

years before radio and television were the principal means by which people could feel a sense of participation in events physically remote from them. Hence, he misunderstands (265) my summary of the proceedings at such parallel events (*Great Deaths*, 57) as relating to the actual funeral services themselves.

These examples suggest a wider caution that Range's interpretations, especially when he modifies the conclusions of other scholars, often need to be checked against his references. Nevertheless, despite such limitations, his research on the musical aspects of the central London and Windsor services means that his work is a valuable addition to the literature. The comprehensive and somewhat mechanical nature of his treatment renders the book rather tedious as narrative and analysis but very useful as a work of reference. Those seeking a rounded contextualized understanding of its subject will, however, need to read it alongside the work of other scholars, including Olivia Bland's *The Royal Way of the Death* (1986), which Range complements rather than supersedes; Jennifer Woodward's *The Theatre of Death* (1997) for the early part of the period; the studies of Paul Fritz and Esther Schor for the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; and David Cannadine and John Wolfe for the Victorian era and the twentieth century.

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JACQUELINE ROSE, ed. *The Politics of Counsel in England and Scotland, 1286–1707*. Proceedings of the British Academy 204. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016. Pp. 303. \$110 (cloth). doi: 10.1017/jbr.2018.138

While all late medieval and early modern English and Scottish kings promoted the sacred, even absolutist, nature of their monarchical power, they also used the discourse of counsel to legitimate their authority, inform their decisions and manage discordance. The influence of the counselor was the chink, the gap through which others could seek to shape policy. Thus, the counselor's role implicitly acknowledged the negotiated nature of even so-called absolute monarchy. In *The Politics of Counsel in England and Scotland*, the various authors' clear explanations of the theories of seeking, giving, and occasionally heeding counsel, and the more institutionalized counsel offered through formal councils demonstrates that using and following counsel was all part and parcel of being an early modern monarch.

Individually, each of the jewel-like chapters unpicks, elucidates, and clarifies the rationale, discourse, functions, implications, processes and effects of seeking and taking counsel, and the dangers in failing to be seen to take counsel. Not including those who considered themselves by right part of the consultative process in decision-making, Alan MacDonald argues, led to Charles I's undoing, though this was the culmination of a decline in communication that had already begun in James VI and I's reign after 1603. The "perils of offering unwelcome counsel" are noted too, in this case Richard Rex on Thomas More and Henry VIII (145). Jacqueline Rose draws the distinction between consultation and counsel, and Susan Doran usefully separates two distinct activities, in firstly seeking counsel, and sourcing information on which to make a decision, and secondly in heeding and acting upon counsel. Elizabeth I did the first but not necessarily the second, especially where the royal prerogative was involved (156–57). Some of the authors chart the rise of institutionalized counsel in privy councils, councils of estates, and parliaments.

Above all, Rose's lengthy, measured and comprehensive introduction should be required reading for anyone looking at monarchical power in England and Scotland. She brings out

the linkage between expectations of good rule and the discourse of counsel, the monarch's role in negotiating advice, and in the related texts a "shared and constant framework of thought about counsel" (19) that was malleable enough during times of political crisis. She notes the difficulties of capturing the processes of unrecorded informal counsel, often oral, in comparison to the formal councils' registers, observing that we know more about it when it failed, because of the recorded complaints such failures produced. Counsel was a "means of political dialogue" (31), and one that was "a valuable polemical weapon ... because it hard to deny outright that it should exist" (14). It could act as a guardian against tyrannical rule, and arbitrary justice. As a result, it was more than the "unthinking reiteration of moral commonplaces" (2), instead it was an outlet for potential grievance just short of outright resistance, and an opportunity to "reassert widely share principles of political harmony" (16). It was also beneficial to keep less friendly counselors around you, as a way of containing their opposition, and as useful scapegoats for error. Sometimes Rose could have pushed this idea further; though being seen to take counsel is considered in terms of the legitimization of authority, its role in the negotiation and exercise of political power remains somewhat underdeveloped.

This is a very useful book about the politics of counsel in England and in Scotland, written by specialists in the discrete histories of these two separate kingdoms. But the only time a more comparative or integrated approach to the subject is taken in Rose's final chapter on the problematic lack of a British council to deal with specifically British problems—that Scotland had one that dealt with Scottish things, and the English had another for English concerns. Instead, we have a book that does well to underline the significance of counsel in each kingdom but does not consider how they compared. As a result, the implicit assumption seems to be that they worked in a broadly similar manner.

But how much more fruitful might it have been, in a book about two adjoining kingdoms that came together dynastically in 1603, to compare and contrast the separate political systems, the differences between which Rose rightly acknowledges? There's a gaping lacuna where a more comparative approach might have yielded something more than the otherwise insightful investigation of the two separate kingdoms—and that is the mid sixteenth century. Unfortunately, Mary, Queen of Scots, and still less James V, are but bit players in this overly English-focused theater. Mary appears in these pages only to receive counsel from Elizabeth, or as the object whose fate was being determined by Elizabeth's reaction to or use of English counsel. What of Mary's own counselors or councils? Given their disparate fortunes, can anything be understood from a comparison of the ways in which Elizabeth and Mary interacted with counsel? This may have been particularly fruitful given Rose's excellent insights into the pressure-release provided by counsel short of resistance. In the tumultuous events of Mary's reign and forced abdication surely we have a case study of counsel (or otherwise) that needs testing, and testing against another sixteenth century queen.

And, too, what might we learn of any similarities or differences between Henry VIII's and James V's treatment of counsel? In all this the evidence of David Lyndsay's *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* (first performed in 1540, with the oldest extant version first performed in 1552), or Richard Maitland's or Alexander Scott's advice poems were begging for discussion. Additionally, could Mason and Doran not have usefully combined to write a chapter together? Instead what we have here is Scottish historians using Scottish historiography, and English historians using English scholarship. What might a consideration, for instance, of counsel in Scotland as part of the negotiation of power as explained by Steve Hindle, Mike Braddick, Keith Wrightson, et al. for England? Perhaps negotiation is now old hat, nearly two decades' old work, but surely it still has something to say about the political processes being described here. This book is very good in its parts, but as a whole it is missing a trick.

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