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VOICE, ORALITY, AND THE PERFORMANCE OF POLITICAL COUNSEL IN EARLY MODERN SPAIN

Author's manuscript version
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In 1596, the Spanish captain and diplomat Bernardino de Mendoza described books and manuscripts as ‘mute counsellors’, which ‘only spoke if they were sought after and never answered back about what they had said’.¹ In 1626, the Franciscan friar Pedro Fernández de Navarrete urged the Spanish king to ‘ask for, listen to, and follow the advice of his counsellors’.² Both testimonies make clear that counsel was not only a major element of early modern politics, but also a distinctively oral practice. This essay analyses the oral features of decision-making processes in early modern Spain and assesses the relationship between orality, writing practices, and the voice and bodily gestures of counsellors.

Performances of counsel during the reigns of Philip II, Philip III, Philip IV, and Charles II of Spain —between 1555 and 1700— are reconstructed here from several types of sources. First, the very documentation produced by councils is analysed from a new perspective. In contrast with established scholarly practice, these documents are not used in search of ‘raw data’ for political or administrative history. Council documentation is read instead as scholars of early modern drama would analyse printed texts in search of evidence of the actual staging of a play.³ Special attention will also be paid to the procedures of councils. These were recorded in internal ordinances that regulated their activity, clarified participants’ functions, and stated how counsellors and secretaries were expected to speak and behave.

Also deserving notice are the numerous references to orality found in well-known Spanish theoretical treatises. These works not only serve to contextualize the oral features reflected in the documentation produced by counsels, but also help to understand the substantial importance attributed to the oral performance of counsel. Third, there exist a significant number of manuscript letters on the education of the nobility in which general advice on conversation is adapted to provide particular indications regarding counselling. These letters for noblemen show that style was learned on a case-by-case basis by closely imitating others at court. Printed treatises and aristocratic letters which circulated in manuscript contained contrasting views on personal counselling styles. Comparison between the two allows better understanding of the tension between humanistic and aristocratic representations of counsel, repeatedly pointed out in many studies. Finally, ambassadors' reports include valuable indications regarding the voice and style of particular counsellors.

The first part of this essay deals with the 'sociology' of the texts used and produced by early modern councils. This notion, taken from Donald MacKenzie's bibliographical scholarship, avoids reproducing an oversimplified dichotomy between written sources and oral practices.⁴ It also takes into account the work of numerous literary scholars and social and cultural historians who have criticized the misleading character of straightforward distinctions between literacy and orality.⁵ Council documentation not only bears numerous traces of orality, but also allows us to understand the slow consolidation of standardized documentary typologies and the fluctuating procedures for transmitting oral decisions in written forms. Documents issued by councils are best seen as forming part of a

broad range of communicative practices, and the control of those communication flows was a crucial element of court politics.

Sociological analysis of early modern courts and anthropological theory on representation of the state also encourage a reframing of councils' activities.⁶ The second section of this article reconstructs the performance of counsel by analysing descriptions of the voice, the style of conversation, and the appearance of counsellors. Council meetings were judged by political or administrative criteria, but the bodies and attitudes of counsellors were also part of court sociability, and their gatherings and activities literally represented the internal functioning of the Spanish Monarchy.

The third and final section considers various strategies to control conversations, influence decisions, and put pressure on counsellors. Focussing on oral practices, it aims to offer a better understanding of early modern voting and decision-making processes. Voting rarely consisted in voicing a simple yes or no, and often involved lengthy discussions in which the knowledge and the social status of the counsellor were at stake. It also aims to show that dissent and consensus formed part of the image of government and therefore were closely inspected by authorities and subjects alike.

