

Thomas Elyot on Counsel, *Kairos* and Freeing Speech in Tudor England

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What makes speech free? It is usually taken that speech is ‘free’ if it is not met with punishment from governing authorities.¹ ‘Freedom of Speech’ involves a right to speak without fear of governmental reprisal. A focus on the debates surrounding ‘liberty of speech’ in the Tudor period, however, leads us to another way of considering the ‘freedom’ of speech: that it is not the absence of punishment which makes speech free, but rather the choice to speak freely regardless of such reprisal.² In this way, the discussion shifts from the limits and boundaries of free speech to the way in which speaking truth is itself freeing, regardless of the consequences.

In Tudor England, these debates centred on the delivery of political counsel. There was both a ‘paradox of counsel’ and a ‘problem of counsel’ in Tudor England. The paradox existed in the expectation that rulers must take counsel to legitimise their rule, even though such counsel – if obligatory – could limit their power. The problem came from the perspective of the counsellors themselves: they ought to speak truth to power but doing so in non-ideal circumstances could lead to that counsel being ignored, or worse, their imprisonment or death. The key word often used to describe such dangerous counsel was *parrhesia* [παρρησία], variously understood as ‘plain speaking’ or ‘liberty of speech’.

No Tudor writer had more to say about counsel and frank speech than Thomas Elyot, whose thought on the topic was shaped by the increasingly restricted space for counsel-giving in England in the 1530s.³ Elyot, especially in his writings of 1533, tackled both the paradox and the problem of counsel head on. Drawing particularly on the work of Isocrates and Plutarch, Elyot sets out that the demands of ‘right timing’ (*kairos*) necessitate frank speech in order to limit the otherwise unrestrained passions of a monarch, regardless if these will be met with punishment or not. Such speech, Elyot maintains is not just free in itself but is itself liberating: for the speaker – no matter the consequences; for the listener – even when forced to listen or obey; and for the commonwealth. As such, Elyot answers both the paradox and the problem of counsel: the king’s power is not diminished by obeying virtuous counsel, but enhanced, and the counsellor is not endangered by giving his counsel, but freed. In the absence of an unrestricted space for

communicating ideas, for Elyot truthful frank speech still must be delivered, which serves to free the speaker, even if it results in physical enslavement. It is a different view of free speech than most modern interpretations and has the potential offer another way of thinking about free speech – and its issues – today.

I

From the classical to the modern period *parrhesia* can be seen to have four essential elements:

- (primarily) A truthful speech act,
- (which contains) a critique of either speaker or audience (usually the latter),
- (given in the context of) a power differential (speaker must be less powerful than the audience),
- (resulting in) a sense of risk or danger in speaking this truth.⁴

Despite these central elements, *parrhesia* has been interpreted various ways throughout its very long history. In particular, work has been done in the last decade to show the ways in which the Foucauldian interpretation of *parrhesia* is in many ways at odds with – or is at the least another side of – an older notion of *parrhesia*, which highlighted its offensive licentiousness.⁵ Plato both recommends and condemns *parrhesia*, suggesting that it ought to be restricted to the law-maker, as its use by other classes can produce civil discord.⁶ The great rhetorician Quintilian (highly influential in the Renaissance) places *parrhesia* (or '*licentia*') amongst his figures of speech, noting that it 'may frequently be made a cloak for flattery'.⁷ As Matthew Landauer points out, ancient *parrhesia* had both a positive and a negative connotation. Pejoratively, it could be 'thoughtless, careless, impudent speech'.⁸ On the other hand, it could also be the sort of free speech that served 'as a possible antidote to secure the epistemic properties crucial to a successful debate', thus securing democracy.⁹ This can also have to do with a confusion and conflation of *parrhesia* and an older term, *isegoria*, which tended to have more positive connotations, relating to the opportunity for all to speak freely.¹⁰ It was *parrhesia* that proved the more enduring term, absorbing rather than ending the debates about what 'free speech' ought to mean.

The connection between notions of 'free speech', *parrhesia* and counsel-giving in Early Modern England has long been established. David Colclough's work on *Freedom of Speech in Early Stuart England* has been especially influential in showing that 'At the heart of early Stuart debates on free speech was the question of how best to advise a prince – the question of counsel'.¹¹

Parrhesia was the key rhetorical figure in these discussions, which becomes interwoven with the paradox and problem of counsel:

The counsellor's freedom of speech was a prerequisite for the proper fulfilment of his duty, and both republican and imperial versions of the classical past insisted that frankness was a central virtue of the advisor. The compulsion to speak out thus came from a desire or necessity to be virtuous, as well as from the firmly held belief that ultimately the safety of the realm was more important than either one's own safety or the comfort of the ruler.¹²

Parrhesia was associated with a Ciceronian duty to protect the commonwealth over and above other interests, especially one's own self-interest.

The most influential Tudor handbook on rhetoric, Thomas Wilson's *The Arte of Rhetorique*, first published in 1553, defines *parrhesia* as 'when we speake boldly, & without feare, euen to the proudest of them, whatsoeuer we please, or haue list to speake.'¹³ Henry Peacham's *The Garden of Eloquence* (1577) echoes this idea, also bringing in the notion of the permissibility of such speech: '*Parrhesia*, when speaking before them whome we ought to reuerence and feare, & hauing somthing to say, which either toucheth the[m]selues, or their friends, do desire them to pardon our boldness, shewing that it were great pittie, yf for lack of admonitio[n], vices should be maintained, & vertues oppressed.'¹⁴ In using this figure, Peacham goes on, 'the time, the place, and chiefly the persons, ought wel to be considered of.'¹⁵ Likewise George Puttenham, Elyot's own nephew, writes in his *Defense of English Poesie* (1589) that '*Parhsia*' can be said to be in use 'when [the persuader's] intent is to sting his aduersary, or els to declare his mind in broad and liberal speeches, which might breede offence of scandall, he will seeme to bespeak pardon before hand, whereby his licentiousnes may be the better borne withall.'¹⁶ *Parrhesia* is thus not free speech itself for these writers, but carries within it the request for freedom of speech. In the absence of institutionalised universal rights, frank speech to those in power requires the indulgence of the listener in each instance. For this reason, *parrhesia* brings together two otherwise apparently-contradictory notions: dangerous speech and free speech.

