourses of necessity in the face of the dangers facing his queen and country in order to both excuse his frankness and create a sense of urgency

which would induce Elizabeth to act.¹⁰⁰ The notion of *kairos* also had connotations of urgency: now was the moment not only to advise but also to act.¹⁰¹ Presenting Elizabeth's situation as critical gave Walsingham the opportunity to advise her, and also justified his frankness and "heat" or passion. Model orators like Isocrates and Demosthenes justified their frank speech in a similar manner, emphasizing the good of the state and their own disinterested motives.¹⁰²

Occasionally their shared education and conception of the monarch-counsellor relationship could be undermined by Elizabeth's subversion of expectations. The importance of Elizabeth's appreciating Walsingham, in public and in private, is shown by a letter of 1581 in which he expressed to Elizabeth "... how infinitely I think my self bound unto you for ... your comfortable Postscript in the Earl of Leicesters [*sic*] Letters, other your most gracious and favourable speeches given out publiquely since my departure, of the good opinion it pleaseth your most excellent Majestie to hold of your poor and unprofitable servant ...".¹⁰³

A perceived lack of appreciation caused Walsingham to leave court in December 1586, telling Burghley that Elizabeth's "vnkynd dealyng towards me hathe so wounded me as I could take no comfort to staye there".¹⁰⁴ He did not return until the following February. The cause of Walsingham's withdrawal was a deep-seated sense of personal and political grievance with Elizabeth. Not only had she refused him adequate reward for the "infynyt toyle and dyscomforte" he had experienced as secretary, but he was also profoundly frustrated by her prevarication over the fate of Mary Stuart.¹⁰⁵ As his monarch, it was her duty to reward his service and ensure it could continue, and she was ignoring his dutiful advice. This was also a time of significant personal and financial stress for Walsingham: his son-in-law, Sir Philip Sidney, had recently died, leaving Walsingham to honour his debts.¹⁰⁶ Elizabeth's unsympathetic response to her secretary's financial plight, personal grief and political argument undermined the pillars that supported their relationship: her willingness to listen to his advice and their personal intimacy.

Walsingham was most successful when his rhetoric and actions aligned, when his claims to be acting in Elizabeth's best interests were accepted by the queen herself. Burghley acknowledged the importance of this when he wrote: "we all must dutifully beare *wit* hir ... offence ... not despayryng, but how so ever she mislyketh matters at *on* tyme, yet at an other tyme, she will alter hir sharpnes, specially whan she is *perswaded*, *that* we all meane truly for hir and hir suerty, though she *sometymes* will not so understand".¹⁰⁷

When she felt that he did not have her service at heart, she was less willing to accept his advice or even his presence at court. However, these moments of doubt and suspicion were usually alleviated by “long talk”.

* * *

When Walsingham adhered to the rules of counsel he seems largely to have escaped censure. His capacity to present advice and even swingeing criticism in a form acceptable to Elizabeth was dependent on his sensitivity to her requirements and views. Walsingham is seen as frank by historians, which demonstrates the strength of his *ethos* or self-presentation. Elizabeth, however, understood Walsingham's assertions of honesty and impartiality as a rhetorical device, designed to improve the efficacy of his advice. This meant that she could dispute his right to *parrhesia*, or frank/free speech, and the advice proffered through it. It was her resentment of Walsingham's attempted manipulation that caused disagreements, not Walsingham's “frankness”.

Elizabeth was obviously an active and expert participant in the process of counsel. Another woman, who had not had Elizabeth's educational opportunities, would have struggled to assert her authority over those around her in this way. This shared knowledge, usually the preserve of men, bridged the gap between queen and counsellors, mitigating the importance of Elizabeth's sex, and making it more difficult to side-line her in political discussion.

Walsingham often criticized Elizabeth for faults associated with the female sex, such as indecisiveness and parsimony. However, he rarely explicitly identified them as *feminine* weaknesses even to his colleagues. Walsingham did not accuse Elizabeth of these faults out of generalized disapproval of female rule, but instead singled out her attributes which were most antithetical to the active, militarily involved policy he wanted to pursue. In this sense, Walsingham's efforts to endow Elizabeth with resolution and certainty through both ordinary and, sometimes, extraordinary means can be understood in the context of the contemporary expectation that counsellors were to supply the faults of their princes.¹⁰⁸ What Walsingham thought about queenship in general is not clear, but his response to Elizabeth's rule in particular suggests that, like Throckmorton and Randolph, he approached this pragmatically, treating Elizabeth's active rule as a *fait accompli*.

For all the importance of convention in such relationships, we have to leave room for individual idiosyncrasies in the practical relationship forged between monarch, whether male or female, and adviser. Walsingham's centrality, personally and politically, to Elizabeth's government was exemplified in 1586, while he and Lord Burghley were both away from court attending the trial of the Queen of Scots. Elizabeth wrote them a joint letter, addressing them informally at the outset as "Sir spirite, myne and yow master Moore". She ended the letter, "I haue commanded this bearer to bring me word of both *your* healthes And so when a foole hath spoken, she hath all done", and signed herself "[s]uch am I to yow as *your* faiths haue deserued".¹⁰⁹ William Davison also passed on to Walsingham Elizabeth's hope that the commissioners were "neer grown to some end so as by thursday next she may see you here".¹¹⁰ These letters demonstrate the affection and dependence of Elizabeth on her two most famous advisers: she could not be without her Moor or his counsel for long.

NOTES

1. Mendoza to Philip II, 30 March 1586, *Calendar of Letters and State Papers relating to English Affairs preserved in the Archives of Simancas*, ed. Martin A. S. Hume, vol. III, 1580–1586 (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode for H.M.S.O., 1892–1899: 1896), 573. Hereafter cited as *Cal. Spanish*.
2. See for example Hsuan-Ying Tu, "The Pursuit of God's Glory: Francis Walsingham's Espionage in Early Elizabethan Politics, 1568–1588" (PhD diss., University of York, 2012), 251–52; John Cooper, *The Queen's Agent: Francis Walsingham at the Court of Elizabeth I* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011), 104; Christopher Haigh, *Elizabeth I*, 2nd ed. (London: Longman, 1998), 87; Lacey Baldwin Smith, *Elizabeth Tudor: Portrait of a Queen* (London: Hutchinson, 1976), 72; Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth*, vol. II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925), 259.
3. Anne Somerset, *Elizabeth I* (London: Phoenix, 2003), 353; Sir John Neale, *Queen Elizabeth* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1934), 238; James Anthony Froude, *The Reign of Elizabeth*, vol. IV (London: J. M. Dent and Sons Ltd.; New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1911), 61.
4. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth*, 228–9; Read, *Mr. Secretary Walsingham*, II, 259; Tu, "Walsingham's Espionage," 252; Somerset, *Elizabeth I*, 353.
5. Froude, *Reign of Elizabeth*, V, 476–7.
6. See for example Mendoza to Philip II, 9 October 1581, *Cal. Spanish*, 1580–86, 185. Something of the sort may also have been going on during the 1576 mission of the Sieur de Champagny on behalf of the governor of the Low Countries, Requesens, see Read, *Mr. Secretary*, I, 322.

7. Walsingham to Sir Christopher Hatton, 23 June 1578, Additional MS 15891, fol. 45v, British Library.
8. See especially Walsingham's letters to Elizabeth in February, March and April 1575 in SP 12/103, and August and September 1581 in SP 78/6 and also printed in Sir Dudley Digges, *The Compleat Ambassador, or, Two Treaties of the Intended Marriage of Queen Elizabeth of Glorious Memory; Comprised in Letters of Negotiation of Sir Francis Walsingham, her Resident in France. Together with the Answers of Lord Burleigh, the Earl of Leicester, Sir Tho: Smith, and others* (London: Tho: Newcomb for Gabriel Bedell and Thomas Collins, 1655).
9. For Elizabeth's letter writing practices and preferences see Rayne Allinson, *A Monarchy of Letters: Royal Correspondence and English Diplomacy in the Reign of Elizabeth I* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 17–36; Melanie Evans, “‘By the Queen’: Collaborative Authorship in Scribal Correspondence of Queen Elizabeth I,” in *Women and Epistolary Agency in Early Modern Culture, 1450–1690*, ed. James Daybell and Andrew Gordon (London: Routledge, 2016), 36–51.
10. James Daybell, “Introduction,” in *Early Modern Women's Letter-Writing, 1450–1700*, ed. James Daybell (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 8.
11. For Elizabeth's education see, for example, T. W. Baldwin, *William Shakespeare's Small Latine and Lesse Greeke* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1944), 25784. For Walsingham's education see Read, *Mr. Secretary*, I, 14–20.
12. Joanne Paul, “Counsel and Command in Anglophone Political Thought, 1485–1651” (PhD diss., Queen Mary, University of London, 2013), 41.
13. Sir Thomas Elyot, *The book named the governor, 1531* (Menston: Scolar Press, 1970), sig. B5².
14. John A. Guy, “The Rhetoric of Counsel in Early Modern England,” in *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 294.
15. Anne McLaren, “Delineating the Elizabethan Body Politic: Knox, Aylmer and the Definition of Counsel 1558–88,” *History of Political Thought* 17, no. 2 (1996): 241.
16. Victoria Smith, “‘For Ye, Young Men, Show a Womanish Soul, Yon Maiden a Man's’: Perspectives on Female Monarchy in Elizabeth's First Decade,” in *Gender and Political Culture in Early Modern Europe, 1400–1800*, ed. James Daybell and Svante Norrhem (London: Routledge, 2017), 153, 151.
17. “Whether it may stand with good policy for her Majesty to join with Spain in the enterprise of Burgundy,” Harley MS 168, fol. 54, BL. For discussion of this document's attribution, see Simon Adams, Alan Bryson and Mitchell Leimon, “Walsingham, Sir Francis (c.1532–1590),” *Oxford*

- Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online ed., May 2009). Accessed 10 November 2015, doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28624>. Hereafter ODNB, "Walsingham."
18. See for example Walsingham to Henry Cobham, 7 June 1582, SP 78/7, fol. 96-, The National Archives, Kew; Walsingham to Robert Bowes, 22 July 1583, SP 52/32, fol. 107, TNA.
 19. Walsingham to Elizabeth, 10 August 1581, SP 78/6, fol. 4v, TNA.
 20. [Walsingham] to Robert Beale, 2 November 1577, SP 81/1, fol. 103, TNA.
 21. Linda Shenk, "Turning Learned Authority into Royal Supremacy: Elizabeth I's Learned Persona and Her University Orations," in *Elizabeth I: Always Her Own Free Woman*, eds. Carole Levin, Jo Eldridge Carney and Debra Barrett-Graves (Aldershot, Hampshire, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 79.
 22. Patrick Collinson, "The Monarchical Republic of Queen Elizabeth I," in *Elizabethan Essays*, ed. Patrick Collinson (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), 44.
 23. Daniel Kapust, "Cicero on Decorum and the Morality of Rhetoric," *European Journal of Political Theory* 10, no. 1 (2011): 95.
 24. David Colclough, "Parrhesia: The Rhetoric of Free Speech in Early Modern England," *Rhetorica* 17, no. 2 (1999): 179; Todd S. Frobish, "An Origin of a Theory: A Comparison of the Ethos in the Homeric 'Iliad' with that Found in Aristotle's 'Rhetoric,'" *Rhetoric Review* 22, no. 1 (2003): 18, 19; Kapust, "Cicero on Decorum," 97; Joanne Paul, "The Use of *Kairos* in Renaissance Political Philosophy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 67, no. 1 (2014): 44, 46.
 25. Colclough, "Parrhesia," 178–186; James S. Baumlin, "Ciceronian *Decorum* and the Temporalities of Renaissance Rhetoric," in *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory, and Praxis*, eds. Phillip Sipiora and James S. Baumlin (Albany, New York: University of New York Press, 2002), 138–64; Kapust, "Cicero on Decorum," 91–112; Paul, "Use of *Kairos*," 45–51.
 26. Colclough, "Parrhesia," 183–184, 190; Frobish, "Origin of a Theory," 27; Kapust, "Cicero on Decorum," 97.
 27. Paul, "Counsel and Command," 57.
 28. Read, *Mr. Secretary*, I, 18.
 29. Natalie Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse in the Elizabethan Realms* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 74–78; ODNB, "Walsingham"; Read, *Mr. Secretary*, I, 13–25.
 30. "The othe of a Consellor", 17 November 1558, SP 12/1, fol. 3v, TNA.
 31. Gemma Allen, "Women as Counselors in Sixteenth-Century England: The Letters of lady Anne Bacon and Lady Elizabeth Russell," in *Women and Epistolary Agency in Early Modern Culture, 1450–1690*, eds. James Daybell and Andrew Gordon (London: Routledge: 2016), 82, 91.
 32. Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse*, 35–40.

33. Walsingham to Elizabeth, 22 February 1575, SP 53/10, fol. 12, TNA.
34. Walsingham to Elizabeth, 16 January 1575, SP 26/2, fol. 152, TNA.
35. [Walsingham] to [Sir Christopher Hatton], 2 September 1578, SP 83/9, fol. 62v.
36. Walsingham to Sir Amias Paulet, 5 September 1586, SP 53/19, fol. 87, TNA.
37. Stephen Alford, *The Early Elizabethan Polity: William Cecil and the British Succession Crisis, 1558–1569* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 41–2; Mears, *Queenship and Political Discourse*, 271.
38. Walsingham to Thomas Randolph and Robert Bowes, 16 March 1578, Harley MS 6992, fol. 100, BL.
39. Walsingham to Thomas Randolph and Robert Bowes, 16 March 1578, Harley MS 6992, fol. 100v, BL.
40. Walsingham to Burghley, 3 August 1575, Harley MS 6992, fol. 13, BL.
41. Walsingham to [unknown], 1570, SP12/45, fol. 1v, TNA.
42. Lois Agnew, “Rhetorical Style and the Formation of Character: Ciceronian Ethos in Thomas Wilson’s *Arte of Rhetorique*,” *Rhetoric Review* 17, no. 1 (1998): 93.
43. Walsingham to Elizabeth, 12 April 1575, SP 12/103, fol. 59, TNA.
44. Walsingham to Elizabeth, 12 April 1575, SP 12/103, fol. 59, TNA.
45. [Walsingham] to Burghley, 2 September 1578, SP 83/9, fols. 61–61v, TNA.
46. Walsingham to Elizabeth, 20 March 1575, SP 52/26/2, fol. 159, TNA.
47. Mendoza to Zayas, 16 October 1579, *Cal. Spanish*, 1568–79, 704. Mendoza was not sure whether “all this is artifice.”
48. Walsingham to Sir Thomas Heneage, 1 June [1571?], *Report on the Manuscripts of Allan George Finch, Esq., of Burley on the Hill, Rutland*, ed. Sophia Crawford Lomas, vol. I (London: H.M.S.O., 1913), 18; Walsingham to Randolph, [18 March] 1581, SP 52/29, fol. 46, TNA.
49. Walsingham to Robert Bowes, 10 August 1580, SP 52/128, fol. 162–, TNA.
50. Kapust, “Cicero on Decorum,” 102.
51. Rachel McGregor, “Making Friends with Elizabeth in the Letters of Roger Ascham,” in *Women and Epistolary Agency in Early Modern Culture, 1450–1690*, eds. James Daybell and Andrew Gordon (London: Routledge, 2016), 154.
52. Gary Schneider, *The Culture of Epistolarity: Vernacular Letters and Letter Writing in Early Modern England, 1500–1700* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005), 130–1.
53. Walsingham to William Davison, 15 May 1584, SP 52/34, fol. 69, TNA.
54. Walsingham to Davison, 20 May 1584, SP 52/34, fol. 77, TNA.
55. Walsingham to Randolph, [2] April 1586, SP 52/39, fol. 41, TNA.
56. Walsingham to Huntingdon, 21 March 1581, *Report on the manuscripts of the late Reginald Rawdon Hastings, Esq., of the Manor house, Ashby de la Zouche*, ed. by John Harley and Francis Bickley, vol. II (London: H.M.S.O., 1930), 29.