Counsel has been studied as a tool and a metaphor for balancing political power and shaping public discourse. John Guy, José Antonio Maravall, and many other scholars have described the central role of counsel in political thought.⁷ And their approaches have been fruitfully combined with intensive research on the evolution of early modern institutions and their participants.⁸ But too close an association with political history has obscured many other aspects of early

modern counsel. In his pioneering studies of communication and aristocratic voices at court, Fernando Bouza has shown that in early modern Spain orality, image, and writing were all considered perfectly effective forms with which to attain and retain knowledge.⁹ Working on rhetorical traditions, David Colclough has traced the reception of classical notions of *parrhesia* or free speech in pragmatic treatises on counsel, and Carmen Peraita has underscored that the Spanish writer Francisco de Quevedo presented his *Política de Dios* as a direct talk to the monarch, with constant references to oral communication and the rhetoric of sacred eloquence.¹⁰ The widespread importance attributed to oral forms of advice reveals, in short, that one can construct a more complete notion of counselling by joining together the realms of voice, appearance, and text. And to this end this essay seeks to redefine the complex mix of theoretical notions, personal abilities, social hierarchy, and political struggle involved in early modern counselling.

I

The documentation produced by early modern Spanish councils conveys the relevance of orality in the procedures of councils and contains numerous traces about the broader social and communicative context at court. But in order to reassess the nature of this documentation it is useful to bear in mind two general indications about the theoretical and institutional foundations of counsel and councils.

First of all, counsel had a central role in early modern political thought, which was fuelled by different converging traditions. Counsel had a particular feudal and aristocratic taste to it. Kings were expected to take counsel, and vassals were supposed to offer their advice. But counsel was also a rhetorical exercise with a strong classical tradition, which was received and updated in humanist approaches to politics. Finally, counsel was a political and Christian notion.¹¹ In all three traditions, counsel expressed a reciprocal obligation that corresponded well to anthropomorphic metaphors of government. Theorists throughout Europe repeated Aristotle's idea (*Pol.* III, 1287b) that counsellors were like the senses of the prince. In his famous treatise *Concejo i consejeros de príncipe* (1559), Fadrique Furió Ceriol expressed this idea and defined counsellors in the following terms: 'his understanding, his memory, his eyes, his ears, his voice, his feet and hands'.¹²

Second, Spanish councils were courts with jurisdiction over particular series of affairs, and justice was specifically based on a mix of written and oral testimony. *Audiencia* (hearing) was a court of justice, and *oidor* (hearer) was the name given to judges in high courts and royal councils.¹³ This relationship with the sense of hearing was not merely etymological. In 1633 the Spanish jurist and counsellor of the Indies Juan de Solórzano Pereira refused a post as prosecutor of the Council of Castile alleging that his increasing hearing problems would not allow him to perform that task. Although Philip IV insisted on his merit, Solórzano retired some years later because of deafness.¹⁴ Habsburg monarchs, together with their stable councils functioning in the regulated manner characteristic of high courts, also employed less formalized types of counsel like

the *juntas*, which were semi-permanent committees to deal with concrete affairs. Despite the general European tendency towards institutionalization in this period, the frontiers between the ‘consultative process’ and the formal institutions are often difficult to ascertain. Ranging from personal advice to fully developed institutions, early modern councils and counsel were undoubtedly varied and unstable.¹⁵

Scholars are conscious that oral consultation never ceased in the Habsburg court, but they have failed to interpret the relationship between written and oral practices.¹⁶ Spoken orders (*despachos a boca*) did not simply run parallel to written notes and letters. Political counsel navigated constantly between oral and written formats in ways similar to those of ballads, news, and rumours. Reports (*memoriales*) were usually read aloud and discussed orally before turning once again into written decisions or proposals. In fact, references to ‘reading’ within councils generally imply reading aloud, as the examples in this section will show. Although historians of reading have examined this practice within groups of illiterate peasants, religious women, or urban popular classes, they have largely ignored that reading aloud also had a key role in decision-making processes.¹⁷

Philip II’s reign (1555-1598) constitutes an obligatory starting point for the purposes of the present analysis because it is usual to consider paperwork as the basis of his administration. An increasing concern with legal proof and memory also favoured the creation of archives, another major development of Philip II’s reign.¹⁸ But despite all the descriptions of this sovereign as a writing king there also exist indications that underline the importance contemporaries still attributed to orality. The almoner Luis Manrique criticized Philip II’s custom

of treating all matters 'with notes and in writing' and reminded him of his 'royal obligation, which is hearing and dealing with everyone'.¹⁹ And the historian Luis Cabrera de Córdoba created an idealized image of Philip II as a 'hearing king', a sovereign with a nice voice, 'clear and grave' speech, and who 'allowed [people] to talk to him' at the palace, at court, and on the roads.²⁰ Both Manrique's complaint and Cabrera's praise suggest that although written administration had grown significantly and would continue to do so in early modern Spain, oral contact continued being considered among the duties of a good king. Worried about Philip II's health, the Spanish friar Pablo de Mendoza suggested in 1581 that the king should devote more time to giving audiences, talking with ministers, and resolving business in oral form, and less to reading and writing documents.²¹