Attention to the way in which Thomas Elyot fits into this story, and perhaps even complicates it, has developed in the last ten years, particularly in the work of Arthur Walzer. Whereas Colclough focused on the rhetorical emphasis on *decorum* – 'the time at which, the place in which, and the persons to whom one was speaking'¹⁷ – Walzer and others have focused on another Greek concept: *kairos* [καῖρός] – the 'right' or 'opportune' moment.¹⁸ Walzer makes the argument that Elyot's *Of the Knowledge Which Maketh a Wise Man* and *Pasquil the Playne*, both produced in 1533, treat the issues of right-timing, counsel and *parrhesia* in ways that highlight

the Janus-faced nature of this last concept, drawn from the classical debates regarding its use in both democratic and non-democratic contexts.¹⁹ As Walzer notes, in non-democratic institutions (he gives the examples of ‘Imperial Rome and Early Modern England’) the “ideal counselor” replaces the “ideal orator” as the normative idea of the rhetor’ who uses *parrhesia*.²⁰

It is especially in the works of classical philosophers on which Elyot draws – Isocrates and Plutarch – that *parrhesia* becomes connected to ideas about advising the ruler, as well as *kairos*.²¹ Isocrates’ *Ad Nicoclem* advises the king to grant freedom of speech to ‘those who have good judgement’ to advise him,²² and he puts himself consciously in the position of *parrhesiast* in his address to Philip and in the *Antidosis*.²³ In Plutarch *parrhesia* reaches new levels of importance, reflecting the tension between the need for the free speech of men of prudence, and the ways in which it could be a cover for the flatterer.²⁴ Plutarch sets out a series of tests to uncover such a one: the most crucial distinctions between the flatterer and a true friend is in the nature of their advice, and especially, that the latter gives frank advice (*parrhesia*) at the right time (*kairos*). In particular, ‘frankness, like any other medicine, if it be not applied at the proper time [*kairos*], does but cause useless suffering and disturbance, and it accomplishes, one may say, painfully what flattery accomplishes pleasantly. For people are injured, not only by untimely [*akairos*] praise, but by untimely blame as well’.²⁵ By missing the proper moment, such speakers can ‘deliver’ the listener readily into the hands of flatterers. In trying to avoid the accusation of flattery, in other words, friends must be careful they do not go too far the other way in giving unseasonable criticism, and Plutarch proceeds to give detailed advice about the proper nature of frank speech. Plutarch summarises: ‘In what circumstances, then, should a friend be severe, and when should he be emphatic in using frank speech? It is when occasions demand [*kairos*] of him that he check the headlong course of pleasure or of anger or of arrogance, or that he abate avarice or curb inconsiderate heedlessness.’²⁶ A true friend will watch for such occasions, and not let them ‘slip’. For this reason, Plutarch concludes that ‘it is necessary to treat frankness [*parrhesia*] as a fine art, inasmuch as it is the greatest and most potent medicine in a friendship, always needing, however, all care to hit the right occasion [*kairos*], and a tempering with moderation’.²⁷ It is important, Plutarch makes clear, to grasp the occasion for frank speech, in order to mitigate the influence of the passions in the counselled. This is the purpose or function of *parrhesia* for Plutarch, one of the most influential classical writers on the subject in Tudor England.

II

The classical tradition, however, as the Renaissance humanists found, raised more questions than it provided answers. How could this opportune moment be identified? How could a frank speaker deliver advice to one not inclined to hear it, especially if an ideal opportunity does not present itself? In particular, they were interested in the way in which counsel might provide for the freedom of the people, by countering the tyrannical tendencies of a single ruler.²⁸ As Erasmus put it in his *Education of a Christian Prince*, it would be best if the people could elect their ruler, but ‘Where there is no power to select the prince, the man who is to educate the prince must be selected with comparable care’.²⁹ Erasmus in this text is ambivalent about the efficacy of the counsellor, as opposed to the tutor, of a prince, ascribing to the former the role of establishing virtue in the prince and, thus, in the people as a whole.³⁰ From the prince flows all the good and ill of the commonwealth, and it is the man who instructs him in the virtues who determines the nature of what the prince disseminates to his people: ‘a country owes everything to a good prince; but it owes the prince himself to the one whose right counsel [*recta ratio*] has made him what he is’.³¹ Erasmus also observed the ways in which speech to a powerful figure could be freeing. As he writes in his description of his *Panegyricus*, ‘I realized that this literary form [the panegyric] cannot be handled without flattering. However, I have adopted a novel approach – being very free in my flattering and very flattering in my freedom’.³² That being said, Erasmus sides with Plutarch in maintaining that the worst sort of flattery is one that involves a ‘touch’ of *parrhesia*.³³

It is in coming up against Lutheranism that Erasmus is clearest on the relationship between free speech and correct timing. He writes to Lorenzo Campeggio in 1520 that he gave advice to Martin Luther:

that he should spare the dignity of rulers, for it they are inopportune insulted or admonished they do not improve, but rather become embittered and sometimes stir up dangerous storms. As a result, the critic loses his authority and sometimes his life, and the advice its effect. While it is never lawful to oppose the truth, still it is sometimes expedient to conceal it at the right time.³⁴

In these few lines, Erasmus expresses succinctly the humanist ‘problem of counsel’ and its connection to right timing. If the right moment is identified correctly, the problem of counsel will be avoided. Silence is often necessary, depending on the demands of the moment.

Erasmus’ friend and contemporary, Thomas More, appears to have the same model in mind in Book I of his *Utopia*, in which he sets out a debate between a Platonic defence of the contemplative life, and a Ciceronian argument for the active life, expressed in terms of whether an experienced scholar – in this case Raphael Hythloday – should become a counsellor to a prince.³⁵ The character of Morus argues for duty and *decorum*: Hythloday’s advice would do the

commonwealth good, and thus he ought to give it; in so doing, he ought to alter his advice according to the circumstances, not attempting to impose unbending principles regardless of circumstance. Hythloday resolutely holds that his counsel would be of no benefit outside of the ideal context of Utopia, a place in which there is nothing private, and thus no self-interest or pride. Importantly, Hythloday holds that to enter into service to a prince would in fact be servitude, in contrast with the freedom that he enjoys outside of the court. His advice would meet with only ridicule or punishment. If he adopted the compromising 'indirect' approach suggested by Morus, it would no longer be virtuous advice, becoming as corrupted as that around it. Book I of *Utopia* is a debate regarding the problem of counsel, without a clear resolution.³⁶

In general, More does advocate for the active life of politics, but is cautious when it comes to frank speech. Speech is better than silence, when it tends to the reformation of the company, but this is dependent on the nature of the occasion. In his *Four Last Things*, written in about 1522, he sets out that there is 'as scripture saith, time to speke & time to kepe thy tong', a reference to the appearance of *kairos* in Ecclesiastes 3:7.³⁷ When encountering 'nought and vngoldly' speech, keeping silent is only the second-best path of action, and is entirely self-serving. Instead, it is better to 'breake into some better matter' and thus benefit all those assembled as well.³⁸ If, however, speech will not change them and will only 'irritate them to anger', then silence is the best option.³⁹

Such speech ought to take place, however, in private. In *Utopia*, it is a capital offense to speak of public matters outside the public assemblies, and like Erasmus, More is especially clear about the limitations to free speech after the Reformation. As he writes in his *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer* in 1532-3, it 'were a lewd thing to suffer any prince, estate, or governor, to be brought in slander among the common people'. It is the responsibility of the prince's 'confessors and counsellors' to keep him in line.⁴⁰ More himself fiercely enforced bans on seditious and heretical texts, even though he had – reportedly – also advocated for freedom of speech in Parliament.⁴¹

More's position is soundly critiqued by his contemporary, Thomas Starkey, in his *Dialogue between Pole and Lupset*. For Starkey, seeking an opportunity for speech does not mean, as Hythloday would have it, waiting for the ideal opportunity, but seizing any that comes along. This might mean, in contrast to More's comments above, that it becomes necessary to present one's advice outside of the institutionalised fora for doing so.