57. Walsingham to William Davison, 20 May 1584, SP 52/34, fol. 77, TNA.
58. Walsingham to [Burghley], 24 July 1577, Cotton MS, Caligula C III, fol. 529, BL.
59. See, for example, Walsingham to Elizabeth, 20 March 1575, SP 52/26/2, fol. 159, TNA.
60. Walsingham to Hatton, 23 June 1578, Additional MS 15891, fol. 46, BL.
61. Guy, "Rhetoric of Counsel," 294.
62. Paul, "Use of *Kairos*," 49; Colclough, "*Parrhesia*," 190–1.
63. Read, *Mr. Secretary*, I, 18.
64. Mendoza to Philip II, 31 March 1578, *Cal. Spanish*, 1568–79, 476.
65. Mary Dewar, *Sir Thomas Smith: A Tudor Intellectual in Office* (London: University of London, Athlone Press, 1964), especially 119–23, 171–4; Florence M. Greir Evans, *The Principal Secretary of State: A Survey of the Office from 1558 to 1580* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1923), 46, 49; Michael B. Pulman, *The Elizabethan Privy Council in the Fifteen-Seventies* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 152.
66. Walsingham to Elizabeth, [1]2 September 1581, Digges, *Compleat Ambassador*, sig. Hhh 2⁵.
67. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth*, 214.
68. Neale, *Queen Elizabeth*, 215.
69. *Titus Andronicus* (4.2.99), and Jeremiah 13:23, cited in Michael Neill, "'Mulattos', 'Blacks', and 'Indian Moors': *Othello* and Early Modern Constructions of Human Difference," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 49, no. 4 (1998): 364.
70. Leicester to Walsingham, 30 July 1581, *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury: preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, vol. II (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode for H.M.S.O., 1888), 403. Hereafter cited as *Hatfield MSS*.
71. [Walsingham] to Sir Amias Paulet, 14 January 1578, SP 78/2, fol. 4, TNA. When Elizabeth gave presents in turn, Walsingham was often singularly fortunate. John Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, vol. III (London: John Nichols & Son, 1823), 19.
72. Mary Hill Cole, *The Portable Queen: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Ceremony* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 223–4.
73. Hill Cole, *Portable Queen*, 71, 229.
74. Sir Thomas Smith to Burghley, 7 January 1573, Harley MSS 6991, fol. 19, BL.
75. Read, *Mr. Secretary*, I, 322.
76. Walsingham to Burghley, 16 October 1576, Harley MSS 6992, fol. 56, BL.
77. Walsingham to Robert Beale, 28 May 1576, Egerton MSS 1694, fol. 12, BL.
78. Walsingham to Burghley, 16 October 1576, Harley MSS 6992, fol. 56, BL.
79. "Negotiations of M. de Villiers with the Prince of Orange," SP 70/140, fol. 153-, TNA, cited in Read, *Mr. Secretary*, I, 333–4.
80. Walsingham to Burghley, 3 August 1578, SP 83/8, fol. 7, TNA.

81. Read, *Mr. Secretary*, I, 334.
82. ODNB, "Walsingham."
83. For a detailed account of this embassy, see Read, *Mr. Secretary*, I, 373–422; private bonds: 394.
84. Walsingham to [Burghley], 20 September 1578, SP 83/9, fol. 28v¹, TNA.
85. Walsingham to Burghley, 9 September 1578, SP 83/9, fol. 14v, TNA.
86. See for example, [Walsingham] to Sir Thomas Heneage, [2? September] 1578, SP 83/9, fol. 64v, TNA; and [Walsingham] to the earl of Warwick, 18 July 1578, SP 83/9, fol. 60v, TNA.
87. For this view, see Walsingham to Elizabeth, [1]2 September 1571, Digges, *Compleat Ambassador*, sig. Hhh 2⁵; and for Elizabeth's threats see Walsingham to Thomas Randolph, 29 July 1578, SP 83/7, fol. 90, TNA.
88. Elizabeth to Walsingham, 8 August 1578, SP 83/8, fol. 16v², TNA.
89. Evans, "By the Queen," 43–51.
90. John Zouche to Walsingham, 27 December 1579, SP 63/70, fol. 163, TNA; Walsingham to Sir Henry Cobham, 30 December 1579, SP 78/3, fol. 60, TNA; Read, *Mr. Secretary*, II, 22; William Pelham to Walsingham, 15 December 1579, SP 63/70, fol. 148; Pelham to Walsingham, 29 December 1579, SP 63/70, fol. 171.
91. Walsingham to Elizabeth, 16 August 1581, SP 78/6, fol. 13, TNA.
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93. Walsingham to Elizabeth, 16 August 1581, SP 78/6, fol. 13, TNA.
94. Walsingham to Elizabeth, 16 August 1581, SP 78/6, fol. 13v, TNA.
95. Walsingham to Elizabeth, [1]2th September 1581, Digges, *Compleat Ambassador*, sig. Iii.
96. Walsingham to Elizabeth, [1]2th September 1581, Digges, *Compleat Ambassador*, sigs Hhh 2⁵–Iii.
97. Elizabeth to [Walsingham], September 1581, *Hatfield MSS*, II, 430.
98. Walsingham to Elizabeth, [1]2th September 1581, Digges, *Compleat Ambassador*, sig. Hhh 2⁵.
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103. Walsingham to Elizabeth, 6 August 1581, Digges, *Compleat Ambassador*, sig. Aaa 2².
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105. Walsingham to Burghley, 6 December 1586, SP 12/195, fol. 111v, TNA.
106. Walsingham to Thomas Wilkes, 3 December 1586, SP 84/11, fol. 51, TNA; Walsingham to Burghley, 5 January 1587, SP 12/197, fol. 6; *ODNB*, “Walsingham.”
107. Burghley to Walsingham, 18 July 1578, SP 83/7, fol. 65v, TNA.
108. Elyot, *Governor*, sig. B5¹.
109. [Elizabeth] to Burghley and Walsingham, October 1586, Lansdowne MS 10, fol. 213, BL. See also Evans, “By the Queen,” 40–3.
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The Queen as the Counsellor's Muse: Elizabeth I in *The Faerie Queene's* Proems

John Walters

The inheritance of the throne by women created considerable ideological problems for sixteenth-century England's patriarchal social norms. Rule by women had been consistently and vociferously rejected by male writers, and John Knox's denunciation of rule by women represents an especially famous and pertinent example of the attitudes that England's sixteenth-century ruling queens confronted.¹ Yet even defenses of Elizabeth's right and fitness to rule are hedged with ambivalence toward the prospect of women holding authority. For example, in John Aylmer's defence of Elizabeth's accession, *An Harborowe for Faithfull and Trewe Subjects* (1559), now often presented as a contrast to Knox's views, Aylmer emphasizes the controlling role that the sovereign's advisers and appointed officials—who are all men—play in the English political system.² Even though a woman heads the English polity, Aylmer assures his readers, men retain control in all the bodies that collectively govern the country on her behalf. As A. N. McLaren emphasizes, it was precisely thanks to such limitations on the English sovereign's power that English Protestants like Aylmer

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could reframe Elizabeth's succession as a providential blessing; she can be welcomed because the country's traditions reassure men she cannot become too powerful.³ Such efforts to reassert masculine authority under a woman's rule, Louis Montrose argues, "impelled the English political nation to speculate and to act more boldly than they might otherwise have done about issues of authority, liberty, counsel, and commonwealth".⁴ An important consequence of this process, he adds, "was to enhance substantially the collective role of those male subjects who—by virtue of their status, office, education, and/or perceived moral rectitude—could claim a place in the political nation and a voice in the governance of the state"; in particular, "the humanist concept of counsel and the office of counsellor assumed unprecedented importance".⁵

The perceived need for men of learning, virtue and experience to guide a ruling queen's government provided an opening for male subjects from all social strata to position themselves as counsellors. Mary Thomas Crane records that during Elizabeth's coronation procession, the young queen was treated to numerous allegorical pageants offering unsolicited advice on how she should conduct her rule, spectacles testifying that "at the beginning of her reign even her lowliest subjects believed that she needed advice and that they had the right, even the duty, to offer it".⁶ Throughout Elizabeth's reign, her male would-be advisers positioned their counsel "as an act of love and loyalty toward the queen, in the best interests of the godly commonwealth and therefore in her best interests, even when it contravened her will", Montrose writes.⁷ As this comment suggests, Elizabeth did not always welcome the outpouring of advice her subjects directed at her, although she recognized the utility of appearing open to it. Moreover, Crane claims, Elizabeth (herself in possession of a formidable humanist education) was skilled at rhetorically adapting the humanist ideal of counsel to preserve her authority, often to the frustration of her counsellors.⁸ Elizabeth displays both her skill at appropriating the ideal of counsel and her desire to limit her counsellors' control over her actions in her first public speech after her accession. Elizabeth first enjoins William Cecil "that without respect of my private will, you will give me that counsel that you think best".⁹ She then assures the other nobles and officials present, "I mean to direct all my actions by good advice and counsel", and she promises, "for counsel and advice I shall accept you of my nobility, and such other of you the rest as in consultation I shall think meet".¹⁰ Yet she closes by limiting her counsellors to what she regards as a manageable number: "And they which I shall not appoint, let them not think the same

for any disability in them, but for that I do consider a multitude doth make rather discord and confusion than good counsel".¹¹ In practice, as Montrose reports, "[a]lthough [she] might sometimes seek the counsel of her Privy Councillors and favorites, she would not tolerate unsolicited advice even from them, particularly on such sensitive issues as her marriage and the succession".¹² When subjects dared to broach these matters anyway, the queen's reactions could be scathing. For example, when a Parliamentary delegation pressed the marriage issue in 1566, Elizabeth replied, "when I call to mind how far from dutiful care, yea, rather how nigh a traitorous trick this tumbling cast did spring, I muse how men of wit can so hardly use that gift they hold".¹³ But in spite of the queen's unreceptiveness to unsolicited counsel, Montrose emphasizes that "the offering of unsolicited public advice to the monarch was widely disseminated in printed sermons and tracts, and—in more oblique and coded form—in pageants, plays, and poems".¹⁴

In unexpected ways, then, the fact of a ruling queen in late sixteenth-century England created new definitions of and possibilities for counselling the monarch. Some of these innovations might not have been entirely welcome from the perspective of the nobles, gentry and clergy who deployed the ideal of counsel to reassert their prerogatives within a political order challenged by the exceptional situation of a woman at its head. The new importance of a specifically humanist-influenced style of counsel enabled men with the requisite education to claim the status of counsellors even if other aspects of their backgrounds, such as their class origins, might otherwise have excluded them from counselling a monarch. Relatedly, the widespread desire to offer educated counsel to the queen led to the development of new methods of publicizing advice. Traditionally, service as a royal counsellor involved a personal relationship with a prince. Humanist educators trained young men for this type of counsel, perhaps best exemplified in Elizabeth's England by her long relationship with Cecil.¹⁵ Yet not every man who wanted such a close counselling relationship with the queen could achieve it, and so educated subjects who sought to counsel Elizabeth turned to a variety of print media to disseminate their advice.

Edmund Spenser's epic-romance *The Faerie Queene* represents an especially ambitious, creative and idiosyncratic attempt to counsel Elizabeth in print. Spenser presents the allegorical world of the poem as an experimental space in which readers can learn new approaches to ethical thought and judgement by interpreting the adventures of the poem's characters. Spenser's framing of his poem as a text that can counsel its readers, including the

queen, in the ethical habits of thought they need to govern England runs strongly counter to the anti-poetic tone of much humanist writing on counsel. For example, Roger Ascham—one of young Princess Elizabeth’s tutors—criticizes the widespread preference among “fond schoolmasters” for students with “quick wits”, scoffing, “quick wits commonly be apt to take, unapt to keep ... Such wits delight themselves in easy and pleasant studies and never pass far forward in high and hard sciences[;] ... therefore the quickest wits commonly may prove the best poets but not the wisest orators—ready of tongue to speak boldly, not deep of judgment either for good counsel or wise writing”.¹⁶ Ascham levels a double condemnation against poetry, concluding that it is educationally useless and that as either pastime or occupation it is a reliable sign of a man unsuited for public responsibilities like service as a counsellor.

Spenser takes a radically different view. He constructs his roles as counsellor and poet as inseparable. To read his poem is simultaneously to listen to his counsel. Spenser’s attempts to engage the queen as one of his readers, thus making him one of her counsellors, appear in especially concentrated form in the proems he places before each of the poem’s six complete legends. Spenser’s proems are simultaneously part of the poem’s action, commentaries on its composition, meaning and reception, and responses to historical events. As Lesley Brill remarks in one of the few critical studies of the proems, this framing device “create[s] a juncture between *The Faerie Queene* and other imaginative or real worlds”.¹⁷ Spenser’s proems represent an especially complex example of what Gérard Genette calls the “paratext”, which Genette defines as any of the “productions”, whether “verbal or other[wise]”, that “surround” and “extend” a text, “precisely in order to *present* it, in the usual sense of this verb but also in the strongest sense: to *make present*, to ensure the text’s presence in the world”.¹⁸ Genette furthermore suggests that paratexts help to reveal an author’s desires for the interpretation of the text; the paratext is “always the conveyer of a commentary that is authorial or more or less legitimated by the author ... an influence that—whether well or poorly understood and achieved—is at the service of a better reception for the text”.¹⁹ Above all, Spenser’s proems enable his narratorial persona to ask Queen Elizabeth to read his poem and heed its counsel. For this reason, the changes evident in the narrator’s approaches to addressing and representing Elizabeth in the proems reveal much about Spenser’s shifting ideas regarding both his own status as a counsellor and the prospects for counsellors to make meaningful interventions in Elizabeth’s England.

In the early proems, the poet's counsellor/narrator persona and the queen form a mutually beneficial pair. In the first proem, thoughts of the queen inspire the narrator, who represents himself as inexperienced with the epic genre, to perform his great task. Meanwhile, in the second and third proems, the poet-narrator explicitly calls upon the queen to read his poem. By metaphorically representing his poem as a mirror in which the queen will see her virtues reflected, he announces that *The Faerie Queene* aspires to counsel as well as to praise Elizabeth. Collectively, the proems to the first three books suggest the poet's hope that he and his queen can collaborate to lead England to greatness—the queen through her wise rule, the poet through his counsel and artistic achievement. In stark contrast, the proems introducing Books IV–VI abound with the narrator's doubts about the efficacy of his poetry and his counsel. In the fourth proem, the poet must compete with rival counsellors who condemn his poetry. At the same time, his faith in the queen seems increasingly shaky. The fifth and sixth proems address the queen in conventional terms that draw attention to the distance between how she wants to be represented and the truths of her reign. The narrator hints at these truths through dire musings upon the world's degeneration, meditations often framed by subtly subversive verbal or rhetorical ambiguities that imply the narrator's dwindling faith in his queen. These changes suggest the erosion of Spenser's faith in counsel—and perhaps in the queen he seeks to counsel—over the course of his epic.

THE 1590 PROEMS: “MIRROURS MORE THAN ONE”

Spenser's first proem establishes several of the poem's most important concerns before addressing the queen directly. The opening lines draw attention to the poem's narration by a first-person speaker who also happens to be untested in the epic genre: “Lo I the man, whose Muse whylome did maske, / As time her taught, in lowly Shephards weeds, / Am now enforst a farre vnfitte taske, / For trumpets sterne to chaunge mine Oaten reeds” (I.Pr.1).²⁰ Leaving behind his earlier efforts in pastoral poetry, the narrator accepts the duty to “sing of Knights and Ladies gentle deeds, / Whose praises hauing slept in silence long, / Me, all too meane, the sacred muse areeds / To blazon broade emongst her learned throng” (I.Pr.1). Nearly all commentators who discuss this proem note that its first four lines both imitate and adapt the Latin lines, attributed to Virgil, that preface Renaissance editions of the *Aeneid*.²¹ Spenser uses the opening

lines to place himself in the tradition of the Virgilian career progression, but he also establishes some crucial ways in which he will diverge from that model. Most significantly, Leigh DeNeef remarks, Spenser's allusion to Virgil "introduces a crucial and problematic difference" because "Spenser's 'I' is metaphoric: it does not identify a literal person but a generic role and progress".²² This view demands some qualification, because, as with almost everything in *The Faerie Queene*, the poem's first-person narrator exists in "both/and" instead of "either/or" terms. While he exists in part as a metaphoric construct, as DeNeef suggests, the poetic autobiography he claims closely matches Spenser's. The speaker of the first proem draws attention to his role as creator of the upcoming work in both metaphoric and literal registers, with the opening stanza combining acknowledgment of the narrator's humble poetic background with an announcement of his intention to create more ambitious work.²³

While the first stanza places considerable emphasis on the narrator's individuality through its numerous uses of first-person pronouns, both it and those that follow also connect the speaker to several sources of inspiration that will aid his efforts to fulfil his poetic duties in a manner that dignifies himself, his helpers, and his country. In the final stanza, the narrator calls upon Queen Elizabeth to add her assistance to that of more traditional sources of poetic inspiration like Cupid and the muses:

And with them eke, O Goddess heauenly bright,
 Mirrour of grace and Maiestie diuine,
 Great Ladie of the greatest Isle, whose light
 Like *Phoebus* lampe throughout the world doth shine,
 Shed thy faire beames into my feeble eyne,
 And raise my thoughtes too humble and too vile,
 To thinke of that true glorious type of thine,
 The argument of mine afflicted stile:
 The which to heare, vouchsafe, O dearest dread a while (I.Pr.4).