The *Dialogue* begins in much the same way as *Utopia*: two interlocutors – Thomas Lupset and Reginald Pole – engage in a discussion of the merits and disadvantages of counsel-giving. Lupset attempts to convince Pole that he ought to offer his counsel to a prince for the good of the

commonwealth. Pole agrees in principle that every able man ought to offer his counsel in this way, but the issue remains of 'time and place'.⁴² In a tyranny, he objects as Hythloday had, either good counsel will be laughed at and rejected, or the counsellor himself will become corrupted (the 'problem of counsel' again). Lupset immediately recognises this objection, criticising those who 'too narrowly and so curiously they ponder the time and the place, that in all their lives they nother fine time nor place', vainly looking for 'Plato's common weal'.⁴³ Instead, the focus should be on 'taking the time when it is, and taking occasion when it offereth itself ... Let not occasion slip; suffer not your time vainly to pass, which without recovery fleeth away; for, as they say, occasion and time will never be restored again'.⁴⁴ Pole (and thus Hythloday) has missed the point of an emphasis on *kairos*. According to Starkey's Lupset, it is not about delaying until the perfect moment, but seizing an available opportunity with the aim of doing one's 'office and duty', which is to speak truth to power.⁴⁵

Starkey suggests that hereditary monarchy is a problem; it does nothing to ensure that a monarch will be led by reason, rather than the affections. As such, the prince must, in turn, be ruled by his counsellors. In the vision set out by Pole, this means making the monarch subject to a series of councils, which in fact hold sovereign power in the state. Pole, in the end, however, maintains that he lacks the opportunity to communicate this advice to the Parliament or king, and will wait until such an opportunity present itself. Such 'tarrying of time', Lupset objects, will in fact lead to the 'destruction of all'.⁴⁶ It is on this note that the dialogue ends, and it was never published. Awaiting the opportunity to safely deliver one's advice limits the scope for speaking. Erasmus and More advocate silence in such occasions; Starkey worries that awaiting the ideal moment to speak has destabilising effects on the commonwealth.

III

Elyot's contemporaries grappled with the issues of free speech, freedom and right timing, but with little concrete resolution. The problem and paradox of counsel still persist in these writings. Added to them is confusion about what exactly constitutes the right moment and what sort of speech should be used in it. It is in Elyot's works, especially those published in 1533, that resolutions to these issues are put forward. Elyot defines clearly the opportune moment for frank speech, demonstrates under what conditions frank speech should break the bounds of propriety and *decorum*, and solves both the problem and paradox of counsel by highlighting the freeing nature of *parrhesia*, even (or perhaps especially) in the context of tyranny.

Thomas Elyot was part of the humanist circle around Thomas More. He entered the service of Henry VIII shortly after More had, in 1523, as senior clerk of the king's council.⁴⁷ He,

however, lost his position in the wake of Cardinal Wolsey's fall in 1529, and so was forced to work his way back into the king's favour. The result was *The Boke Named the Governour*, published in 1531, and designed to show off Elyot's relevant skills and suitability for a political posting. It is, perhaps for that reason, a fairly conservative text. Elyot places greater emphasis on the maintenance of existing social hierarchies than does More or Starkey. Although he borrows from Isocrates and Plutarch in exclaiming 'O what damage have ensued to princes and their realms where liberty of speech hath been restrained!', giving the example of Alexander, who fell into hatred and eventual death because of his silencing of freedom of speech, he does not address the issue of what an individual should do in such circumstances.⁴⁸ In short, in the *Governour* he does not explicitly confront the problem nor the paradox of counsel. In fact, he expresses a Hythloday-esque scepticism in regard to liberty of speech, given the corrupt context in which it must operate. Since 'this liberty of speech is now usurped by flatterers', it is difficult to distinguish it from flattery.⁴⁹ The receiver of advice must therefore determine whether the adviser is a friend or not. The problems encountered by those wishing to give truthful advice are not considered.

Two years after writing *The Governour*, Elyot's context had changed dramatically, and with it his approach to these questions.⁵⁰ Elyot served as ambassador to Spain for four months from 1531 to 1532, sent to try to bring Charles V around on the issue of the annulment of the marriage of his aunt, Catherine of Aragon, to Henry VIII. Elyot did not support Henry's 'Great Matter'; as Greg Walker establishes, Elyot seems to have had a private meeting with Henry in June 1532 in which he expressed his views on the annulment of Henry's first marriage.⁵¹ Elyot was replaced by Thomas Cranmer and when he returned to England was out of money and favour. For this reason the 1533 texts convey a greater sense of urgency in considering the role of the counsellor, and contain a deeper reflection especially on the themes of *kairos* and *parrhesia*.

In particular, we are concerned with *Pasquil the Playne* and *Of the Knowledg⁵² which Maketh a Wise Man*, both published in 1533.⁵³ Walzer suggests that they present a critique of unrestrained, indecorous and ill-timed frank speaking, noting the conflict between 'two different versions of the rhetoric of counsel... one based on principles of philosophy and one based on strategic rhetoric', in many ways mirroring the opposition that had been presented in Book I of More's *Utopia*.⁵⁴ In what follows, I maintain that Elyot does not simply re-articulate this problem, but presents a resolution, by ruminating on the role of *parrhesia* in securing liberty.

In *Pasquil*, plain speaking is represented by the title character, a personification of the Pasquino statue in Rome, upon which residents could post complaints and satires.⁵⁵ Through this practice, Elyot notes, he has become 'rude and homely'.⁵⁶ Pasquil debates with two embodiments of flattery, noted to be 'cosens' as there is 'small diuersite betwene [their]

condicions':⁵⁷ Gnatho, who 'alway affirmed, what so euer was spoke[n] of his maister' and Harpocrates, who favours silence.⁵⁸ Elyot ends his address to the reader with the plea that 'if it seme to you, that Pasquill sayeth true' then 'in declaring howe moche ye do fauoure truthe, defende hym ageyngst venemous tungen and ouerthwart wittis', for these 'doeth much more myschieffe, than Pasquillus babillinge', a plea that Pasquil repeats in the final line.⁵⁹ Elyot thus accepts from the outset the Janus-faced nature of *parthesia*, yet concludes that the opponents of truth-speaking are far more dangerous than those who – in an effort to speak truth – offend or prattle, as Pasquil does.

Pasquil's discussion with each counsellor centres on the interpretation of a quote from Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*.⁶⁰ The quotation as Gnatho gives it is 'holding thy tonge wher it behoueth the. And spekyng in tyme that whiche is conuenient.'⁶¹ In Aeschylus' original, the character of Orestes addresses the chorus, instructing them to 'be silent when there is need and speak only what the occasion demands'.⁶² The dialogue becomes a debate about how best to interpret this line, and – in essence – how best to determine what *kairos* really means in regards to giving counsel.⁶³ Gnatho gives his reading first. He interprets the statement as meaning that 'it behoueth a man to holde his tunge, whan he aforeseeth by any experience, that the thinge, whiche he wolde purpose or speke of to his superior, shall neyther be pleasantly herde nor thankfully taken'.⁶⁴ He suggests that, when it comes to words, 'oportunitie & tyme alwaye do depende on the affection and appetite of hym that hereth them'.⁶⁵ Of course, anyone well read in their Plutarch, as Elyot was, would know that this was an interpretation of *kairos* completely at odds with the one that a good counsellor was meant to adopt. The good counsellor ought to use *kairos* to restrain affections, not to play to them.