In addition to the effusive praise the narrator offers Elizabeth, he also makes a double request to her, asking for her attention as well as her help. Her role in the creation of the epic that will follow does not end with the inspiration she provides, although that is indispensable. Instead, the narrator appeals in the final line that she "heare" the poem she moves him to create. This request marks the first, albeit tentative, suggestion that the relationship between narrator and queen ought to be reciprocal. The narrator asks her "to heare" the work she has inspired, although for the

moment he provides no indication of what response he desires from her. The narrator presumably hopes for the queen's approval of his work, but only in the proem to Book II does he first venture to ask for more—after, ideally, the queen has read and reflected upon the legend of the Redcrosse Knight that forms the narrative action of Book I.

The second proem begins with an address to the queen:

Right well I wote most mighty Soueraine,
That all this famous antique history,
Of some th'abundance of an ydle braine
Will iudged be, and painted forgery,
Rather then matter of iust memory (II.Pr.1).

From here the narrator turns to defending the truthfulness of his narrative and his own reliability against imagined critics who demand that he display to them “that happy land of Faery” which they charge he “so much doe[s] vaunt, yet no where show[s]” (II.Pr.1). His defense involves reminding his critics that much about the world remains unknown, as evidenced by the discovery of new lands like “th’Indian *Peru*” and “fruitfullest *Virginia*” that “haue from wisest ages hidden beene” (II.Pr. 2, 3).²⁴ DeNeef suggests that the narrator needs to confront doubts about his reliability because the Legend of Temperance addresses worldly and thus more ambiguous topics in contrast to the religious certainties of Book I, a change in subject that raises new questions about “the unique way the book speaks metaphorically”.²⁵ This is accurate, but DeNeef does not consider the role the narrator gives to the queen when he constructs a defense of his work. By addressing her first, the narrator seeks to enlist her as his first defender. Immediately upon finishing his Legend of Holiness, the narrator addresses the queen and asks for her response by informing her of the charges his critics lay against him. He implies that he desires her response to both his poem and its critics, suggesting that her response will serve as the final arbiter of its truthfulness and artistic merit.

The narrator makes clear, however, that commendation is not the only response he wants from his sovereign. After stating his defense of his poem in the middle stanzas of the second proem, he addresses the queen again when he concludes. He now suggests, “And thou, O fayrest Princesse vnder sky, / In this fayre mirrhour maist behold thy face / And thine owne realmes in lond of Faery” (II.Pr.4). This appeal adds a crucial new dimension to his efforts to include the queen in his audience. She is no

longer asked simply to hear and approve of the poet's song, but urged to use her encounter with the text as an occasion to reflect upon herself and her government. Richard Rambuss suggests that the development of the mirror metaphor from the first to the second proem signifies that Spenser offers *The Faerie Queene* to Elizabeth as "a textual mirror [that] reflect[s] back to the queen the representation of herself she has herself dictated" in a move that establishes her as the poem's sole inspiration and audience.²⁶ Rambuss argues that Spenser claims the status of the queen's "especially privileged servant" by portraying himself as the one who holds up her mirror.²⁷ Yet Rambuss regards this claim as one that makes Spenser's poetic mirror into an instrument of royal praise in opposition to "the admonitory looking glasses of the *Mirror for Magistrates* tradition", as if praise and admonition must be mutually exclusive.²⁸ In the last of the three proems in the 1590 *Faerie Queene*, however, Spenser writes an appeal for the queen's attention that suggests his intentions for the poem can include admonitory advice as well as praise.

The third proem notably includes the return of the language of duty and obligation which the poet applies to his task in the first. He begins the preface to the Legend of Chastity by writing, "It falls me here to write of Chastity, / The fayrest vertue, far about the rest" (III.Pr.1). Recognizing that this topic necessitates the representation of his monarch's famed virginity, he worries that his poetic talents are not up to the challenge: "How then shall I, Apprentice of the skill /... Presume so high to stretch mine humble quill?" (III.Pr.3). Yet he must persevere with this difficult task: "now my lucklesse lott doth me constrayne / Hereto perforce" (III.Pr.3). The narrator's language here strongly resembles that of the first proem in two key ways. First, he expresses considerable self-doubt about his poetic talents, with his misgivings directly linked to his awareness that he is an "Apprentice" or a "Nouice" in the art of poetry (III.Pr.3, I.Pr.2). Second, he claims that he is "constrayne[d]" to create the poem, much as he is "enforst" to write in the first proem (III.Pr.3, I.Pr.1).

These recurrent claims that the poet finds himself pressed into creating his epic resemble the claims from the beginning of Elizabeth's rule that men of learning and talent are particularly obliged to serve the commonwealth as counsellors when a woman inherits sovereignty. Under other circumstances, Spenser's narrator suggests over the course of the first three proems, he might not have been called upon to produce an epic. His duty to serve his queen, however, demands that he write with the public interest in mind. Namely, he must labor to instruct readers in the

virtues they must possess to fulfil their duties as counsellors. Spenser most famously elaborates this purpose in the “Letter to Raleigh”, written by Spenser to his friend Sir Walter Raleigh allegedly “for [his] better light in reading” the poem and appended to its first published edition. In the letter, Spenser writes that “the generall end therefore of all the booke is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in vertuous and gentle discipline”.²⁹ Likewise, the poem’s title page informs readers that the volume they hold is “Disposed into twelue books, Fashioning XII Morall vertues”, inviting readers to learn these twelve virtues by reading the poem that portrays them. When combined with the narrator’s preoccupation with his constraint, these other paratextual claims for the poem’s power to fashion its readers must influence understandings of his methods of addressing the queen.

When the narrator again appeals for the queen’s attention at the end of the third proem, he does more than credit her with inspiring the poem when he requests,

Ne let his fayrest *Cynthia* refuse,
 In mirrours more than one her selfe to see,
 But either *Gloriana* let her chuse,
 Or in *Belphoebe* fashioned to bee:
 In th’one her rule, in th’other her rare chastitee (III.Pr.5).

This last recurrence of the mirror metaphor shows that, in contrast to Rambuss’s claim, the narrator seeks something more than a privileged status in the royal service in return for praise. The narrator’s use of “fashioned” takes on a double meaning when set beside the fashionings proposed elsewhere in the poem’s paratexts, which all describe a process of change the reader can (and perhaps must, as a matter of ethical obligation) undergo in response to what she or he reads. In the third proem, “fashioned” primarily signifies “represented” (or “reflected”, to adhere to the mirror metaphor), but the alternative signification of remaking more prominent in its other usages is not cancelled. The narrator calls upon the queen to see herself in the virtuous heroines *Gloriana* and *Belphoebe*, but the cumulative effect of his addresses to her in the proems in this volume of *The Faerie Queene* is to suggest that her viewing must not be passive. Instead, he asks her to join the poem’s other readers in the process of remaking herself in the image of the virtues it allegorizes. Collectively, the first three proems in *The Faerie Queene* make an appeal for the queen’s

attention that escalates into a request for her to recognize the poem's narrator as one of her counsellors, one whose advice has the power to make her more like the heroic figures whose legends she reads.

THE 1596 PROEMS: "A MIGHTY PERES DISPLEASURE"

When the next three books of *The Faerie Queene* appear in 1596, the confidence in the efficacy of the poem's ethical project on display in its initial edition has disappeared. Spenserians have long noted this change. For instance, Richard Helgerson notes that "[t]he optimistic faith that had animated the early books, the faith that history was going the right way, seems to have left Spenser in the 1590s".³⁰ Critics particularly explore Spenser's supposed loss of confidence in England's auspicious trajectory when reading the Legend of Justice, the fifth book of *The Faerie Queene*. They most commonly locate its cause in the same events the legend allegorizes with considerable bitterness: the assorted setbacks the Reformed cause had suffered all over Europe, Elizabeth's refusal to intervene on behalf of England's fellow Protestants and, most of all, the continuing failure of the English colonial regime to stamp out rebellion in Ireland. While Book V certainly represents an important site for examining developments in Spenser's views during the 1590s, as does his dialogue on Irish affairs, *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, his proems to Books IV–VI of *The Faerie Queene* suggest that the disillusionment apparent across his entire *oeuvre* in his final decade specifically derives from a loss of faith in the power of counsel to persuade Elizabeth to pursue the policies that Spenser seems to favour.

The changes apparent in the narrator's approaches to speaking to and about the queen in the proems to the later books of *The Faerie Queene* exemplify developments evident across English culture. The country faced many difficulties during the final two decades of Elizabeth's reign, including war with Spain, famine and epidemics, frustration with official corruption, and religious conflict as both radical Protestants and Roman Catholics struggled against the strictures of the established church.³¹ Montrose writes that in this context, "as the glorification of the Queen became both more exorbitant and more hollow, the criticism of her regime became more pointed", with dissenters specifically targeting Elizabeth's alleged "vanity and her vulnerability to flattery".³² At times, counsellors' awareness of these particular character flaws invest their discussions of how to counsel the queen with tangible bitterness and cynicism; Montrose cites

some examples relevant for understanding the changes in the way Spenser addresses the queen in the 1596 proems.³³ One, a letter that Edward Dyer wrote to Christopher Hatton when the latter sought advice on what means he might use to recover the queen's favour, merits closer attention. Dyer first warns Hatton to remember "with whom you have to deal, and what we be towards her"; he continues, "though she do descend very much in her sex as a woman, yet we may not forget her place, and the nature of it as our Sovereign".³⁴ Dyer furthermore warns Hatton not to confront the queen openly, for "she will imagine that you go about to imprison her fancy ... and that will breed despite and hatred in her towards you".³⁵ Instead, Dyer suggests that "the best and soundest way" to deal with Elizabeth is "to acknowledge your duty, declaring the reverence which in heart you bear, and never seem deeply to condemn her frailties, but rather joyfully to commend such things as should be in her, as though they were in her indeed".³⁶ Dyer counsels Hatton to reflect back to the queen the image of herself she wishes to see if he hopes to prosper.

The opening stanza of Spenser's fourth proem acknowledges that his poem has come to the attention of the powerful, but not in the way he had hoped in 1590. The narrator complains, "The rugged forehead that with graue foresight / Welds kingdomes causes, and affaires of state, / My looser rimes (I wote) doth sharply wite" (IV.Pr.1). The new volume begins with an acknowledgment of its fraught place in the public sphere; it is the continuation of a poem that other people have discussed and that some specific royal counsellor has condemned. Specifically, the narrator claims he has come under attack "For praising loue ... / And magnifying louers deare debate" (IV.Pr.1). His antagonist denounces his love poetry as a snare "By which fraile youth is oft to follie led, / Through false allurement of that pleasing baite, / That better were in vertues disciplined" (IV.Pr.1). As DeNeef recognizes, this is a serious charge against the narrator's poetic project. Connecting this proem to the more optimistic one that precedes Book III, DeNeef remarks, "[i]f Book III tries to defend the poetic text against the mimetic abuses which may mar or taint the poet's verbal portrait, and against as well the reader's assumption that the literal textual image offers literal terms for human action, then the proem to Book IV implies that such a defense has failed".³⁷ The use of the words "vertuous" and "disciplined", which evoke other uses of these key terms in the 1590 *Faerie Queene*—especially the "vertuous and gentle discipline" of the Letter to Raleigh—add to the impression that in the fourth proem the narrator must defend against an attack on the fundamental nature of his work.

One of the kingdom's premier counsellors, he laments, accuses his poem of exerting a corrupting influence on readers that stands in polar opposition to the edifying effect it is supposed to achieve.

The stern critic mentioned in the first two lines is usually assumed to be William Cecil, Lord Burghley. Some critics have tried to show that Spenser's poetry, specifically the original erotic ending of the Legend of Chastity, did genuinely offend Burghley.³⁸ Montrose suggests instead that Spenser's dislike for Burghley stems from political differences, specifically the "shift in Cecil's ideological orientation during the 1580s, a shift from zealous support for a commonwealth religious and political agenda that was often at odds with the queen's own inclinations or express wishes, to a politique and self-serving facilitation of royal authoritarianism".³⁹ Perhaps the combination of these two conflicts—Burghley's disapproval of erotic poetry and Spenser's disapproval of changes in the politics of counsel—suggests the terms for the narrator's counterattack. He responds that his critics "ill iudge of loue, that cannot loue" (IV.Pr.2). The term *love* offers ambiguities that the narrator exploits to defend his poetry on two grounds. First, he reiterates his praise for the value of chaste love, the main theme of Book III and one that remains central in the fourth and fifth legends (IV.Pr.2). Second, the narrator defends the philosophical love exemplified by Socrates, "the father of Philosophie", as the wellspring of "all the workes of those wise sages" of antiquity (IV.Pr.3). By aligning his work with the dialogues of classical philosophy, which typically aim at persuading the sage's interlocutors to pursue a virtuous way of life, the narrator implies that a similar love of virtue motivates his poem, which likewise instructs its readers in virtue.⁴⁰

Love remains the narrator's key theme when he shifts to addressing the queen instead of the other counsellors embodied by "The rugged forehead". Indeed, with this move the narrator seeks to exclude those other readers from his audience entirely, dismissively remarking, "To such therefore I do not sing at all, / But to that sacred Saint my soueraigne Queene" (IV.Pr.4). Instead, he insists, "To her I sing of loue, that loueth best, / And best is lou'd of all aliuē I weene: / To her this song most fitly is address, / The Queene of loue, and Prince of peace from heauen blest" (IV.Pr.4). The narrator uses hyperbolic praise to show Elizabeth the self-image she desires, just like Dyer suggests. Furthermore, the narrator, like Hatton, can find opportunities to turn to his own advantage the pleasure Elizabeth derives from shows of loyalty (or flattery). Although he portrays the queen as an ideal embodiment of love in these lines, his praise for her

conceals a demand. In the next stanza, he prays that Cupid will “From [Elizabeth’s] high spirit chase imperious feare, / And vse of awfull Maiestie remoue /... That she may hearke to loue, and reade this lesson often” (IV. Pr.5). This prayer makes the narrator’s representation of Elizabeth in the previous stanza provocatively conditional. He suggests that she can only truly become the embodiment of love he fashions if she attends to his advice. As Rambuss points out, this contention has a gendered dimension, as “Spenser rather high-handedly insinuates that the queen herself needs to be schooled, needs to be disciplined ... by love, personified ... as a mollifying, but specifically masculine force”.⁴¹ Spenser’s address to Elizabeth in this proem represents his most striking attempt to counsel her in the terms Montrose contends are typical of her male humanist counsellors, terms which assert her obligation to follow their advice even (or especially) when she would prefer to do otherwise.⁴²

While the narrator’s demand that Elizabeth must read his work and learn its lessons appears in especially strong terms here, the demand itself is not new. Rambuss, in contrast, suggests that in the fourth proem Spenser assigns “the essentially new role of pupil to Elizabeth,” while Maureen Quilligan argues that “Elizabeth now is uniquely a reader, not a muse or poetic subject”.⁴³ Yet the proems of the first three books make their own escalating series of demands on the queen as a reader by asking her to fashion herself after its mirrors in addition to asking her to inspire her loyal and loving poet. The proem to Book IV differs because the narrator now acknowledges that the queen may not respond as he wishes. His confrontation with “The rugged forehead” and the movement away from a counsel-centred ideal for Elizabeth’s queenship which that figure represents shakes his confidence in the likelihood that his poem can have the effect he desires. In response, he heightens the force of his appeals to the queen to a pitch of exclusivity that betrays no small amount of desperation. By saying that he writes only for her, he implies that he is the only counsellor she should be heeding. He now asks her to read *only* his advice, and to reread that advice “often”. Those other counsellors to whom the narrator alludes in the first stanza will only mislead the queen through their inept or hostile misreadings of the poem, and so they must be imaginatively silenced in favour of a conversation between poet and queen that the narrator now demands must exclude all other counsellors.

Perhaps recognizing the excessiveness and likely futility of such a demand, the narrator makes no attempt to build on it in the rest of the poem. Instead, as the final two proems illustrate, he dwells increasingly on

both the disastrous results that follow from failures of governance and on what frustrated counsellors can do to respond to these disappointments. These themes also characterize the poem's final two legends, those of justice and of courtesy, culminating in the poem's embittered final stanza. Spenser treats the perceived failures of Elizabeth's government at great length in Book V, beginning with the proem's revision of the optimistic promise of future greatness he heralds in the proem to Book II into a narrative of decline. In the fifth proem, the narrator announces,

So oft as I with state of present time,
The image of the antique world compare ...
Such oddes I finde twixt those, and these which are,
As that, through long continuance of his course,
Me seemes the world is runne quite out of square
From the first point of his appointed sourse,
And being once amisse growes daily wourse and wourse (V.Pr.1).

This stanza pointedly reverses the relation between antiquity and the present that the narrator posits in the second proem. There, as Judith H. Anderson emphasizes, the world is suffused with possibilities for new knowledge and new adventures.⁴⁴ In the fifth proem, comparisons with antiquity only underline the degeneracy of the present. Even the discovery of new knowledge only confirms the world's decay over time, as the narrator's lengthy discussion of astronomical observations that had perplexingly challenged the accuracy of traditional understandings of celestial motions illustrates (V.Pr.5-8). Mary Thomas Crane notes that Spenser "introduces a new twist when he links the conventional Ovidian account of social decline to disorder in the heavens", and she argues that his knowledge of astronomical "observations ... that proved the realm of fixed stars was subject to change" became for him further proof of the world's inexorable decline.⁴⁵

The queen plays only a small part in Spenser's musings on decline, with the narrator addressing her only in the final stanza of this proem. Moreover, the seemingly conventional tributes he offers to her "great justice prayed ouer all" take on an ambiguous tone in the context of both his remarks earlier in the proem and the events that open the following legend. In both places, the narrator emphasizes that justice belongs to the vanished world of antiquity and now exists only in imperfect forms. In the proem, the mythological era of "*Saturnes* ancient raigne" when "Iustice sate

ador'd with solemne feasts" contrasts sharply with the present, when justice is "for most meed outhyred" (V.Pr.9, 3). The first canto of Book V, meanwhile, begins with the story of a goddess of justice, Astraea, who abandons the world and leaves behind the knight Artegall as her imperfect substitute. Artegall struggles to carry out Astraea's teachings but suffers numerous failures and frustrations. Nor does Elizabeth fill Astraea's place in Spenser's muted praise of the queen's justice in the proem. He neither promises that she will see her own justice reflected in the poem nor asks her to read it in order to improve her administration of justice. Instead, he simply requests that she not prevent him from treating justice. She is now less inspiration than potential obstacle.

In the sixth and final proem, the narrator continues to voice pessimism about the queen. Again, this attitude emerges most clearly from the unfavourable comparison he makes between antiquity and the present. Introducing the legend's virtue, he comments that although examples of courtesy "plenteous seeme" in the present, "Yet being matcht with plaine Antiquitie, / Ye will them all but fayned showes esteeme, / Which carry colours faire, that feeble eies misdeeme" (VI.Pr.4). He intensifies this comparison in the next stanza, alleging, "in the triall of true curtesie, / Its now so farre from that, which then it was, / That it indeed is nought but forgerie" (VI.Pr.5). These remarks suggest that readers should treat anything that looks like courtesy with suspicion. In a sense, courtesy may stand in a worse state than justice. While the latter is merely absent or recognizably perverted, that which passes for courtesy is deceptive. Like the Spenserian villains Duessa or Acrasia, the "fayned showes" of false courtesy trick readers into accepting them in place of the virtue they imitate. It is after offering this warning that the narrator suddenly—and, as Anderson notes, illogically—addresses the queen for the last time.⁴⁶

As if he has not made the comments he makes in the previous two stanzas, the narrator now asks, "But where shall I in all Antiquity / So faire a patterne finde, where may be seene / The goodly praise of Princely curtesie, / As in your selfe, O soueraine Lady Queene[?]" (VI.Pr.6). The discordance between the narrator's denunciation of the falsity of present-day courtesy and his praise of the queen as a paragon of courtesy who excels those of antiquity casts doubt on his sincerity. Following Anderson's observation that "[t]he poet's compliment to the Queen here is courteous in some sense, but it is also ambiguous", it seems that the narrator models the type of insincere show of courtesy he condemns earlier, perhaps subtly rebuking the queen for her inability to tell the difference; the narrator is

not simply “troubled by the real possibility that there may be in [his praise] only a flattering show of true courtesy”, he calls the reader’s attention to that possibility.⁴⁷ Such a move would represent an especially provocative example of the critiques of the queen’s alleged vanity that Montrose observes in late Elizabethan culture, given that it appears in a poem ostensibly written to praise Elizabeth.⁴⁸

The narrator leaves unanswered the question of whether it is still possible for him to counsel the kind of queen he intimates Elizabeth has become. His request that she “pardon me, most dreaded Soueraine, / That from your selfe I doe this vertue bring, / And to your selfe doe it returne againe” suggests that he will continue to try (VI.Pr.7). This request adapts the mirror metaphor in a way that emphasizes his poetic activity of remaking the royal image, as he suggests that what he “bring[s]” from the queen he will “returne” with improvement. Yet as in the fifth proem, the narrator does not ask the queen to read his poem. By the conclusion of Book VI, furthermore, the narrator seems to doubt whether any form of effective reading is possible in an environment marred by the indiscriminate “Barking and biting” of slander exemplified by the Blatant Beast (VI.xii.40). He again laments that his critics have unfairly maligned his writings, closing the second half of the poem by revisiting its opening complaint (VI.xii.41). He responds by advising his book, “Therefore do you my rimes keep better measure, / And seeke to please, that now is counted wisemens threasure” (VI.xii.41). At the end of his project, the narrator no longer appears to have faith in his ability to counsel anything except his own poem, the only advice he can give it is that it should “please” its readers with what they want rather than need to read, and the queen on whom the narrator once set his highest hopes for the possibilities of his poetic counsel to improve England has vanished from the reader’s sight.

Spenser’s proems articulate the radical belief that a counselling poem can meaningfully intervene in the life of any reader, including a queen. Yet his proems also betray an awareness that counsel, whether it is given poetically or in some more conventional literary form like a sermon or an advice-to-princes treatise, depends for its efficacy on the willingness of its audience to heed it. If that is lacking, as the narrator fears in the proems to Books V and VI, counsellors may find themselves speaking into the void as the situations they hoped to amend turn inexorably for the worse. Even if Spenser is unlike many other Elizabethan counsellors insofar as his counselling relationship with her only exists in the imaginative realm of his poetry, in confronting the terrible prospect that the queen will not to listen to him he is all too typical.

NOTES

1. See John Knox, "The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women," in *The Political Writings of John Knox*, ed. Marvin A. Breslow (Washington, D. C.: The Folger Shakespeare Library, 1985).
2. A. N. McLaren, *Political Culture in the Reign of Elizabeth I: Queen and Commonwealth 1558–1585* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 60.
3. McLaren, *Political Culture*, 66; see also Hanna Coates's (Chap. 9) discussion of Aylmer in her contribution to this volume.
4. Louis Montrose, "Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary," *ELH* 69.4 (2002), 907.
5. Montrose, "Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary," 911.
6. Mary Thomas Crane, "'Video et Taceo': Elizabeth I and the Rhetoric of Counsel," *SEL* 28 (1988), 5.
7. Montrose, "Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary," 912.
8. Crane, "'Video et Taceo,'" 1–2.
9. Elizabeth I, "Queen Elizabeth's First Speech, Hatfield, November 20, 1558," in *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, eds. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 51.
10. Elizabeth I, "First Speech," 52.
11. Elizabeth I, "First Speech," 52.
12. Montrose, "Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary," 913.
13. Elizabeth I, "Queen Elizabeth's Speech to a Joint Delegation of Lords and Commons, November 5, 1566," in *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, 93–4.
14. Montrose, "Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary," 914.
15. Crane, "'Video et Taceo,'" 7.
16. Roger Ascham, *The Schoolmaster*, ed. Lawrence V. Ryan (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1967), 21.
17. Lesley Brill, "Other Places, Other Times: The Sites of the Proems to *The Faerie Queene*," *SEL* 34 (1994), 2.
18. Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 1; see also Richard Chamberlain's *Radical Spenser: Pastoral, Politics and the New Aestheticism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), esp. 38–9.
19. Genette, *Paratexts*, 2.
20. All parenthetical references to *The Faerie Queene* are to A. C. Hamilton's edition (Harlow, England: Pearson, 2007).
21. For a recent summary of critical commentary on this topic, see David Scott Wilson-Okamura, *Spenser's International Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 22–4. Elsewhere, Wilson-Okamura emphasizes that these lines "do not appear in any of the oldest manuscripts [of the

- Aeneid*], except as insertions,” but “they were accepted as genuine in the Renaissance” (*Virgil in the Renaissance* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010], 86).
22. A. Leigh DeNeef, *Spenser and the Motives of Metaphor* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1982), 93.
 23. The narrator also uses his allusion to Virgil to announce that he will adapt as well as imitate his source material. Specifically, as John Watkins points out, the narrator’s allusion to Ariosto in the fifth line “suggest[s] that Spenser will adapt Virgil along Ariostan lines,” *The Specter of Dido: Spenser and Virgilian Epic* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 61.
 24. Much criticism on this proem, and on Book II in general, focuses on these mentions of the New World and the emergent European imperialism to which they refer. David Read argues concerning the proem that the narrator’s references to New World raise crucial issues of historicity and futurity. Lands like Peru, Read explains, existed outside European history for centuries, but the discovery and conquest of Peru unexpectedly altered the course of that history by making Spain the premier European power, particularly by enabling Spain to exploit the gold and silver it extracted from its colonies. Read argues that Spenser’s desire for a similar discovery to become the basis of England’s future greatness leads him to create Fairyland as “a looking glass that is also a window into the future”, and Spenser’s sense that England’s glorious future could perhaps be secured at least partly through an imperialist project similar to Spain’s probably informs his choice to mention Virginia (*Temperate Conquests: Spenser and the Spanish New World* [Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000], 21, 22. The wealth the Spaniards extracted from the Americas, and the brutality of the methods they used to extract it, reappears as a concern for Spenser in the seventh canto of Book II when its hero Guyon tours the cave of Mammon (II.vii.35–9).
 25. DeNeef, *Spenser and the Motives of Metaphor*, 105.
 26. Richard Rambuss, *Spenser’s Secret Career* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 70, 71.
 27. Rambuss, *Spenser’s Secret Career*, 71.
 28. Rambuss, *Spenser’s Secret Career*, 71.
 29. Edmund Spenser, “A Letter of the Authors,” in *The Faerie Queene*, ed. Hamilton, 714.
 30. Richard Helgerson, *Self-Crowned Laureates: Spenser, Jonson, Milton, and the Literary System* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 91.
 31. John Guy provides a detailed survey of the woes of the late Elizabethan period in “The 1590s: The second reign of Elizabeth I?,” in *The Reign of Elizabeth I: Court and culture in the last decade*, ed. John Guy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

32. Louis Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 78, 79. Guy concurs that “Elizabeth’s vanity was the one constant force of her reign” (“The 1590s,” 3).
33. Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*, 79.
34. Edward Dyer to Christopher Hatton, 9 October 1572, printed in Harris Nicolas, *Memoirs of the Life and Times of Sir Christopher Hatton* (London: Richard Bentley, 1847), 17.
35. Dyer to Hatton, 18.
36. Dyer to Hatton, 18. The latter sentence is quoted in Montrose, *The Subject of Elizabeth*, 79. Hanna Coates, in Chap. 9 in this volume, discusses several letters that Sir Francis Walsingham wrote concerning how to present advice to the queen in a style that would not offend her. Coates, however, emphasizes that Walsingham rarely tied Elizabeth’s faults to her gender, making his letters typically unlike this letter of Dyer’s.
37. DeNeef, *Spenser and the Motives of Metaphor*, 117.
38. Bruce Danner, *Edmund Spenser’s War on Lord Burghley* (New York: Palgrave, 2011), 33.
39. Montrose, “Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary,” 915.
40. On the aims of ancient philosophical dialogue, see Pierre Hadot, *What Is Ancient Philosophy?*, trans. Michael Chase (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2002).
41. Rambuss, *Spenser’s Secret Career*, 104.
42. Montrose, “Spenser and the Elizabethan Political Imaginary,” 912.
43. Rambuss, *Spenser’s Secret Career*, 105; Maureen Quilligan, *Milton’s Spenser: The Politics of Reading* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 202.
44. Judith H. Anderson, *Reading the Allegorical Intertext: Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 163.
45. Mary Thomas Crane, *Losing Touch with Nature: Literature and the New Science in Sixteenth-Century England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 97, 98.
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Reconsidering the Political Role of Anna of Denmark

Anna Whitelock

Whilst King James I of England has traditionally been dismissed as the “wisest fool in Christendom”, his wife Anna of Denmark has been caricatured as “frivolous to the last”¹ with no “particular distinction of mind or spirit”.² Both Anna and James have suffered from a general neglect of scholarly interest in the early Stuart period in favour of the tumultuous reign of their son Charles I and as such these misleading stereotypes have been resistant to redefinition. This is now changing and multi-disciplinary research and scholarship focusing on the early seventeenth century is gathering pace. As James is reconsidered as a pragmatic and prudent peace-maker king, Anna is now being acknowledged as highly intelligent and accomplished with important cultural and political interests. But this chapter will go further: whilst Anna’s political agency was to some extent curtailed by gender expectations and by the presence of an heir, she fashioned an alternative sphere of intimacy and agency the significance of which should not be under-estimated.

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This chapter will re-examine the nature and significance of the political role played by Anna of Denmark, James I's queen's consort, in England. Traditional historiography has dismissed her activities as confined to masques, court entertainments and ceremony which were assumed to be apart from politics.³ As Roy Strong has argued, "on the whole, Anna lived for pleasure ... she deliberately avoided politics".⁴ Revisionist scholarship has now directly challenged this view by rightly acknowledging the political significance of court culture, and understanding the entertainments that Anna designed and promoted as an important means through which her views on politics, religion and war could be expressed.⁵ Yet her political role also went further: she was an active petitioner with the king on behalf of members of her household and others she favoured, played an important role in domestic politics and international diplomacy, and took a keen interest in the various European dynastic matches proposed for her children. Far from being a frivolous and apolitical figure, Anna played a significant and often over-looked political role at the Jacobean court and in the establishment of the Stuart monarchy in England. She exercised political power and expressed her opinions and identity through various informal cultural and political channels. To better understand Jacobean court politics not only does one need to coopt the "cultural" but also acknowledge the polycentrism of the Jacobean court within the household and court of Anna, not to mention those of Prince Henry and later Prince Charles, playing a significant role in politics and at times articulating a position at odds with that of the king.