In response, Elyot has Pasquil reiterate much of Plutarch's doctrine of *kairos*:

Oportunitie consisteth in place or tyme, where and whan the sayd affections or passion of wrath be mitigate and out of extremitie. And wordes be called conueniente, whiche haue respecte to the nature and state of the person, vnto whom they be spoken, and also to the detrimente, whiche mought ensue by the vice or lacke that thou hast espied, & it ought not to be as thou hast supposed. For oportunitie & tyme for a counsayllour to speke, do not depend of the affection and appetite of hym that is counsayled: mary than counsaylle were but a vayne worde, and euery man wolde do as hym lyst.⁶⁶

The affections should not be entered into a consideration of opportunity except in terms of their being 'out of extremitie'. Gnatho is thus correct that Pasquil ought to consider 'what, and to whome, and where thou spekist', but he considers the wrong factors in relation to these, and

with the wrong ends in mind.⁶⁷ Gnatho seeks promotion, Pasquil truth. That is part of what makes Gnatho such a dangerous flatter: he seems to be speaking sense, but in fact is self-serving – precisely the problem that Elyot had identified in *The Governour*.

Gnatho is also correct that Pasquil ‘rayles’, but this has to do with the pressing needs of Pasquil’s context. As Pasquil states at the end of the dialogue, he would ‘speake neuer a worde, but sit as styll as a stone’ if those ‘that be called, wolde alwaye playe the partis of good Counsaylours’.⁶⁸ But the world is turned upside-down, so that ‘stones do grutche’ and ‘counsailours be spechelesse’; the statue Pasquil speaks while advisers say nothing.⁶⁹ This idea that the world ‘is rou[n]d, and therefore it is euer tournynge’ so that ‘nowe the wronge side vpwarde, an other tyme the ryghte’ runs throughout the text, especially in Pasquil’s greetings to Gnatho and Harpocrates.⁷⁰ Pasquil opens by declaring ‘It is a wonder to see the world: Now a daies, the more straunge the better lyked, therefore vnnethe [scarcely] a manne maye knowe an honest man from a false harlotte’, upon which enters Gnatho.⁷¹ When Harpocrates enters, he declares that he will give his master counsel after they both have eaten, prompting Pasquil to declare ‘Lo is it not as I sayde, a wonder to se this worlde?’ as in ‘olde tyme’ men used to attend to such important matters in the morning, before dining, recalling Pasquil’s juxtaposition of the right timing of eating and counselling.⁷² Now ‘after noone is tourned to fore noone, vertue into vice, vice into vertue, deuotio[n] into hypocrisie, and in some places men saye/ fayth is torned to herisyse.’⁷³ In other words, the timing of affairs has turned virtues into vices. In such a world, Pasquil’s bluntness, usually inappropriate, is the only option.⁷⁴ As he says, he might otherwise give his counsel in private, but since he is not invited into the chambers of the mighty to correct their vices, he must publish it publicly, so that shame might be a motivating factor for a vice-ridden leader.

Gnatho’s suggestion, then, that Pasquil’s counsel is not listened too because it is too harsh misses the point: Pasquil’s counsel is harsh because he was not listened to. Pasquil’s bluntness is a last resort, caused by the evil counsellors – the Gnathos and Harpocrates – of the world. In some ways this is a position much like Hythloday’s – a truth-speaker excluded because of already-existing bad counsel – but Pasquil is no Hythloday in his counsel, and is desperate, not reluctant, to give his advice. He is not awaiting a utopian scenario, but rather has been shut out. This was Elyot’s own position in 1533, supplanted by Gnathos and Harpocrates and forced to articulate his counsel publicly. The opportunity he had described is not possible, so instead it becomes a question of when the urgency of the situation demands the cessation of silence.

This is the question taken up in Pasquil’s exchange with Harpocrates. Challenging Harpocrates’s dedication to silence, Pasquil asks him ‘If I perceyued one at thy backe with a

swerde drawne, redy to strike the, woldest thou that I shulde holde my peace, or else tell the?’⁷⁵ Harpocrates responds that ‘Naye, sylence were than oute of season’ – ‘season’ being another translation for *kairos*.⁷⁶ Pasquil responds that Harpocrates ‘wyll season silence’ and jokes that ‘Marye I wene my lorde shulde haue a better cooke of you thanne a counsayllour.’⁷⁷ He asks Harpocrates ‘howe thou doest season thy sylence[?]’⁷⁸ Harpocrates responds that he does so ‘with sugar, for I vse lyttell salte,’ and Pasquil retorts that this ‘maketh your counsayl more swete than sauery.’⁷⁹ Harpocrates choice of ‘season’ makes his advice pleasant but not wholesome.

Harpocrates has also misunderstood the situation which would necessitate plain speaking. He wishes to insist that he only needs to speak out when the danger to his master is imminent, as the sword drawn at his back. Their debate thus hinges on the meaning of the word ‘imminent’, which Pasquil notes is ‘a worde taken out of latine, and not co[m]menly vsed’.⁸⁰ Harpocrates defines ‘imminent’ as ‘whan it appereth to be in the instante to be done or to happen: and afer some mens exposition, as hit thretned to come’.⁸¹ Pasquil insists, however, that Harpocrates has misunderstood this word, for ‘the instant whan it appereth/ that your frend shall be slayne/ and the instante whan he is in sleinge’ are in fact not the same, but ‘diuerse’.⁸² To speak in Harpocrates’ ‘imminent’ moment is to be too late, for then ‘it is in the instance of doinge or happening.’⁸³ Speech is ‘in good season’ when the danger is imminent in Pasquil’s understanding of the term.⁸⁴ Pasquil and Harpocrates agree that before this moment speech is dangerous to the speaker, and after it, dangerous to the hearer.⁸⁵ This exact moment must be hit, then, to benefit both counsellor and counselled. The problem of counsel comes down to understanding *kairos*. *Pasquil*, however, does not solve the problem of counsel, though it clarifies it, and like *Utopia*, and Starkey’s *Dialogue*, it ends without a clear resolution.

These issues come together, and are addressed in full, in Elyot’s *Of the Knowledge Which Maketh a Wise Man*, a dialogue between two parties: Plato and Aristippus, the former of whom is the Socratic teacher, the latter the learner. Aristippus, as he appears in Laertius, is a hedonist, which makes Plato’s later lessons about the rule of reason stand out all the more clearly.⁸⁶ Crucially as well, Aristippus is described as having been much favoured by Dionysius because ‘He was capable of adapting himself to place, time and person, and of playing his part appropriately under whatever circumstances.’⁸⁷ Like Gnatho, this flattering opportunist makes an ideal foil for the *parrhesiastes*.⁸⁸

Plato appears in the text in slaves’ garb, having been sold and almost killed (twice) for offering his frank counsel to the tyrant Dionysius, as recorded to Diogenes Laertius’ life of Plato:

But when Plato held forth on tyranny and maintained that the interest of the ruler alone was not the best end, unless he were also pre-eminent in virtue, he

offended Dionysius, who in his anger exclaimed, 'You talk like an old dotard.' 'And you like a tyrant,' rejoined Plato. At this the tyrant grew furious and at first was bent on putting him to death; then, when he had been dissuaded from this by Dion and Aristomenes, he did not indeed go so far but handed him over to Pollis the Lacedaemonian, who had just then arrived on an embassy, with orders to sell him into slavery.⁸⁹

Notably, in Elyot's version, Plato responds that Dionysius' words 'sauored of Tyranny', which the character of Plato later claims demonstrates his temperance and reserve in counselling the king, as it was not a straightforward accusation of tyranny against the king himself.⁹⁰ This rejoinder is, according to Elyot, 'that whiche is best worthy to be called wysedome'.⁹¹ The immediate lessons, then, of this text appear to be similar to those of *Pasquil*: blunt frank speech is sometimes necessary in order to correct the vices of kings, even under threat of death. But what is to be done about those consequences?

Aristippus, like Gnatho to *Pasquil*, accuses Plato of speaking 'vnadisedly', for knowing the 'nature and dispoicion' of the listener, he should not have spoken in the way that he did. Plato explains to Aristippus that, as his purpose in coming to Sicily was not to advise the king, he resisted the call to attend Dionysius until he was convinced. Dionysius wished to see Plato, the two agree, because of the 'reporte' he had heard of Plato's 'wisedome and knowledge'.⁹² As this is what prompted Dionysius' call, Plato reasons to Aristippus, Plato was required to fulfil this expectation and both act and speak accordingly. Aristippus is forced to agree: Plato ought to 'tell [Dionysius] truthe/ & accordinge to [Plato's] profession'.⁹³ As Plato's profession is 'That no man is happy, except he be wise and also good', the two embark on a discussion of what wisdom is, or rather what kind of knowledge constitutes wisdom.⁹⁴

After a long discussion, they conclude that this knowledge is self-knowledge, which gives knowledge – in turn – of others: 'the knowlege of hym selfe: wherby also he knoweth other', which is to know things 'intelligible' rather than 'sensible', and thus resides in the soul.⁹⁵ Plato draws the image of the soul as ruler over the passions, with understanding 'for a chiefe counsayllour'.⁹⁶ If the imagination does not consult 'king cou[n]saylle of vnderstandyng' it can be moved and persuaded to think that vices be 'good pleasant & profitable'.⁹⁷ Without such counsel, the soul becomes 'ministre vnto the sences/ which before were her slaues' and 'holly at their co[m]mandment'.⁹⁸ The internal persuasion of the soul is echoed by the same externally, for 'vicious co[m]munication, yl counsayle, and flattery' lead to 'the venemous humour of ylle opinion, wherof commeth vice'.⁹⁹ For Elyot's Plato, the rule of understanding's counsel guards against the enslavement of the soul, leading to vice. This model of internal counsel mitigating

enslavement parallels the model that Plato will also use in which relationship with the king, in which he takes the role of ‘king cou[n]saylle of vnderstandyng’ over Dionysius’ soul.

When the invitation came at last to Plato to speak on the nature of kingship, Plato ‘reioyed, wenyng to haue founde the oportunitie to speake that I so longe loked for.’¹⁰⁰ Having this opportune moment, Plato was required to live up to the expectation of wisdom Dionysius had of him, and declare the contents of the knowledge which makes him wise: that the ideal king is one ‘in whom the soule had intiere & ful auctorite ouer the sensis & alway kept the affectis in due rule & obedie[n]ce, folowyng only the counsayle of Vndersta[n]ding’.¹⁰¹ Plato ends his counsel to Dionysius on the image of the tyrant, who loses understanding as a counsellor, and is thus ruled by the appetites and falls easily into the ‘snares’ of such flatterers, ignoring the words of those who would seek to correct him.¹⁰² As Plato explains, one who does not follow the counsel of understanding is enslaved, king or no.

Plato’s ‘knowledge’ resolves the paradox of counsel – the king is freed, not restrained, by listening to wise advice – but it does not solve the problem. Aristippus protests that Plato endangered himself in speaking to Dionysius this way, ‘without hope of benefite’.¹⁰³ Plato maintains, however, that Dionysius ‘had no power to indamage my soule, by whose operation I was called a wyse man’, whereas if he had chosen not to speak out of fear of bodily harm, he would have ‘proued my selfe to haue ben a foole and no wyse ma[n]’.¹⁰⁴ Plato ‘declared that my mynde was not subiecte to corporall passions, and consequently not to sensuall affections’ in speaking the truth to Dionysius.¹⁰⁵ Thus, ‘by takyng libertie from me, and makyng me a slaue, he more declared mi wordis to be true’.¹⁰⁶ Plato is untouched by his physical enslavement because his soul remains free through his choice to speak truth to power. Dionysius, on the other hand, is shown starkly in his enslavement. Plato concludes that he was indeed never lost, as he ‘was neuer transformed or out of that astate, where in a wise man ought alway to be’, whereas Dionysius ‘hath bothe lost him selfe’ by refusing Plato’s knowledge, and has lost Plato ‘which by [his] counsaile shuld haue ben to hym so royall a tresure’.¹⁰⁷ Freedom can be found by the rule of reason, which Plato demonstrates through his act of *parrhesia*. Thus, Elyot answers both the paradox and problem of counsel: wise counsel should indeed rule the king, and the counsellor ought to have no fear of consequences in the performance of his duty. All are made free through freeing speech.

If one accepts, as Elyot does, that the rule of reason over the passions is what preserves liberty, then it is easy to see how frank speech to those in power can be liberating. If the auditor heeds the advice then he is freed even as he is ruled, as are those he governs because he ceases to be a tyrant. If he does not, then the counsellor is still free – no matter what might be done to him physically – as he has not been governed by his passions in avoiding such a confrontation.

Modern notions of freedom of speech are centred on the observance of individual universal rights by a governing power. If this is lost, then no freedom of speech can be said to exist. In Elyot's work, the act of speaking truth to power is itself freeing, no matter the consequences, and is in fact necessary. In this view, then, freedom of speech moves from a right to a duty, and the mechanism of freedom from the extent of governmental control to the speech act of the individual. This freeing speech can (and ought to for Elyot) exist in contexts in which modern notions of freedom of speech does not.