Anna of Denmark was the first queen consort in England since 1547, the last had been Katherine Parr, and the first queen consort of "Great Britain". She therefore occupied a position (in theory at least) as the figure at court closest to the king, and was the mother of the heir to the throne. Given her family heritage, she also had a keen sense of her own royalty. She was, as the Venetian ambassador described, the "daughter, sister and wife of a King".⁶ Her father was Frederick II, King of Denmark and Norway, one of the richest princes in Europe, and her mother Sophia was the daughter of Ulric III, Duke of Mecklenburg. Anna had six siblings including her brother King Christian IV of Denmark and Norway with whom she remained particularly close. As Susan Frye has described, by her birth and position, Anna's "every action carried political weight, from giving birth to going on progress, from entertaining ambassadors to following the intrigues of dynastic marriage".⁷ Whilst in the *Basilicon Doron* James had counselled his son never to allow his wife "to meddle with the poli-

ticke government of the commwonwealth”,⁸ it seems Anna defied such expectation and was determined to play an active political role.⁹

Anna was also a woman with her own personal beliefs and had, independently of her husband, converted to Catholicism whilst in Scotland.¹⁰ The significance of her Catholicism to her decisions and political actions thereafter has been debated, as has the degree to which it posed a threat to, or undermined, James’ own position. Whilst David Bevington and Peter Holbrook have argued that “the first ten years of the Stuart reign saw the forwarding of Queen Anna’s programmes in ways that were not always consistent with those of her royal husband”,¹¹ others have instead suggested that James used his wife’s Catholic sympathies and political interests to further his own agenda.¹² There is evidence for example that James exploited his wife’s Catholicism and contacts with Rome to gain support from European Catholic powers in his bid for the English throne and to block Catholic support for other claimants.¹³ In letters to Rome, Anna sought Pope Clement VIII’s approval of her husband’s claim by suggesting James might possibly convert to Catholicism.¹⁴

From the very earliest days of James’ English reign, Anna demonstrated her independence from her husband and her determination, in some matters, to follow her own agenda. Before beginning her journey to England she regained control of her eldest son Prince Henry from the Earl of Mar against James’ wishes and then rejected the “official” delegation of ladies he had sent to accompany her across the border and to form the core of her new household entourage. She also refused to accept the king’s appointment of Sir George Carey as her chamberlain, and instead insisted on retaining the services of the Scots man John Kennedy.¹⁵ When James learnt of his wife’s obstinacy, he was furious, commenting “if he do find that she bring [Kennedy] hither to attend her in that place, that he would break the staff of Chamberlainship on his head, and so dismiss him”.¹⁶ Anna was determined to establish her own household independently of the king’s own wishes and indeed appointed a number of ladies, including Penelope Rich and Mary Countess of Pembroke, who had been supporters and associates of the executed Earl of Essex (leader of the abortive 1601 rebellion against Elizabeth I) and who represented the militantly Protestant and anti-Spanish grouping that had survived Elizabeth’s reign. By selecting her own courtiers she built up a network that was loyal to her. Moreover, in appointing devout Protestants to her household, Anna displayed a pragmatism and political flexibility even if this ran counter to her own personal beliefs.

Both for her own household members and other loyal individuals, Anna was a valuable political ally who regularly sought to act as an intermediary with the king to further their appeals and petitions. Whilst she was not always successful, the fact that her support was sought both by her ladies-in-waiting and others suggests that Anna was certainly perceived as having a significant influence. The many appeals to Anna recorded in the state papers are testament to her active role as a patron and petitioner including on behalf of her lady-in-waiting Arbella Stuart who was the king's cousin and next in line to the throne.¹⁷

When on 22 June 1610 Arbella Stuart went ahead with a secret marriage to William Seymour which James had expressly forbidden, she looked to Anna to intercede on her behalf with the king.¹⁸ Anna sent countless letters to James imploring him to look on Arbella with sympathy and leniency. In the end her counsel had little effect and following Arbella's attempt to escape to the continent she was imprisoned in the Tower of London. Yet even after her death on 25 September 1615, Anna remained loyal to her and petitioned the king to allow the court to enter a period of mourning as a sign of respect for her rank. Again James refused his wife's petition.¹⁹ A similar determination to support those who had fallen foul of her husband is evidenced by Anna's championing of Sir Walter Raleigh following his fall from favour. She appealed in highly personal terms to the king that "as he tendered her health, to spare him, for that she had received great good by his receipts".²⁰ Ultimately Anna's efforts failed and Raleigh was beheaded although the fact that he was not actually executed until 1618 suggests perhaps that she had had some influence in prolonging his life.²¹ Clearly Anna saw herself in the role of a counsellor to the king, advising him on how he might treat those who he believed had shown him disloyalty or had lost his favour. This "counsel" was premised on an appeal not to James' political instincts but rather to his compassion. This very "personal" counsel was perhaps something particularly distinct to a queen consort.

Anna proved to be an equally loyal ally and supporter of Lady Anna Clifford, one of the ladies in her household, even when this again meant opposing James' position. When Clifford had appealed (unsuccessfully) to James over her right to inherit her father's ancestral estates, Anna intervened in January 1617. On 16 January 1617, Lady Anne received a letter from her husband, dictating that she was to go to court and appear before the king regarding her inheritance and the settlement. Clifford immediately sought out the queen. As she recorded in her diary, "upon the 18th being Saturday, I went presently after dinner to the Queen to the Drawing

Chamber where my Lady Derby told the Queen how my business stood and that I was to go to the King so she promised me she would do all the good in it she could". Anna warned Clifford "not to trust my matters absolutely to the King lest he should deceive me".²² In the end, James was unable to force Lady Anne to back down and agree to the terms he had offered her. Lady Anne retained control of the Westmoreland estates, as well as those in Yorkshire.

Anna had also had a decisive influence in saving the life of James Elphinstone, first Lord Balmerino, the secretary of state for Scotland. In October 1608 Balmerino was forced to "confess" for allegedly having falsely obtained the king's signature on a letter to the Pope written ten years before. The letter was now being used to support a claim that James had "misled the papacy in [the] letter ... about his intentions [regarding Roman Catholics] before his accession" and James demanded Balmerino's "confession" in order to refute the claim.²³ James had signed the letter but could not admit to this in the charged post-Gunpowder plot years. On the petition of Jane Drummond, one of her most favoured ladies and a relative of Balmerino, Anna interceded on his behalf with James in an attempt to save his life. Her efforts proved successful. Rather than face a traitor's death, Balmerino was allowed to return to his estates where he died in 1612. It would seem that Anna was a regular petitioner and the efforts she made on behalf of others suggest a determination to carve out her own identity and find a particular role in court politics. The Venetian ambassador pointed to the popularity of the queen because of her role as an active petitioner:

She does not at all intermeddle unless to ask a favour for someone: this it is which makes the people love, cherish and respect her.²⁴

James did not always approve of her meddling and during the Balmerino episode he confessed to Robert Cecil that "if my wife would forbear to mediate, I would be more glad".²⁵

Yet James did seem happy for Anna to have some influence over appointments to his household and entourage. George Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury, described how:

... King James had a fashion, that he would never admit any to nearness about himself but such a one as the queen should commend unto him, and make some suit on his behalf²⁶

Certainly Anna's petition led to James Hay (the future Earl of Carlisle) been appointed as a Gentleman of the King's Bedchamber in August 1603²⁷ and ten years later she was to play an active role in the events that led to the downfall of Robert Carr, the Earl of Somerset, and the rise of George Villiers. Following his rise to the king's favour in 1607, Anna grew to dislike and mistrust Somerset and after his appointment as Principal Secretary of State following Robert Cecil's death in 1612, became increasingly vocal in her opposition to him and to the Howard faction which supported him.²⁸ Instead Anna turned her support to the opposing faction headed by William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton who were seeking to challenge Somerset by questioning his right to court position and privileges. In 1614, Anna's rage against the Howards was fuelled when Carr was appointed Lord Chamberlain instead of the Earl of Pembroke who she was championing. Fearing that he was facing defeat and the loss of his position, in the summer of 1615, Somerset requested a royal pardon for all the offences that might be alleged against him. James immediately granted a pardon for minor crimes but was stopped from signing a second pardon concerning major crimes alleged against Carr by both the opposition of Lord Chancellor Ellesmere and of the queen. As the Venetian ambassadors' despatch of November 7 described, when the queen learned that James intended to grant the second pardon, "she immediately left her palace for the King's, and contrived to induce him to suspend the order to put the seal to the pardon, and it has never been affixed".²⁹

As Somerset's position became increasingly precarious, the Pembroke faction decided to ensure Somerset's fall by providing James with a new favourite. Their choice fell on the twenty-two year old George Villiers who was brought to court and appointed to the office of cupbearer to the king. George Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury, sought Anna's formal recommendation of Villiers to James knowing her support for him would help his cause with the queen. Yet Anna was initially circumspect:

My Lord, you and the rest of your friends know not what you do. I know your Master better than you all; for if this young man me once brought in, the first person that he will plague must be you that labour for him; yea. I shall have my part also. The King will teach him to despise and hardly intreat us all, that he may be seen as beholden to none but himself.³⁰

Nevertheless Anna eventually gave her support and in 1615 persuaded James to knight Villiers and make him a Gentleman of the Bedchamber. Anna's role in the rise of Villiers was later recalled by the Venetian agent

Foscarini who noted that “since the fall of [Anna’s] enemy, the Earl of Somerset, Mr. Villiers has risen, supported by her and dependent upon her”.³¹ During the events that led to the fall of Carr, Anna showed herself to be a skilled political agent and engaged in factional politics in England as she had been in Scotland. This was a dramatic example of her political agency: male courtiers looked to her for patronage and support and she “acted as an important broker between dynasties and factions”.³²

Whilst Anna did have clear opinions, Catholic sympathies and a keen sense of her own mind and status, she rarely directly challenged the king in a manner which undermined his position. Indeed in 1615, when the *Corono Regio*, a verse satire questioning James’ honour as a monarch was published, Anna became directly involved. Amid suspicion that the *Corona Regia* had been written by Dr. Erycius Puteanus, a scholar at the University of Louvain in the Spanish Netherlands, and as fears were raised as to the maintenance of relations with the Netherlands, Anna wrote to the joint Governor of that country, the Archduchess Isabella, and to the archduke’s ambassador, requesting that action be taken against Puteanus. This was not the only instance that Anna became involved in foreign affairs as is indicated by her request to the English ambassador in France, Sir Thomas Edmondes, in 1617 to maintain a correspondence with her to keep her informed “of such things ... as you think will not be eyther unpleasing or unfitting for us to understand”.³³ Moreover in spite of her Catholic sympathies, as dramatically demonstrated by her refusal to take the sacrament at her coronation, Anna was pragmatic and acted on her religious belief advisedly. Rather than side-lining her from the realm of policy and diplomacy, her Catholicism had a political value and was used by James accordingly. Believing that she was influential with the king and significant in diplomacy, the Habsburgs distributed gifts and pensions to Anna and her ladies during and after the 1603–04 Anglo-Spanish peace negotiations.³⁴ And, following the Gunpowder Plot when King Philip III of Spain sent Juan Valsco de Aragon as head of an embassy to England, he was deliberately instructed to court Anna and made her a gift of a satin dress embroidered with amber leather and a velvet cap with gold buttons.³⁵ Two years later, as the ambassador reported, “in future they intend to make up for their neglect in the past now that they are aware of her great weight with the King”.³⁶ The Marquis de San Germano, Ambassador-Extraordinary for Spain, was directed to bring Anna “large presents” in order “to win her to their side”.³⁷ Anna was a consistent champion of the Habsburgs and to show her support refused to receive the ambassadors sent to the court from the Netherlands in 1607.³⁸ This was a not insignificant ceremonial

snub and intended as a clear statement of her disapproval of the States General in their rebellion against the Spanish. Nevertheless the Venetian ambassador believed the Spanish were “utterly deceived” in their perception of Anna’s influence.³⁹ Yet it seems that it was to Anna that the Venetians looked when, after 1615, they were threatened by Spanish imperialism in Italy. As alarm in Venice at Spain’s intentions continued, several Venetian agents approached Anna to intercede with James on behalf of the republic.⁴⁰ Writing to the Doge and Senate on 28 March 1618, Contarini, the Venetian Ambassador, described an audience he had with the queen and how “after representing the present state of affairs in Italy I besought her [Anna] to exercise her influence in favour of the republic. This she certainly seemed most ready to do”. However as the ambassador continued, “she confessed to having very little power with the King and the Lords of the Council who she was well aware were influenced by pensions from Spain; and not approving of these alliances with the Catholic King she now shows herself utterly opposed and well nigh hostile to the Spanish faction”.⁴¹ Months later he reported that Anna “evinced extreme satisfaction at your Serenity’s [The Doge] having settled your disputes with King Ferdinand [Holy Roman Emperor]”.⁴²

On certain occasions it seems Anna specifically represented the king in his absence and gave audiences in the presence of the senior male members of the court. In June 1610, following the assassination of the French King Henry IV, she received the Venetian ambassador Marc Antonio Correr “surrounded by a large number of her Ladies, Lord Salisbury, many other Earls and great gentlemen of the court”. At that time she expressed her “extreme regret for the murder of his Most Christian Majesty, and said that the King was greatly disturbed”.⁴³ Six years later the outgoing Venetian ambassador in England, Antonio Foscarini, described one of his last encounters with the queen at Greenwich. He spent more than an hour with her and discussed a range of topics including the election of the new doge and she “added assurances of her especial affection for the republic, to which, she said, she was immensely obliged, not merely for the love borne towards her and her consort” but also the favour shown to her brother the King of Denmark. She went on to ask “what she could [do] to aid and further the welfare and conquences of your Excellencies”.⁴⁴

Susan Frye has gone as far as to suggest that “reading between the lines of ambassadorial correspondence for Venice and Italy, it becomes clear that ... James and Anna functioned as a kind of foreign policy team”.⁴⁵ Whilst Anna’s role was not as formal as if she had been a member of the

Privy Council, she played a valuable role in meeting with ambassadors and in what might be described as “soft diplomacy”, and on a number of occasions both James and Anna apparently played coordinated and complementary roles. The diplomatic sphere has been acknowledged as a sphere within which women played a part and Anna can certainly be seen here as a quasi-counsellor and mediator between the king and foreign powers.

Zorzi Giustinian, the then Venetian ambassador, described how when in 1608 the king closed “the passage between Dover and Calais in order to intercept the message which the French ambassador here was sending his master”, the queen gave a breakfast for Zorzi Giustinian at which she broached the subject, but as the ambassador reported, “I took care to avoid all discussion”. And as Giustinian added, clearly speaking on behalf of both herself and James, “the Queen expressed the great affection of the King and herself for the Republic”.⁴⁶ Later ambassadorial despatches point to the fact that Anna regularly held audiences and the then Venetian ambassador Marc Antonio Correr described how after a “public audience, where the Royal family was united”, he and his fellow ambassador Francesco Contarini, had a separate audience with Anna.⁴⁷

Besides playing a role in hosting ambassadors and supporting James’ diplomatic endeavours, Anna’s primary concern was securing suitable Catholic matches for her children with European ducal and royal families. Less than a year after her arrival in England, and during the visit of the Constable of Castile to London for the signing of the Anglo-Spanish treaty, Anna “secretly brought forward a scheme for the marriage of her son, Prince Henry” with the Spanish Infanta.⁴⁸ In early 1605, the Venetian ambassador Nicolo Moilin reported that a number of privy councillors had met in the queen’s apartments and that they and “the queen foremost, showed themselves very favorable to this match much more so than to the French”.⁴⁹ Such was the king’s perceived importance that the French King Henry IV issued specific instructions to his ambassador Beaumont to try and win the queen’s favour.⁵⁰

Over the years that followed, a number of other ambassadors from Catholic states came to England to propose marriage alliances for Henry, Elizabeth and Charles and looked to Anna as a key supporter. Certainly Anna was actively involved in all this diplomacy; she ensured that her daughter Elizabeth did not marry Gustavus Adolphus, the King of Sweden who was a resolute enemy of her native Denmark whose interests she continued to champion, and in 1610 was reported to be “much inclined” towards a match between her daughter and the Prince of Savoy.⁵¹ However

despite Anna's clear preferences for a Catholic match, James negotiated a match for Princess Elizabeth with the Protestant Frederick Elector Palatine of the Rhine in response to the threat of a Franco-Spanish alliance. Anna was "noted to have given no great grace nor favor to this match".⁵² Not only was Frederick a Protestant but as a prince and not a king, Anna believed he was not a sufficiently prestigious match for her daughter. Moreover Anna believed, rightly as would be shown, that the marriage would put England at risk of being involved in future Germanic wars. It was wise counsel but not heeded by James. Antonio Foscarini, the Venetian ambassador, in a despatch of 1612 described how involved and aware Anna had been in the diplomatic negotiations: "she asked me what news I had from Italy, and what they thought at Venice about the Franco-Spanish matches. I said I had nothing worthy of her Majesty's notice ... I added that the matches here were also on a fair way to conclusion. The queen showed she understood my allusion to the Palatine, and said the king and the Council were greatly in its favour but did not express her views one way or another". The ambassador points to a queen discreet and circumspect not to voice her opposition to her daughter's match to the Elector Palatine. Anna was politically engaged and informed and was, as Foscarini makes clear, in a position to counsel even if James did not act accordingly, she knows "what is going on" for James "tells her any thing she chooses to ask, and loves and esteems her".⁵³ The queen was eventually reconciled to the match and attended the wedding on 14 February 1613.