This notion of freeing speech existed in Tudor England alongside the ancestor of the government-granted rights-based understanding of freedom of speech, traditionally expressed in Parliament. It is the latter which won out, largely, as Colclough has demonstrated, through the greater power of Parliament, and as I have attempted to show elsewhere, due to the lessening position of the political counsellor.¹⁰⁸ It has long been held one of the roles of the history of political thought to unearth forgotten or discarded ways of conceptualising those ideas taken to be 'givens', such as the notion of free speech, a practice which is often held to be necessarily emancipatory. By tracing *parrhesia* and its encounter with *kairos* in the work on the counsellor in the early Tudor period, we come across a way of thinking about free speech that presents an alternative perspective. Conceiving of free speech as a duty, requiring deep reflection, education and self-sacrifice, taking place in the context of a situation of unfreedom, shifts the rhetoric around the term, as well as the burden of responsibility/agency. It is not something that can be 'taken away' by governmental powers or other citizens, but rather something that can be neglected or abused by those citizens who refuse to take it up or do so in ways that are self-serving and thus necessarily detrimental to the commonwealth in which they live (as well as themselves). The goal of this notion of free speech is defined as the good of the commonwealth, rather than the preservation of an individualistic notion of rights. It seeks to correct corrupted (self-interested) governmental authorities for the freedom of all.

None of this is to suggest that the modern rights-based notion needs to be replaced wholesale by this duty-based concept of free speech. I leave it up to others who have thought more deeply about how freedom of speech functions (or fails to function) in modern polities to theorise the ways in which these two perspectives on the concept might work together. Nevertheless, it is a

tradition that needs to be held in remembrance: first, because it helps us to understand the intervention made by Elyot in the context of Tudor ‘tyranny’; and second, because recalling this alternative view might itself free us from some very modern problems surrounding the idea of freedom of speech.

- ¹ As N. Warburton, *Free Speech: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 7-8, freedom of speech is understood in terms of Berlin’s negative conception of liberty.
- ² This is not to say that they were not also concerned with the boundaries between liberty and license, or indeed about government limitations on free speech, but that there was another element to the debate, which has been lost to modern discussions of freedom of speech.
- ³ See R. Sullivan and A. E. Walzer (eds), *Thomas Elyot: Critical Editions of Four Works on Counsel* (Leiden ; Boston: BRILL, 2018), ‘introduction’, ‘Chapter 2’; J. Paul, *Counsel and Command in Early Modern English Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming), ‘Chapter 2’.
- ⁴ From J. Paul, ‘Serving the Public by Advising the Ruler’, in P. Overeem and F. Sager (eds), *The European Public Servant: A Shared Administrative Identity?*, (Colchester: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2015), p. 45; see M. Foucault, *Fearless Speech* (Los Angeles: Semiotext[e], 2001).
- ⁵ See C. Attack, ‘Plato, Foucault and the Conceptualization of *Parrhesia*’, *History of Political Thought* 40:1 (2019), 23-48.
- ⁶ See Plato, *Laws*, trans. R. G. Bury (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967-8), 1.649b, 2.671b, 3.694b, 7.806c, 8.829d, 10.908c-d.
- ⁷ ‘*frequenter sub hac facie latet adulatio*’; Quintilian, *Quintilian. With an English Translation*, trans. H. E. Butler (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1922), 9.2.27.
- ⁸ M. Landauer, ‘*Parrhesia* and the Demos Tyrannos: Frank Speech, Flattery and Accountability in Democratic Athens’, *History of Political Thought* 33:2 (2012): 187.
- ⁹ Landauer, ‘*Parrhesia*’: 185–208 adds the feigned and unfeigned variants as well, in line with the *Ad Herennium*.
- ¹⁰ T. Bejan, ‘The Two Clashing Meanings of “Free Speech”’, *The Atlantic* (2 December 2017).
- ¹¹ D. Colclough, *Freedom of Speech in Early Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 3.
- ¹² Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, p. 6.
- ¹³ T. Wilson, *The Arte of Rhetorique*, quoted in Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, p. 47.
- ¹⁴ H. Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence*, quoted in Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, p. 53.
- ¹⁵ Peacham, *The Garden of Eloquence*, quoted in Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, p. 53.
- ¹⁶ H. Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie* (London, 1589), pp. 189-90.
- ¹⁷ Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, p. 5.
- ¹⁸ A. E. Walzer, ‘The Rhetoric of Counsel and Thomas Elyot’s Of the Knowledge Which Maketh a Wise Man’, *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 45:1 (2012): 24–45; A. Walzer, ‘Rhetoric of Counsel in Thomas Elyot’s Pasquil the Playne’, *Rhetorica: A Journal of the History of Rhetoric*, 30:1 (2012): 1–21; see also J.

- Paul, 'The Use of Kairos in Renaissance Political Philosophy', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 67:1 (2014): 43–78.
- ¹⁹ Which he demonstrates in A. E. Walzer, 'Parrēsia, Foucault, and the Classical Rhetorical Tradition', *Renaissance Society Quarterly*, 43:1 (2013): 1-21; see also Landauer, 'Parrhesia', 185–208.
- ²⁰ Walzer, 'Parrēsia, Foucault, and the Classical Rhetorical Tradition', 3.
- ²¹ Elements of what follows have been drawn from Paul, *Counsel and Command*.
- ²² 'δίδου παρρησίαν τοῖς εὖ φρονοῦσιν, ἵνα περι ὧν ἂν ἀμφιγνοῆς'; Isocrates, 'Ad Nicoclem', *Isocrates with an English Translation in three volumes*, trans. G. Norlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 2.28.
- ²³ Isocrates, 'To Philip', *Isocrates with an English Translation in three volumes*, trans. G. Norlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 5.72; Isocrates, 'Antidosis', *Isocrates with an English Translation in three volumes*, trans. G. Norlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 15.179. See also his letter to Antipater, as treated by Landauer, 'Parrhesia', 190. *Kairos* is essential to the orator/counsellor, defining the very bounds of deliberation; see Paul, *Counsel and Command*.
- ²⁴ These themes were anticipated to a certain extent by Isocrates, see Landauer, 'Parrhesia', 190.
- ²⁵ 'καίτοι καθάπερ ἄλλω τινὶ φαρμάκῳ, καὶ τῷ παρρησιάζεσθαι μὴ τυχόντι καιροῦ τὸ λυπεῖν ἀχρήστως'; Plutarch, 'Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur', *Moralia with an English Translation*, trans. F. C. Babbitt (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927), 25.
- ²⁶ 'ἐν τίσιν οὖν σφοδρὸν εἶναι δεῖ τὸν φίλον καὶ πότε τῷ τόνῳ χρῆσθαι τῆς παρρησίας. ὅταν ἡδονῆς ἢ ὀργῆς ἢ ὕβρεως ἐπιλαβέσθαι φερομένης οἱ καιροὶ παρακαλῶσιν ἢ κολουῶσαι φιλαργυρίαν ἢ ἀπροσεξίαν ἀνασχεῖν ἀνόητον'; Plutarch, 'Adulator', 29.
- ²⁷ 'καὶ διὰ τοῦτο δεῖ καὶ περὶ τὴν παρρησίαν φιλοτεχνεῖν, ὅσῳ μέγιστόν ἐστι καὶ κράτιστον ἐν φιλίᾳ φάρμακον, εὐστοχίας τε καιροῦ μάλιστα καὶ κράσεως μέτρον ἐχούσης ἀεὶ δεομένη'; Plutarch, 'Adulator', 36.
- ²⁸ This was also a theme in the medieval discourse of counsel. Medieval *speculum principis* books often emphasised counsel as the remedy to the necessarily limited abilities of a prince, as well as his tendency towards tyranny; see Paul, *Counsel and Command*. John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*, one of the first works in this genre also makes the suggestion, developed by Thomas Elyot, that wise counsel frees the listener from vice, which enslaves, and so 'man is to be free and it is always permitted to a free man to speak to persons about restraining their vices'; John of Salisbury, *Policraticus: Of the Frivolities of Courtiers and the Footprints of Philosophers*, ed. C. J. Nederman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 180. He suggests, based on this, that freedom of speech ought always to be in operation.
- ²⁹ 'Ubi potestas non est deligendi Principem, ibi pari diligentia deligendus erit is, qui futurum instituat Principem'; Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince*, trans. L. Jardine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 6.
- ³⁰ This stems from the positions posited in Letters 94 and 95 of Seneca, see Paul, *Counsel and Command*.
- ³¹ 'Omnia debet patria bono Principi. At hunc ipsum debet ei qui rectis rationibus talem effecerit'; Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince*, p. 6.
- ³² 'Videbam enim genus hoc citra adulationem tractari non posse. Ego tamen nouo sum usus artificio, vt et in adulando sim liberrimus et in libertate adulantissimus'; Erasmus, *Erasmus and His Age: Selected Letters of*

- Desiderius Erasmus*, ed. H. J. Hillerbrand (New York: Harper and Row Ltd, 1970), pp. 47, see also 85; Latin: Erasmus, *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterdami*, Vol. 1, ed. P. S. Allen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 405.
- ³³ See Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, p. 44.
- ³⁴ ‘*parceret principum celsitudini, qui conuiciis attackti aut intempestiuus admoniti non solum non reduntur meliores, sed exacerbati perniciosas aliquoties exitant tempestates; fitque ut et monitori sua pereat autoritas, interim et vita, et monito suus fructus. Siquidem veritati nunquam phas est aduersari, ita celare nonnunquam expedit in loco.*’ Erasmus, *Erasmus and his Age*, p. 160.
- ³⁵ Q. Skinner, *Visions of Politics: Volume 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 213-63.
- ³⁶ J. H. Hexter, ‘Thomas More and the Problem of Counsel’, in R. S. Sylvester and G. P. Marc’hadour (eds), *Quincentennial Essays on St. Thomas More: Selected Papers from the Thomas More College Conference* (Boone: Albion, 1978), pp. 55–66.
- ³⁷ T. More, *The Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More: English Poems, Life of Pico, the Last Things*, ed. A. G. Edwards, K. Gardiner Rogers, and C. H. Miller (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 136.
- ³⁸ More, *The Last Things*, p. 136.
- ³⁹ More, *The Last Things*, p. 137.
- ⁴⁰ T. More, *The Yale Edition of the Complete Works of St. Thomas More: The Confutation of Tyndale’s Answer*, ed. L. A. Schuster, R. C. Marius, and J. P. Lusardi (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 561.
- ⁴¹ See Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, pp. 131-2.
- ⁴² T. Starkey, *A Dialogue Between Pole and Lupset*, ed. T. F. Mayer (London: Royal Historical Society, 1989), p. 36.
- ⁴³ Starkey, *Dialogue*, p. 38.
- ⁴⁴ Starkey, *Dialogue*, p. 38-9.
- ⁴⁵ Starkey, *Dialogue*, p. 39.
- ⁴⁶ Starkey, *Dialogue*, p. 191.
- ⁴⁷ See Sullivan and Walzer (eds), *Thomas Elyot*, ‘Chapter 2’.
- ⁴⁸ T. Elyot, *The Book Named The Governor*, ed. S. E. Lehmborg (New York: Dent, 1962), p. 108.
- ⁴⁹ Elyot, *The Governor*, p. 151.
- ⁵⁰ For the dramatic effect this period had on Elyot see K. J. Wilson, ‘Introduction’, in *The Letters of Sir Thomas Elyot, Studies in Philology*, 73.5 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976), pp. xii-xiii. It is also evidenced in Elyot’s 1532 letters to Cromwell in this text (pp. 7-16), in which he speaks of his disappointment at not being a member of Henry’s counsel, and the poverty that has followed on the heels of his embassy.
- ⁵¹ G. Walker, *Writing Under Tyranny: English Literature and the Henrician Reformation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 123-5.
- ⁵² This is an error in the original; I will refer to the text as *Of the Knowledge*, however, in what follows.
- ⁵³ Also relevant is his translation of Isocrates’ letter to Nicocles, published as the *Doctrinall of Princes* in the same year, in which he repeats Isocrates’ advice that the prince ought to ‘Geue to wise men libertee to speake to thee freely’, T. Elyot, *The Doctrinall of Princes* (London, 1533), p. 11; ‘*δίδου παρρησίαν τοῖς ἐν φρονουῶσι*’ Isocrates, ‘Ad Nicoclem’, 2 28.

- ⁵⁴ Walzer, 'Thomas Elyot's *Of the Knowledge Which Maketh a Wise Man*', p. 24; see also Walzer, 'Thomas Elyot's *Pasquil the Playne*'. A similar position is expressed in Sullivan and Walzer, eds, *Thomas Elyot*.
- ⁵⁵ For Elyot's awareness of the Pasquino statue and verses in December 1532 see Walker, *Writing Under Tyranny*, pp. 182-3. As Walker points out, if this is indeed when Elyot became inspired to write *Pasquil*, then he wrote the first edition of text quickly and in intense circumstances, which may explain why it is more vehement than other texts, and why he seems to endorse Pasquil's bluntness.
- ⁵⁶ Thomas Elyot, *Pasquil the Playne* (London, 1533), fo. 2^r. There are two 1533 editions of *Pasquil*, both produced by Thomas Berthelet, the king's printer. One acknowledges Elyot's authorship in the address to the reader, the other does not (and they differ in pagination). I have used the former, which was actually the second of the two to be produced, with Elyot's revisions.
- ⁵⁷ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fos. 11^v-12^r. In this edition it reads 'cosen germanes remoued', in the other 1533 edition it reads 'right cosens' (fo. 12^r).
- ⁵⁸ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 2^r. Walker, *Writing Under Tyranny*, p. 184-5 gives several possible contemporary identifications for Gnatho, and one for Harpocrates: Thomas Cramner.
- ⁵⁹ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fos. 2^v, 30^v.
- ⁶⁰ See Paul, 'Use of *Kairos*', p. 52.
- ⁶¹ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 5^r.
- ⁶² 'σιγᾶν θ' ὅπου δεῖ καὶ λέγειν τὰ καίρια' Aeschylus, *Aeschylus, with an English translation*, Vol. 2. Libation Bearers, ed. Herbert Weir Smyth (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926), 580. Note that the form here is *kairios*, a variant of *kairos*.
- ⁶³ As Walzer, 'Rhetoric of Counsel', p. 8 puts it: 'The theme of *Pasquil the Playne* is the timing of appropriate counsel.'
- ⁶⁴ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fos. 5^v-6^r.
- ⁶⁵ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 6^r.
- ⁶⁶ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fos. 8^v-9^r.
- ⁶⁷ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 4^r. Elyot translates *decorum* in his *Dictionary* of 1538 as 'a semelynesse, or that which becommeth the person, hauynge respecte to his nature, degree, study, offyce, or professyon, be it in doynge or speakynge, a grace. sometyme it sygnifyeth honestie'; T. Elyot, *The Dictionary* (London, 1538), sig. XXX^v. Notably this definition has no temporal dimension. Elyot did not blur *kairos* and *decorum*, but rather saw them as mutually supportive for efficacious speech.
- ⁶⁸ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 29^r.
- ⁶⁹ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 29^v.
- ⁷⁰ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 15^r; See E. Howard, 'Sir Thomas Elyot on the Turning of the Earth.', *Philological Quarterly*, 21 (1942): 441-43; J. Redmond, 'A Critical Edition of Sir Thomas Elyot's "Pasquil the Playne"' (PhD, Purdue University, 1971), pp. 165-6.
- ⁷¹ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 3^r. 'Harlott' here means 'a false or evil man, not a loose woman', Redmond, 'A Critical Edition', p. 154.
- ⁷² As Redmond, 'A Critical Edition', p. 163 points out, this was also in line with expectations of the time; the 1528 Eltham reform paper requires that counsellors 'apply themselves diligently, meeting at ten o'clock in the morning at the latest, and again at two in the afternoon'.