In 1612 when a Catholic match for Prince Henry was sought with Catarina, sister of Cosimo II, Duke of Tuscany, Anna worked to secure papal approval for the marriage despite Prince Henry's faith. Despite professing her devout Catholicism and in a letter to Paul V signing herself "obedientissima filia" (obedient daughter)⁵⁴ the pope remained intractably opposed to any such marriage unless Prince Henry change his faith and that liberty of conscience be guaranteed to all Catholics.

Following Prince Henry's premature death from typhoid and Elizabeth's marriage, Anna turned her attention to finding a wife for Prince Charles. Tuscan, Savoy, French and Spanish matches were all discussed with the respective ambassadors all visiting the queen and her household. Anna made a confidential appeal to Jean-Baptiste Van Male, the Spanish envoy, about the marriage of her son and made it clear that her greatest ambition was to bring a Spanish Infanta to England and secure a match that would bring together England, Denmark and the Habsburgs of the Low Countries and Spain to ensure peace.⁵⁵ In February 1614 Anna tried to arrange an audience between the king and the Spanish ambassador

Diego Sarmiento de Acuña, Count of Gondomar, to discuss the marriage, but James declined to meet him.⁵⁶ She was known to be discussing the Spanish alliance with George Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Sir Thomas Edmondson, the former ambassador to Archduke Albert of the Netherlands, who both sought to change her mind.⁵⁷ Anna persisted and throughout 1615 and early 1616 she was reported to have had frequent private audiences with the Spanish ambassador.⁵⁸ In 1617 she began to doubt the Spanish and believed that their proposal was just a pretence in order “to benefit their affairs”. Anna told Contarini the Venetian envoy that the Danish ambassador, “whose master believed his close connection with this royal family allowed him to speak plainly” had been dissuading the king from the Spanish marriage at which James was “greatly offended”. Anna was clearly closely involved with such details of diplomacy and as Contarini’s despatch continued, “Her Majesty told me moreover that the king was not aware of her being acquainted with these particulars and would be much annoyed if he thought she were, so that she pretended to know nothing about them ...”.⁵⁹ Anna’s hostility to the Spanish did not last long and, in December 1618, the Venetian ambassador reported that she was once again “very anxious for [Charles] to marry in Spain, and does her utmost to that end; she hates a French marriage and opposes it openly ...”.⁶⁰

Particularly in the realm of diplomacy, Anna can be seen to have played an active political role and one that was, in large part, encouraged by James. Whilst her counsel was very often not heeded, she was undoubtedly an informed and active political player.

* * *

It is as a patron of and performer in court masques that Anna has been most widely acknowledged in accounts of James I’s reign. Whilst such entertainments have traditionally been dismissed as being a sphere of mere frivolity, historians have now drawn attention to the “politics of performance” where not only might the masques themselves showcase particular political issues, but that attendance itself at such entertainments was highly political.⁶¹ Martin Butler, in his essay, “Courtly Negotiations”, argued that such court entertainments provided Anna with a means to craft a particular identity and express her opinions about religion, war and politics. While Ben Jonson and Samuel Daniel wrote many of the masques, it was Anna who chose their central themes and often designed the details of the spectacles.⁶² As Zorzi Guistinian the Venetian ambassador described in January 1608,

the splendour of the spectacle, which was worthy of her Majesty's greatness. So well composed and ordered was it all that it is evidence the mind of her Majesty, the authoress of the whole. Is gifted no less highly than her person. She reaped universal applause.⁶³

That said, as Butler continues, "Anna's masques were never explicitly political: they made no attempt to allegorise alternatives to James' policies".⁶⁴ Barbara Lewalski takes a somewhat different view and suggests that while Anna "was always careful to pay proper homage to James within the context of the masque, there is no question that she also asserted her own royal status and her own political values and opinions".⁶⁵ Moreover, by privileging invitations to particular ambassadors, Anna could be seen to have played a highly politicized role which impacted on diplomacy. On a number of occasions, Anna displayed her support for Spanish Catholic interests by inviting the Spanish rather than the French ambassador, often to James' great embarrassment amid fears for wider diplomacy.⁶⁶

Between 1604 and 1611 Anna commissioned and performed in six masques written by Ben Jonson and Samuel Daniel. The first masque was Samuel Daniel's *Vision of the Twelve Goddesses* which was presented on 8 January 1604 at Hampton Court. The masque symbolized the union between the crowns of England and Scotland and took place at a time when Anglo-Spanish peace was sought.⁶⁷ Great favour was shown to the Spanish ambassador Don Juan de Tassis, Conde de Villamediana, in order to encourage favourable relations between the two countries. In fact the masque originally scheduled for Twelfth Night had had to be postponed for two days because of the dispute between the Spanish and French ambassadors. It seems from the despatch that Tassis sent to Philip III on 20 January 1604, that Anna intervened specifically to ensure that he would be there and that the French ambassador would not.⁶⁸ This controversial gesture symbolized a significant shift in English foreign policy. As Mark Hutchings and Berta Canno Echevarria have argued, "the significance of this intervention would be far-reaching, marking the beginning proper of the peace treaty negotiations".⁶⁹

On 4 January 1617, the court correspondent John Chamberlain remarked on rumours that "[the Queen] dreames and aimes at a Regencie during the King's absence in Scotland".⁷⁰ James was preparing to make his first visit back to Scotland since becoming King of England. Given Anna's strong sense of her own status and royalty, her desire to be appointed to the regency was perhaps a natural extension of the role she had played as

queen consort hitherto. It was also a role previously occupied by both Catherine of Aragon and Katherine Parr during Henry VIII's military expeditions to France. It seems that Anna regularly acted as an unofficial regent during James' frequent absences from the capital for his prolonged hunting trips. Indeed in 1605, James issued specific instructions that during his absences from London for "open air and exercise", the Privy Council was to meet with Anna at her residence: "The Lords of the Council are tyed to attendance at the Queens' court, and they have a letter from the king to be more diligent in his affairs".⁷¹ Indeed James joked on one such occasion to Robert Cecil that the court was once again in the hands of a woman, "ye and your fellows there are so proud now that yehave gotten the guiding again of a feminine court in the old fashion".⁷² In addition, it seems Anna took a leading role in diplomacy and hosted ambassadors and made important diplomatic contributions. In August 1612 for example, when James was absent from London, Anna held a special audience for the Spanish ambassador, Pedro de Zuniga, when he returned to England to reassure the court about the double marriage alliance between Spain and France. In the presence of several Privy Councillors, as well as members of her retinue, she asked various informed questions about the articles of the treaty.⁷³ This was a meeting of great diplomatic sensitivity and it was Anna who was engaging authoritatively and it seems knowledgably with the ambassadors.

Yet despite her role hitherto, James did not appoint Anna as regent, and established a council of six to rule in his absence with the staunchly Protestant Sir Francis Bacon, Lord Keeper and Lord Chancellor, effectively as its head.⁷⁴ The other members included George Abbot (the Archbishop of Canterbury), Prince Charles, the Earl of Worcester and Sir Thomas Howard (Lord Treasurer), and it was noted that the council often met at Greenwich to ensure Anna was involved.⁷⁵ Although Anna was not the foremost member of the council she was certainly regarded by many as one of its most important and influential members. The Venetian Secretary reported that "[t]he council meets frequently at Greenwich, where the queen generally lives ...".⁷⁶ Anna also perhaps used the opportunity of the king's absence to advance a more ambitious political message in the court masque, *Cupid's Banishment*, held on 4 May 1617. Anna took the position of the masque's "privileged spectator" and presided over a questioning or indeed subversion of the king's authority. Moreover, in the masque itself, Anna was able to identify herself with Pallas Athena, a powerful woman willing to wage wars unlike her peace-loving husband.

This was, as Clare McManus has argued, the assertion of “authority through performance” and might be seen as a response to James’s refusal to name Anna as regent in his absence.⁷⁷

The reign of James I and the establishment of the Stuart monarchy in England continues to be something of a historiographical lacuna or at least an area of study which remains in flux with more work and interpretation still to be done. This chapter has suggested that Anna’s role went further than the masques and was far greater, whether ultimately effective or not, than she had been previously credited with. She had a keen sense of her political identity and queenly status, was looked to by courtiers and others to petition on their behalf in factional manoeuvrings, did seek to directly counsel James and was used by him in policy-making and diplomacy. Anna of Denmark was the first queen consort of the seventeenth century, the first of both England and Scotland, and a woman of proud Danish royal heritage. Through her cultural patronage of masques and art, Anna played a key role in aligning the English court with the world of European court entertainments. In her performance in masques in particular, Anna was also able to fashion an identity as the successor to the late Queen Elizabeth and, in spite of her gender, as a figure of significant qualities and capabilities independent of her husband. Anna was at times able to challenge or reframe and nuance some of James policies and positions. Jacobean court politics had no one single homogenous outlook and instead there were multiple centres, and a range of agents and actors beyond the king and his councillors. As such, court masques and entertainments need to be acknowledged for their political potency and significance both at home and abroad. As a new century dawned and a new dynasty looked to establish itself in England, Anna can be seen as very much a woman fit for the times and whose place in the Jacobean court as a patron, politician, mediator and source of counsel should not be overlooked.

NOTES

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2. M. Lee Jr., *John Maitland of Thirlestane and the foundation of Stewart despotism in Scotland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 204.
3. Leeds J. Barroll, “The Court of the First Stuart Queen,” in *The Mental World of the Jacobean Court*, ed. Linda Levy Peck (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 199.

4. Roy Strong, *Henry Prince of Wales and England's Lost Renaissance* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1986), 16.
5. For recent scholarship on the political significance of masques and courtly entertainments see for example; Leeds Barroll, *Anna of Denmark: Queen of England: A Cultural Biography* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, "Enacting Opposition: Queen Anne and the Subversion of Masquing," in *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 15–43; Sophie Tomlinson, *Women on Stage in Stuart Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Leeds Barroll, "Theatre as Text: The Case of Queen Anna and the Jacobean Court Masque," *The Elizabethan Theatre* 14 (1996): 175–93; Leeds J. Barroll, "Inventing the Stuart Masque," in *The Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, eds. David Bevington and Peter Holbrook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 121–43; Martin Butler, *The Stuart Court Masque and Political Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Barbara Ravelhofer, *The Early Stuart Masque: Dance, Costume and Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Clare McManus, "Memorialising Anna of Denmark's Court: Cupid's Banishment at Greenwich Palace," in *Women and Culture at the Courts of the Stuart Queens*, ed. Clare McManus (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003) 81–101; Clare McManus, *Women on the Renaissance Stage: Anna of Denmark and Female Masquing in the Stuart Court (1590–1619)* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).
6. *CSP Ven* XV, 392.
7. Susan Frye, "Anne of Denmark and the Historical Contextualisation of Shakespeare and Fletcher's Henry VIII," in *Women and Politics in Early Modern England, 1450–1700*, ed. James Daybell (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 182, 188. Cynthia Fry, "Perception of Influence: The Catholic Diplomacy of Queen Anna and Her Ladies, 1601–1604," in *The Politics of Female Households: Ladies in Waiting across Early Modern Europe*, eds. Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 260.
8. King James VI and I, *Basilikon Doron: Or His Maiesties Instructions to his Dearest Sonne Henry the Prince* (Edinburgh, 1599).
9. See Maureen Meikle, "Queen Anna of Denmark: new perspectives on a consort's diplomacy, 1588–1619," *Women's History Review: Special Edition* (forthcoming) for discussion of Anna's political activities in Scotland and in England.
10. Albert J. Loomie, "King James I's Catholic Consort," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 34 (1971): 303–16.
11. Bevington and Holbrook, *Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, 11.
12. Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, *Writing Women in Jacobean England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993) 15–41; Clare McManus, *Women on the Renaissance Stage: Anna of Denmark and Female Masquing in the Stuart Court (1590–1619)* (Manchester: Manchester University Press,

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13. *HMC*, Salisbury, vi., 512. See Albert J. Loomie, "King James I's Catholic Consort," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 34 (1971): 303–16 and "Toleration and Diplomacy: The Religious Issue in Anglo-Spanish Relations, 1603–1605," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 53, New Series (1963): 1–60. See Maureen Meikle and Helen Payne, "From Lutheranism to Catholicism: The Faith of Anna of Denmark (1574–1619)," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 64 no.1 (2013): 45–69; Albert J Loomie, "Spanish Secret Diplomacy," 231–45; G.F. Warner, "James VI and Rome," *English Historical Review* 20 no.77 (1905): 126 and A.W. Ward, "James VI and the Papacy," *Scottish Historical Review* 2 (1905): 249–52.
 14. This was first argued by A. O. Meyer, "Clemens VIII und Jakob I von England," *Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken*. 7.2 (1904) vii, 273–82. See also J.D. Mackie, "The Secret Diplomacy of King James VI in Italy Prior to His Accession to the English Throne," *Scottish Historical Review* 21 no.84 (1924). Anne's letters to the Pope are lost but one she wrote to Cardinal Borghese on 31 July 1601 is in the British Library, Add. MS 37021, 25.
 15. Lambeth Palace Library MS Talbot papers vol K fol. 83 as printed in Edmund Lodge, *Illustrations of British History, Biography and Manner ... &c* (London, 1791) 3 vols: III, 163–5.
 16. J. Nichols, *The Progresses, Processions and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First* (London, 1828) 4 vols, III, 161.
 17. Sarah Gristwood, *Arbella: England's Lost Queen* (London: Bantam, 2003).
 18. *The Letters of Lady Arbella Stuart*, ed. Sara Jayne Steen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 236, 237.
 19. *Ibid.*, 101.
 20. Thomas Birch, *The Court and Times of James the First*, 2 vols (London, 1848) II, 97.
 21. Louis H. Roper, "Unmasking the Connections Between Jacobean Politics and Policy: +e Circle of Anna of Denmark and the Beginning of the English Empire, 1614–18," in *High and Mighty Queens of Early Modern England*, eds. Carole Levin, Jo Eldridge Carney and Debra Barrett (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 48.
 22. *The Diary of the Lady Anne Clifford 1616–1619. A Critical Edition*, ed. Katherine O.Acheson (London: Garland, 1995), 65–6.
 23. See W.B. Patterson, *King James VI and I and the Reunion of Christendom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 87.
 24. "Relation d'Angleterre, par monsieur Marc-Anthoine Correr" (c.1610), quoted in W.B. Rye, *England as seen by Foreigners in the Days of Elizabeth and James I* (London: John Russell Smith, 1865), 272.

25. Salisbury MSS 172–3 See the *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Honourable Marquis of Salisbury* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1976), 24 volumes.
26. Abbot narrative as recalled in 1627 printed in J. Nichols, *The Progresses, Processions and Magnificent Festivities of King James the First* (London, 1828) 4 vols, III, 80–1.
27. See Roy E Schreiber, "The First Carlisle Sir James May, First Earl of Carlisle as Courtier, Diplomat and Entrepreneur, 1580–1636," in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 74 (1984), 7.
28. For the rise of Villiers see Roger Lockyer, *Buckingham: The Life and Political Career of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, 1592–1628* (London: Longman, 1981).
29. *CSP Ven* XIV, 58.
30. Nichols, *Progresses and Processions* III, 80–1.
31. *CSP Ven* XV, 393.
32. Butler, *Stuart Court Masque*, 134. Linda Levy Peck, *Court Patronage and Corruption in Early Stuart England* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990), 68–72.
33. BL, Stowe MS 176, fol. 116.
34. See Albert J. Loomie, "Spanish Secret Diplomacy at the Court of James," 231–45 and see Loomie, "Toleration and Diplomacy," 1–60. See also Cynthia Fry, "Perceptions of Influence: The Catholic Diplomacy of Queen Anna and her Ladies, 1601–1604," 267–86.
35. Nichols, *Progresses and Processions*, III, 48.
36. *CSP Ven* X, 341.
37. *Ibid.*
38. As reported by John Chamberlain. See *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, ed. Norman Egbert McClure (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939) 2 vols, I, 245.
39. *CSP Ven* X, 518. See Loomie, "Spanish Secret Diplomacy," 231–45.
40. Richard Mackenney, "'A Plot Discover'd?' Myth, Legend and the 'Spanish' Conspiracy Against Venice in 1618," in *Venice Reconsidered: The History and Civilisation of an Italian City State, 1297–1797*, eds. John Martin and Dennis Romano (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 185–9, 195–7; H. R. Trevor-Roper, 'Spain and Europe 1598–1621,' in *The New Cambridge Modern History*, ed. J. P. Cooper (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 275–6.
41. *CSP Ven* XV, 183.
42. *CSP Ven* XV, 307.
43. *CSP Ven* XI, 508.
44. *CSP Ven* XIV, 96–7.
45. Susan Frye, "Anna of Denmark and the Historical Contextualisation of Shakespeare and Fletcher's Henry VIII," in *Women and Politics in Early*

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46. *CSP Ven* XI, 14, 87; Susan Frye, “Anna of Denmark,” 187–8.
 47. *CSP Ven* XI, 430–2.
 48. *CSP Ven*, X, 208. Samuel Rawson Gardiner, ed., *Narrative of the Spanish Marriage Treaty* (London: Camden Society, 1869) old ser. 101, 103.
 49. *CSP Ven*, X, 208.
 50. *Lettres missives de Henri IV*, ed., Jules Berger de Xivrey (Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1853), VI, 830.
 51. *CSP Ven*, XII, 73–4.
 52. *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, I, 404.
 53. *CSP Ven* XII, 312.
 54. James D. Mackie, *Negotiations between James VI and I and Ferdinand, Duke of Tuscany* (St. Andrews: St Andrews University, 1927), 72; The original letter is not extant. See also J. D Mackie, “The Secret Diplomacy of King James VI in Italy Prior to His Accession to the English Throne,” *Scottish Historical Review* 21 (1924): 267–82, 282.
 55. Van Male to Isabella Oct 2 1615 in Loomie, “King James I’s Catholic Consort,” 311.
 56. *CSP Ven*, XIII, 92–3.
 57. Loomie, “King James I’s Catholic Consort,” 312.
 58. *CSP Ven* XV, 206.
 59. *CSP Ven* XV, 206–7.
 60. *Csp Ven* XV, 392–3.
 61. See Clare McManus, *Women on the Renaissance Stage: Anna of Denmark and Female Masquing in the Stuart Court (1590–1619)* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), and her edited collection, *Women and Culture at the Courts of the Stuart Queens* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).
 62. See Peter Holbrook, “Jacobean Masques and Jacobean peace,” in *Politics of the Stuart Court Masque*, 67–87.
 63. *CSP Ven* XI, 86.
 64. Butler, *Stuart Court Masque*, 132.
 65. Kiefer Lewalski, “Anne of Denmark and the Subversions of Masquing,” 15–44.
 66. *CSP Ven* X, 403–4, 408–9.
 67. Martin Butler, “The Invention of Britain and the Early Stuart Masque,” in *The Stuart Court and Europe: Essays in Politics and Political Culture*, ed. Malcolm Smuts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996) 65–85. Peter Holbrook, “Jacobean Masques and the Jacobean Peace,” 72–8.
 68. TNA SP 14/6 fols. 53–6.

69. Mark Hutchings and Berta Caño-Echevarría, "Between Courts: Female Masquers and Anglo-Spanish Diplomacy, 1603–5," *Early Theatre* 15: 1 Special Issue. *Access and Contestation: Women's Performance in Early Modern England, Italy, France and Spain* (2012): 92.
70. Sir John Chamberlain to Dudley Carleton, 4 January 1617 in *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, II, 47.
71. Nichols, *Progresses and Processions*, 474.
72. Ralph Winwood, *Memorials of the Affairs of State in the Reigns of Q. Elizabeth and K. James I* (London: W. B. for T. Ward, 1725) II, 44.
73. See Loomie, "King James I's Catholic Consort," 309.
74. *CSP Ven XIV*, 412.
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Epilogue: “*Publica si domini regerent moderamina cunni*”: Deciphering Queenship and Counsel

Joanne Paul

Counsel in the early modern period—no matter the gender of the giver or receiver—was often hidden in poetry, drama or rhetorical techniques. Given the complex context of power and gender associated with queenship, as noted in the previous ten chapters, we should not be surprised that the authors in this volume agree that this is especially the case when counsel was given by or to queens.

As has been pointed out repeatedly in this volume, for instance by Susanna Niiranen (Chap. 5), recovering queenly counsel often involves a process much like deciphering. This was because, as Katarzyna Kosier maintains (Chap. 2), going beyond the prescriptions for queenly counsel could be tenuous and, indeed, dangerous. Queens often had to construct and represent themselves and their counsel as less knowledgeable, martial or capable in order to participate politically, as Catherine Fletcher shows (Chap. 6), highlighting some of the “codes” women used in order to communicate

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diplomatic counsel. The focus on maintaining an outward display of loyalty and obedience means that private conciliar exchanges are, by necessity, hidden, as Helen Matheson-Pollock demonstrates in reference to Mary Tudor (Chap. 4). This might include, as Michelle Beer (Chap. 3), Anna Whitelock (Chap. 11), Susan Broomhall (Chap. 7) and Alexandra Johnson (Chap. 8) show, cultural exchange, ceremony, informal influence, epistolary rhetoric and even wardrobe and architecture: all “silent advice”, which leaves few traces in written sources. In fact, John Walters suggests that this could create new ways of counselling the monarch (Chap. 10), such as through literature. Some of this is recoverable; Hannah Coates for instance focuses on how attention to shared source material and frameworks for counsel (such as humanist readings of classical ideas like *parrhesia* and *kairos*) can help us understand conciliar relationships (Chap. 9).

One means of discreet counsel not considered in this volume is through visual media—art, iconography and emblems.¹ As Peter Daly points out, the early modern world was full of messages presented in visual symbolic form: “Over the years, tens of thousands of people will have sat in churches and chapels, and looked at the stained glass windows, or the emblematic decorations painted on stone or wood. Untold numbers of people will have pondered the emblematic decorations”.² Certainly, this would have been equally, if not more, true for those at the highest echelons of society, for whom almost every spoon, trinket and doorknob was elaborately decorated in symbols.³

These images and emblems might function as proclamations of one’s lineage, standing or ambition,⁴ but could likewise offer counsel to the viewer.⁵ Most emblem books fall into the category of “moralising emblem”, following from the example set by the originator of the genre, Andrea Alciato.⁶ Such books were often directed at “Princes, preachers, counsellors” amongst others,⁷ and offered “advice” on a plethora of topics.⁸

Importantly as well, such images could offer counsel *about* counsel. For instance, Alciato’s emblem “*in Senatium boni Principis*” illustrates the council chamber of a good prince. This emblem is present in the first edition of Alciato’s *Emblematum liber* in 1531, and its title and description vary little from this first presentation. The text reads:

*Effigies manibus truncae ante altaria Divum,
Hic resident, quarum lumine capta prior.
Signa potestatis summae sanctique senatus,
Thebanis fuerant ista reperta viris.
Cur resident? quia mente graves decet esse quieta,*

*Iuridicos animo ne [sic] variare levi.
 Cur sine sunt manibus? capiant ne xaenia, nec se
 Pollicitis flecti muneribusve sinant.
 Caecus at est princeps, quod solis auribus, absque
 Affectu constans iussa senatus agit.*

[Figures without hands sit here before the altars of the gods. The chief of them is deprived of sight. These symbols of the supreme power and of the reverend senate were discovered by men of Thebes. – Why do they sit? – Because lawgivers should be serious, of a calm mind, and not change with inconstant thoughts. – Why have they no hands? – So that they may not take gifts, nor let themselves be influenced by promises or bribes. But the president is blind, because the Senate, by hearing alone, uninfluenced by feeling, impartially discharges what it is bidden to do.]⁹

The text applies to lawgivers and a *capta prior*, later *princeps*, but the image is undoubtedly of a king and counsellors. Holding a sceptre and wearing a crown, the king's eyes appear to be closed, rather than obstructed, and he is relaxed, contemplative in his unadorned chair. Seated on the same level and very close to the king, on either side, are two counsellor figures. Lacking hands, as the passage indicates, they still gesture to the king, working to make themselves heard in the wordless medium of the emblem. Other than the centrality and dress of the *princeps*, there is little difference between him and the other two figures. It is an informal scene of counsel: the king in discourse with close advisers who are seen as equals.¹⁰ As the image is reprinted (new versions of the image appeared in 1534 and 1549, see Fig. 12.1) the council chamber becomes more formal and institutionalized, and the king elevated and blindfolded (rather than closing his eyes of his own volition). As Kevin Dunn sets out, in this emblem, “The body's capacities are divided between the figures: the senators see and deliberate but remain passive while the king sits sensorily impaired but retaining the ability to act”.¹¹ The king is dependent on his counsellors, and it is only together that they represent a whole person: a visual representation of the “body politic” as consisting of king-in-council.

Similar images are present in other sources as well, for instance the woodcut by Richard Pynson from fifteenth-century England which shows a crowned monarch, seated on his throne, holding the sceptre and orb of his office. On either side are two figures who appear to be instructing the king. Four other figures range behind the king, partially obstructed by the arms of his large throne. Although the king is the central figure, and



Fig. 12.1 Andrea Alciati, “*In senatum boni principis*” in *Opera Omnes* (Basel, 1582), vol. 4, 1154. This is the image used in editions following the 1549 Lyons edition

abnormally larger than the others pictured, the two counsellors are standing very close to the monarch, occupying the space in front of the throne. Like the Alciato image, by the middle of the sixteenth century images of kings and their counsellors/councillors were becoming more formal with a more distinguished king. An excellent example is provided by the 1548 publication of Edward Hall’s *Vnion of the two noble and illustre famelies of Lancastre [and] Yorke*. The frontispiece shows a picture of the newly crowned Edward VI, with seated counsellors on either side, who converse among themselves. A parallel image comes at the end of the text, of his father also in council.¹²

Images of queens in council are more difficult to find, as I and my coeditors discovered when seeking a cover image for this volume, and—especially in the case we did end up selecting—they are even more difficult

to parse. A few instances exist, most of them of Elizabeth I. She is shown in John Foxe’s *Actes and Monuments* (1563) in an initial “C” for “Constantine”, to which the queen is compared.¹³ Seated on a throne, with an image of a defeated pope and the broken keys of St. Peter beneath her feet, at her right hand are three figures, likened perhaps to the three magi, and identified by scholars as Foxe, his publisher John Day and their court agent, Thomas Norton.¹⁴ If this identification is correct, then it not only alludes to the nativity, and Constantine, but also “presentation scenes” in which books of advice are given to rulers.¹⁵ *Actes and Monuments* was dedicated to Elizabeth, and her identification with Constantine was as much praise as it was counsel. She is not, however, given the grand counsel scenes her brother and father were afforded (Fig. 12.2).¹⁶



Fig. 12.2 Queen Elizabeth I of England as the Emperor Constantine in initial C; John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (London, 1563), B i^r

If we turn to the world of emblems, we do not fare much better. There is an emblem, from Pierre Coustau's *Pegma* (1555, reproduced in French in 1560) which shows a woman with a crown under a cloth of state, surrounded by speaking and gesturing female attendants, much like the "*in Senatium*" emblem. The subject is given as "*in tempora & mores*" and the image described as "*mulier imperator, & mulier miles*" or "woman emperor¹⁷ & woman soldier". The poems that go with it give a very different image of the balanced body politic shown by the Alciato emblem. They focus on how the "*respublica*" is "swamped by foolish/female wombs"¹⁸ [*fatuis subsit ... vulvis*] and "weak old women" [*elumbes ... anus*]. It "trusts in foolish wombs" [*Creditur ... stultis ... vulvis*] and "insanely enjoys female command" [*Foemineogue amens utitur imperio*]. The "*problema*" it describes is "if cunts rule the public rudder/government as lords" or, "if cunts steer the ship of state as lords" [*Publica si domini regerent moderamina cunni*], which is why women have been banned from such rule, and given the rights of a child.

The ship of state, as a metaphor for rule, was a popular one from Plato and Aristotle onwards, and was often represented in emblems as such.¹⁹ It could also be linked directly to counsel, such as in the emblem by Achille Bocchi in his *Symbolicarum quaestionum* of 1574 (first published in 1555). There, the image accompanying the lesson that "Great things of counsel by support, not by strength to be governed" [*Resconsilii ope, havid viribus magnas geri*], is the image of a ship. At the stern sits the "able old man" who remains "calm" and holds the tiller, pointing at the "youths" who scramble about. They are strong, but unable to manage the ship.²⁰ The lesson is that calm experienced counsel, not youthful strength, ought to guide "great things", such as the ship of state (Fig. 12.3).

This emblem brings us at last to the image chosen as the cover image for this volume, the frontispiece to John Dee's *Generall and Rare Memorials pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Navigation* (1577), designed by Dee himself.²¹ The book is self-consciously a work of counsel. Dee seeks to convince the queen, by means of her Privy Council and principally one of the queen's favourites, Christopher Hatton, that a navy and empire are necessary for the security of England's shores.²² The proposal is a "Supplication to the Queen her most excellent Maiestie", though through Hatton and the Privy Council, and divorced from Dee's own name.²³ Although Dee's proposal is of interest, for its presentation as well as for its suggestion of an English "empire", it is the frontispiece—also used as the cover image for this volume—which concerns us here.

CLVIII LIB. III.

RESCONSILII OPE, HAUD VIRIBVS MAGNAS GERI.

Symb. LXXIII.

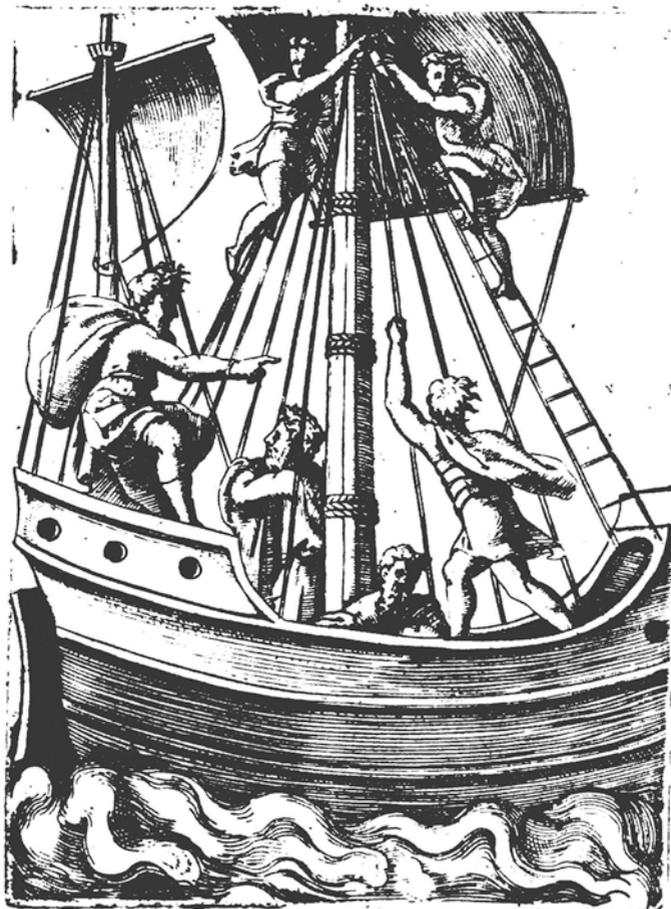


Fig. 12.3 Achille Bocchi, "Resconsilii ope, haud viribus magnas geri" in *Symbolicarum quaestionum* (Bologna, 1574), 213

The image at the centre of the frontispiece is described as an “English Hieroglyph” and draws on a number of symbols from the occult.²⁴ By now familiar to us, however, is the image of the ship of state to the right in the “hieroglyph”. Figured as a ship of Christendom by the Chi-Rho sign (☩) on the masts of the ship, it is also the ship of Europe: it is identified in Greek with “*EUROPA*”, and the image of Europa astride a bull accompanies it.²⁵ In the ship is Elizabeth and three men, often thought to parallel the Constantine image in *Actes and Monuments*, which is also included as an initial “C” in *General and Rare Memorials* (John Day was the printer for both texts).²⁶ Elizabeth gestures to the men with an open palm, not the pointed finger of the calm old man in Bocchi, but still appears to hold the rudder of the ship.²⁷ It appears to be the image of a queen and her council, together steering the ship of state. As Frances Yates suggests, “Dee’s virgin seeks practical advice from the traditions of the Greek empire for the defence and expansion of her realm”, which she can find in the text itself.²⁸ Elizabeth is “advised by her sober counsellors”, according to Margery Corbett and Ronald Lightbown²⁹ (Fig. 12.4).