- ⁷³ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 13^r. This ‘turning virtue into vice’ speaks to the tradition of *paradiastole*. Notably, Elyot may have been the first English writer to attempt to define *paradiastole* in his *Dictionary* of 1538 (sig. Q, iv): ‘*Paradiastole*, a dilatinge of a mater by an interpretation’. Elyot’s comment on heresy here is one of two thinly veiled critiques of the Reformation in *Pasquil*. Earlier, *Pasquil* seems to suggest that had ‘Popes, emperours/ kinges/ and cardinalles’ listened to his advice, it might have been prevented (fo. 9^v-10^r).
- ⁷⁴ This is consistent with Isocrates’ use of *parthēsia* as well, as Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*, p. 25 puts it ‘The kind of frankness undertaken by both Isocrates and Demonthenes is represented by them as necessary only because the people are under the sway of flatterers’. In fact, as Colclough goes on to say, in these contexts it is only free speech (or only remarkable free speech), if it does in fact break the bounds of decorum.
- ⁷⁵ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 13^v.
- ⁷⁶ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 13^v. For the translation of *kairos* as ‘season’, see J. S. Baumlin, ‘Ciceronian Decorum and the Temporalities of Renaissance Rhetoric’, in P. Sipiora and J. S. Baumlin (eds), *Rhetoric and Kairos: Essays in History, Theory and Praxis*, (New York: State University of New York Press, 2002), pp. 141-4. ‘To season’ in English has its root in the temporal meaning of ‘season’, originally referring to allowing fruits, etc to ‘season’ – i.e. ‘to render (fruit) palatable by the influence of the seasons’ – before picking them. Thus ‘right time’ is etymologically linked to this sense of seasoning, and Elyot’s pun has even greater meaning.
- ⁷⁷ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fos. 13^v-14^r.
- ⁷⁸ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 15^v.
- ⁷⁹ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fos. 15^v-16^r.
- ⁸⁰ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 19^{rv}.
- ⁸¹ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 19^v.
- ⁸² Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 19^v.
- ⁸³ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 19^v.
- ⁸⁴ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 20^r.
- ⁸⁵ Elyot, *Pasquil*, fo. 20^r.
- ⁸⁶ Walzer, ‘Thomas Elyot’s *Of the Knowledge*’, p. 27-8.
- ⁸⁷ Ἔην δὲ ἰκανὸς ἀρμόσασθαι καὶ τόπῳ καὶ χρόνῳ καὶ προσώπῳ, καὶ πᾶσαν περίστασιν ἀπμοδίως ὑποκρίνασθαι; D. Laertius, ‘Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers, BOOK II, Chapter 8. Aristippus’, trans. E. D. Hicks (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 66. Notably, this is not a case in which the original in Greek is *kairos*, neither is the Greek *prepon* (Latin *decorum*) used here. See Sullivan and Walzer (eds), *Thomas Elyot*, pp. 30-1, 213.
- ⁸⁸ See also Walker, *Writing Under Tyranny*, p. 198.
- ⁸⁹ ὁ δὲ διαλεγόμενος περὶ τυραννίδος καὶ φάσκων ὡς οὐκ ἔστι τὸ τοῦ κρείττονος συμφέρον αὐτὸ μόνον, εἰ μὴ καὶ ἀρετῇ διαφέρῃ, προσέκρουσεν αὐτῷ. ὀργισθεὶς γὰρ "οἱ λόγοι σου," φησί, "γεροντιῶσι," καὶ ὅς: "σοῦ δὲ γε τυραννιῶσιν." ἐντεῦθεν ἀγανακτήσας ὁ τύραννος πρῶτον μὲν ἀνελεῖν ὥρμησεν αὐτόν: εἶτα παρακληθεὶς ὑπὸ Δίωνος καὶ Ἀριστομένους τοῦτο μὲν οὐκ ἐποίησε, παρέδωκε δὲ αὐτὸν Πόλλιδι τῷ Λακεδαιμονίῳ κατὰ καιρὸν διὰ πρεσβείαν ἀφιγμένῳ ὥστε ἀποδόσθαι.’ D. Laertius, ‘Diogenes Laertius, Lives of Eminent Philosophers,

BOOK III, Plato', trans. E. D. Hicks (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 18-19. As Walzer, 'The Rhetoric of Counsel and Thomas Elyot's *Of the Knowledge Which Maketh a Wise Man*', p. 25 points out, this was a popular story in Renaissance England, appearing, for instance, in More's *Utopia* in the debate between Morus and Hythloday. see also Sullivan and Walzer (eds), *Thomas Elyot*, p. 210.

⁹⁰ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fos. 101^r-102^v.

⁹¹ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. A6^v.

⁹² Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 6^r.

⁹³ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fos. 14^v-15^r.

⁹⁴ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 15^r.

⁹⁵ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 27^r.

⁹⁶ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 51^r.

⁹⁷ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 52^r.

⁹⁸ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 52^r.

⁹⁹ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 71^r.

¹⁰⁰ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 95^r. Plato and Aristippus also discuss the issue of right-timing in regard to Plato's rejoinder, which Aristippus suggests should have awaited 'more oportunitie' once Dionysius' 'fume had been passed' (fo. 102^v). Plato rejects this suggestion, however, suggesting that such a delay would have in fact lost the opportunity, for Dionysius would have quickly forgotten the exchange, and his words would have had no effect. A philosopher like Plato looks to Providence, not Fortune in the deciding of time; he spoke as he must in the opportunity that had been provided to him. Plato thus does not reject *kairos*, as Sullivan and Walzer (eds), *Thomas Elyot*, p. 222-6 seem to suggest, but places it in the giving of Providence, not Fortune.

¹⁰¹ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 95^v.

¹⁰² Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 97^v.

¹⁰³ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 105^r.

¹⁰⁴ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 105^v.

¹⁰⁵ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 106^r.

¹⁰⁶ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 106^v.

¹⁰⁷ Elyot, *Of the Knowledg*, fo. 107^r.

¹⁰⁸ Colclough, *Freedom of Speech*; Paul, *Counsel and Command*.