If we look at Dee’s original drawing, however, the image is slightly different.³⁰ Still Elizabeth sits in the European ship of Christendom, reaching out with one hand with rudder clearly in the other hand. The men in the ship with her, however, have changed. There are now four, not three, marking a clear departure from the Constantine image. They are distinct, and in motion, and look to Elizabeth with arms outstretched.³¹ It is a scene of motion and emotion, compared to the three stationary and calm men in the printed version. It is, in other words, much closer to the Bocchi image than the initial C, and Elizabeth is figured as the calm and experienced navigator, who may not be as strong as the youthful men that surround her, but is more sure. Looking at Dee’s drawing, one cannot be as sure as Yates and Corbett and Lightbown that his intention was to show a queen advised by “sober” counsellors, instead, it seems to portray her in a position of control over her counsellors, similar to the helmsman in the Bocchi image.

Elizabeth does not point at these men, because her outstretched hand has another target: the image of *Occasio* near the centre of the frontispiece. *Occasio* can be identified by her bald head and long forelock, which needs to be seized in order to win opportunity; in Dee’s words “there is a Little lock of LADY OCCASION, Flickring in the Ayre, by our hands, to catch hold on”.³² *Occasio* was no stranger to maritime presentations, in fact she is often presented upon or by the tempestuous seas.³³ From the middle of the century, the famous Alciato image of *Occasio* also includes

the image of at least one ship, apparently seeking her out.³⁴ This is at the foundation of ideas of *kairos*; Aristotle had related the knowledge of particular circumstances not only to medicine, but also to navigation: “the agents themselves have to consider what is suited to the circumstances on each occasion [*kairos*], just as is the case with the art of medicine or of navigation”.³⁵

Dee’s *Occasio* indicates her forelock with her left hand, and in her right she offers a laurel wreath, symbolizing victory.³⁶ This is in contrast to the usual presentations of *Occasio* in which she holds a razor—as she is “keener than any cutting edge”.³⁷ Dee’s *Occasio* is therefore already tamed, and inclined to give victory to the person who captures her. Likewise, whereas *Occasio* was usually shown standing on a ball or orb, here she stands with one foot on the rock above the “fortress of safety” and the other on a pyramid, perhaps symbolizing prudence or the strength of the monarchy.³⁸ The placement of *Occasio* on top of a pyramid, however, may also echo the description of the same in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, printed in Venice in 1499, with accompanying image.³⁹ Notably, in the English translation of that text (in 1592), her wind-pushed spinning on the pyramid made a noise “as if the mynte of the Queene of England had being going there”.⁴⁰ It was precisely towards such an opportunity that Dee hoped Elizabeth’s treasury would be headed, though there is no evidence that Dee would have seen such a translation fifteen years before it was published. Alternatively (or additionally), it could be a reference to Dee himself, and the delta figure he often used to represent his own name.⁴¹

Dee’s text mentions occasion and opportunity frequently, including in his explanation of the frontispiece.⁴² In the manuscript it is clear that *Occasio* looks directly at the queen, though in both versions of the image Elizabeth appears to be pointing to *Occasio*, indicating the direction in which her ship should travel.⁴³ In neither version do the men on her ship look towards *Occasio* or her laurel wreath, their eyes are instead fixed on Elizabeth, either for guidance, or to pass on their advice.

Seizing opportunity before it flew off was something that Elizabeth’s counsellors often complained she was poor at. As Hannah Coates points out in this volume (Chap. 9), Francis Walsingham, at least once, associated this prevarication with her sex: “her *Majestie* beinge by sexe fearfull, cannot but be irresolute, Irresoluc^on beinge an ordinarie Companion to feare”. Elizabeth’s counsellors repeatedly demonstrate a knowledge of both the notion and iconography of *Occasio* in their attempts to counsel the queen.⁴⁴ Sir Thomas Smith writes, for instance, to William Cecil, Lord

Burghley in January 1572 that “ther was never better tyme to doo good” in securing the queen’s “suerty, be yt by marriage or by league”.⁴⁵ As such, Burghley must “moue the quenes ma^{tie} to lose no tyme, & not to p[ro]crastinate” as she is “wont” to do.⁴⁶ He reminds Burghley that “Occasion the more heavy she is before, the more bald she is behend”.⁴⁷ Was Elizabeth truly a procrastinator? Probably she was; delay provided a useful strategy.⁴⁸ Elizabeth acknowledged that “delays are dangerous”, but insisted on taking the time to take advice.⁴⁹ However, it must be considered that her counsellors’ complaints about her predilection towards prevarication stemmed just as much from a gendered demand that she listen, and listen immediately, than simply that she was obstinate. As Susan Doran has recently suggested, the complaints of those like Burghley or Francis Walsingham in regards to her ignoring advice was rather that “Elizabeth ignored their particular ‘good’ counsel”.⁵⁰

Seizing *Occasio* was, as Walsingham’s statement suggests, largely a manly affair. Emblems from the period, perhaps most notably Jean Jacques Boissard’s “L’Occasion” in his *Emblems Latins* of 1588, show the naked *Occasio* being seized by a virile soldier. Likewise, the c. 1510 woodcut by Marcantonio Raimondi of “Virtue Dominating Fortune” shows a muscular bearded man grabbing *Occasio*’s forelock as she stands on her spheres, and beating her naked back. So what does it mean that Dee seems to place so much stock in Elizabeth’s ability to seize occasion, when even her counsellors have perhaps missed it? It could be advice very much in line with her counsellors’ complaints against her, advising her to take occasion through illustrated encomia. Even so, however, it says something that in his manuscript image Dee figures her not only as the capable helmsman, but also as the one able to see and seize opportunity. Dee appears to be speaking directly to the queen in his image—counselling her to seize occasion, guide her council, and steer the ship of state herself, regardless of how her gender would regularly be thought to limit these activities. The shift in the representation of the councillors between the manuscript and print editions might be a change of heart by Dee, an intervention by Day or indeed simply a requirement of the medium.

* * *

Whether speaking of this image in particular, or the various practices and performances of counsel in the context of queenship more generally, it is clear that we, as historians, are likely to only gain access to parts of the

story: indications rather than straightforward confirmations of the way in which elite women navigated the negotiations of gender and power through the giving and receiving of advice in the early modern period. Does this mean that the project is in vain? Certainly not: as this volume has attempted to show, investigating the relationship between queenship and counsel in this period challenges existing understandings of what constitutes “the political”. That the advice investigated here is encoded—through symbol, performance, rhetoric, wardrobe, architecture—is itself a fascinating conclusion about the amorphous construction of the political, and the ways in which women, excluded by traditional understandings of politics, could manipulate these tools to reclaim authority in the networks of counsel which defined early modern monarchies.

NOTES

1. Visual displays in regards to clothing, ceremony and masques are considered, for instance by Beer (Chap. 3) and Whitelock (Chap. 11). Including “emblems” in this category is problematic, for as Peter M. Daly, *The Emblem in Early Modern Europe: Contributions to the Theory of the Emblem* (Farnham: Routledge, 2014), 32 suggests, the emblem consisted of both image and text, and could sometimes include only the latter. For the purposes of this piece, however, emblems will be considered that consist of both text and image.
2. Peter M. Daly, *The Emblem in Early Modern Europe: Contributions to the Theory of the Emblem* (Farnham: Routledge, 2014), 56.
3. Peter Maurice Daly, “Emblems: An Introduction,” in *Companion to Emblem Studies*, ed. Peter Maurice Daly (New York: AMS Press, 2008), 8–10.
4. W. R. Albury, *Castiglione’s Allegory: Veiled Policy in the Book of the Courtier (1528)* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), 192.
5. Daly, “Emblems: An Introduction”, 5 speaks of “the function of the emblem” being “didactic in the broadest sense: it was intended to convey knowledge and truth in a brief and compelling form that will persuade the reader and imprint itself on memory”. Karl A. E. Enekel, “The Neo-Latin Emblem: Humanist Learning, Classical Antiquity, and the Virtual ‘Wunderkammer’,” in *Companion to Emblem Studies*, 144–5 likewise sees the emblem book as a visual commonplace book; “they offer the vast knowledge of classical and humanist scholarship in a nutshell, packed in small portions and presented in a very agreeable form”.
6. Michael Bath, *Speaking Pictures: English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture* (London: Longman, 1994), 2.

7. John Manning, “Whitney’s ‘Choice of Emblemes’: A Reassessment,” *Renaissance Studies* 4, no. 2 (1990): 185.
8. John Manning, *Emblem* (London: Reaktion Books, 2002), 48, 148, 226, 322.
9. Alciato 1531, sig. D1^v. Translation provided by “In Senatium Boni Principis” *Alciato at Glasgow Emblem Project* (accessed 16 Aug 2011).
10. This image is also used in the editions of Alciato produced in Ausburg in 1531 and 1534.
11. Kevin Dunn, “‘Action, Passion, Motion’: The Gestural Politics of Counsel in ‘The Spanish Tragedy,’” *Renaissance Drama* 31 (2002): 27.
12. Metal-cut image, see Luborsky and Ingram 1998, vol. 1, 422.
13. See Patrick Collinson, “John Foxe as Historian,” *The Acts and Monuments Online*, accessed 10 August 2017, <https://www.johnfoxe.org/index.php?realm=more&gototype=&type=essay&book=essay3>.
14. Dale Hoak, “Iconography of the Crown Imperial,” in *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 94.
15. Elizabeth Evenden, *Patents, Pictures and Patronage: John Day and the Tudor Book Trade* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 114.
16. There is also a mid-seventeenth-century image of Elizabeth I flanked by Cecil and Walsingham on the frontispiece of *The Compleat Ambassador*, containing the letters of the two pictured, amongst others, by Dudley Digges. Elizabeth, however, is not “in counsel” with the men pictured, and the book is about the counsel that goes on around her and about her, rather than any she herself is involved in. Likewise the 1693 frontispiece to the *Complete Journal of the House of Lords and the House of Commons Throughout the Whole Reign of Queen Elizabeth of Glorious Memory* presents Elizabeth in parliament in a similar way to the council scenes in Hall, but this is almost a full century after her death.
17. Could be “general”, but the French from 1560 gives “*Emperiere*”, or “empress”; see Randle Corgrave, *A Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (London: William Hunt, 1660), Kk 1^r.
18. Glasgow gives “empty” for *fatuis*.
19. It first appears in Book VI of Plato’s *Republic*.
20. *In puppi residens clauum tenet ille quietus,/ At non quae iuuenum robora, strennuitas, /Quin multo maiora facit, melioraq[ue], solus/ Ipse sua praestans omnibus ingenio./ Res magnae haus valido, aut veloci corpore siunt,/ Verum animi sensu, consilio, imperio.*
21. This frontispiece has been analysed several times. See for instance Frances A. Yates, *Astraea: The Imperial Theme in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1975), 49–50; Margery Corbett and R. W. Lightbown, *Comely Frontispiece: Emblematic Title-Page in England, 1550–1660* (London;

- Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 49–56; Peter J. French, *John Dee: The World of the Elizabethan Magus: The World of an Elizabethan Magus* (London: Routledge, 1987), 182–7; John N. King, *Tudor Royal Iconography: Literature and Art in an Age of Religious Crisis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 238–41.
22. See the context provided by Corbett and Lightbown, *Comely Frontispiece*, 52. For more on the contents of the book, see French, *John Dee*, 182–3. Notably, there is a double-sided portrait of Christopher Hatton dating to around 1580 (the information in the painting dates it to 12 December 1581), upon one side of which is an image of *Tempus* as *Occasio*, with the poem that usually accompanies the image of *Occasio*, ending with the instruction to hang the image in an entrance-hall, to stir up lazy men; See C. W. R. D. Moseley, “A Portrait of Sir Christopher Hatton, Erasmus and an Emblem of Alciato: Some Questions”, *The Antiquaries Journal* 86 (2006): 373–9.
 23. John Dee, *Generall and Rare Memorials pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Navigation* (London, 1577), 20.
 24. Corbett and Lightbown, *Comely Frontispiece*, 49.
 25. Yates, *Astraea*, 49; Corbett and Lightbown, 50.
 26. Yates, *Astraea*, 49 suggests that the theme of the C initial is expanded “to cover the theme of [Dee’s] book”. The same claim is repeated in King, *Tudor Royal Iconography*, 238.
 27. Yates, *Astraea*, 49. Corbett and Lightbown, *Comely Frontispiece*, 50 instead suggest that she holds a sceptre, not the rudder, in her left hand. In the hand-drawing, it is more clearly the rudder.
 28. Yates, *Astraea*, 50. Corbett and Lightbown, *Comely Frontispiece*, 50 identify the three men as “her counsellors”; French, *John Dee*, 184 simply as “members of the nobility”.
 29. Corbett and Lightbown, *Comely Frontispiece*, 56.
 30. This drawing was catalogued amongst the drawings of Elias Ashmole and was used as a model for the frontispiece, Corbett and Lightbown, *Comely Frontispiece*, 51.
 31. As Corbett and Lightbown, *Comely Frontispiece*, 51 point out, whereas in the frontispiece they are “all cloaked and dressed alike”, in the manuscript drawing they are more distinctive. Both she and her counsellors are also much younger.
 32. John Dee, *General and Rare Memorials Pertayning to the Perfect Arte of Navigation* (London, 1577), 54.
 33. Daly, *The Emblem*, 99. See for instance Andrea Alciato’s *Emblematum libellus* (Paris, 1534), 20—the same image appears in the 1536, 1539 and 1542 editions and similar images of *Occasio* at sea appear in subsequent versions of Alciato’s influential emblem book.
 34. An image of *Occasio* at sea with a ship appears in the 1549, 1550 and 1551 Lyon editions.

35. Tarik Wareh, *The Theory and Practice of Life: Isocrates and the Philosophers*, Hellenic Studies Series 54 (Washington, DC: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2013), 4. Aristot. Nic. Eth. 1104a.
36. J. C. Cooper, *An Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Traditional Symbols* (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1979), 96.
37. “Emblem: In Occasionem. Sur L’occasion,” Alciato at Glasgow, accessed 11 December 2017, <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/alciato/emblem.php?id=FALc121>.
38. Corbett and Lightbown, *Comely Frontispiece*, 56. See the pyramid emblem in Hadrianus Junius’ *Emblemata* (1565), which describes “The Pyramids, eternal monuments of the Egyptian kings: The clinging ivy winds round them with wandering branches. The needy populace is supported by the secure wealth of its kings: And constant strength of mind flourishes for ever”; “French Emblems: Emblem: Principum Opes, Plebis Adminicula”, French Emblems at Glasgow, accessed 4 December 2017.
39. *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (Venice, 1499), <http://archive.org/details/hypnerotomachiap00colo>, b ii^v.
40. Francesco Colonna, *Hypnerotomachia*, trans. R. D. (London, 1592), C 3^{r-v}.
41. Peter J. Forshaw, “The Hermetic Frontispiece: Contextualising John Dee’s Hieroglyphic Monad”, *Ambix* 64, no. 2 (3 April 2017): 116–17.
42. Dee, *General and Rare Memorials*, 53.
43. Corbett and Lightbown, *Comely Frontispiece*, 51. <http://www.emblems.arts.gla.ac.uk/french/emblem.php?id=FJU014>. There are similar emblems and images in other emblem books of the time as well, such as Claude Paradin, *Devises heroïques* (1557). See Anthony John Harper and Ingrid Höpel, *The German-Language Emblem in Its European Context: Exchange and Transmission* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2000), 160.
44. Sir Edward Stafford, “Stafford to Burghley,” *State Papers*, 1588, 18 (23 November 1588): 344; Thomas Lyly, “Thomas Lyly to Sir Robert Cecil,” ed. R. A. Roberts, *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury, Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*, 1591–1595, 5 (1894): 91.
45. SP 70/122 f.50^r.
46. SP 70/122 f.50^r.
47. SP 70/122 f.50^r.
48. Susan Doran, *Elizabeth I and Her Circle* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 274.
49. Elizabeth I, *Elizabeth I: Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller and Mary Beth Rose (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 189.
50. Susan Doran, “Elizabeth I and Counsel,” in *The Politics of Counsel in England and Scotland, 1286–1707*, ed. Jacqueline Rose (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 169.

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