Conversation and writing were often strictly interrelated at Philip II's court, and this is reflected in council documentation. A note to the king by Antonio Pérez, secretary to the king, started saying, '[Martín de] Velasco told me to tell you' and then reported an issue related to the galleys before adding that Velasco 'will nevertheless also write to Your Majesty'.²² Reading, taking notes, talking, and reporting conversations formed part of the daily activities of councillors and secretaries. On another occasion, Antonio Pérez explained to Philip II that 'this morning I read the matters regarding Algiers to Francisco de Ibarra and noted down his opinion'. Pérez continued: 'this evening the three [counsellors] met at the palace. I summarized for them the opinion of Francisco de Ibarra, and they talked about it and about other issues contained in your orders'.²³ Similar references to oral practices can be found in the masses of documents produced by and sent to councils. Unfortunately, strong legal,

administrative, and historiographical traditions have kept this documentation away from debates around orality and information networks in the early modern age.

Documents from the Council of Aragon between 1587 and 1589 often state ‘the council says that’ or ‘the council considers that’ and then list several issues, each of them starting with an additional ‘that’.²⁴ These textual strategies aimed to show that those papers truly reported the outcome of previous deliberation. Moreover, these documents also reflect ongoing conversations between king, councillors, and secretaries. These series contain Philip II’s orders to be recalled of certain affairs ‘later on’ and sentences such as, ‘the count of Chinchón should talk to me about this as well’.²⁵ In other cases, the king regulated conversation at a distance. After solving some problems with the town of Ariza and sending instructions to Urbano Jiménez, regent of the Council of Aragon, Philip II ordered that Jiménez had to deal with the delegates from Ariza ‘*de palabra*’, that is, speaking personally to them.²⁶ This last example shows that written documents not only reflect the oral nature of many deliberations, but sometimes also aimed to prompt or to control further conversations.

Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there existed a continual need to guarantee that meaning was transmitted correctly. It is therefore not surprising that the sovereign ordered that decisions (*consultas*) of the Council of War ‘be read there before they are sent to His Majesty’ and that the king’s responses were equally read ‘word for word (*a la letra*)’.²⁷ The conversion of oral debate and instructions into letters and formal decisions was characteristic of the whole period. After Philip II’s reign complaints about

difficult handwriting, summarized reports, and counsellors' opinions transcribed in excessive detail continue to reflect the constant transformation of conversations into written documents.²⁸ Moreover, towards the second half of the seventeenth century official documentation underwent a slow process of standardization, which reveals new concerns about the transmission of oral information in written forms.

Formulas to report councils' decisions faithfully to the king and to put his orders in writing were sought. In 1654, for instance, there was a debate in the Council of Aragon concerning the best way to express its common decisions. Cristobal Crespí de Valdaura, head of this council, suggested that 'the council proposes' was to be preferred over 'the council in its majority' even if the document contained a dissent by one counsellor.²⁹ Alonso Carnero, secretary of state under Charles II (1665-1700), composed a stricter set of directions. First of all, handwriting should be clear enough to guarantee 'that there is no need to read the order (*despacho*) twice to understand what it contains', and language had to be 'clear, pure, plain, and authorized, but not cultivated'.³⁰ Both instructions are meant to facilitate a smooth flow between oral discussions and written documents. Second, written orders should always contain a series of formal expressions such as 'given that' (*por cuanto*) before proceeding to the executive 'I order and command' (*ordeno y mando*).³¹ Third, Carnero stated that 'the secretary of state is the voice of the prince', and therefore royal orders should directly say, 'His Majesty orders that it be said'. According to Carnero, this avoided interposing a third person between the one who commanded and the one who should obey.³² Practical problems related to the materiality of writing and to

reading in loud voice were thus mixed with political and juridical reflections about royal authority and the transmission of orders.

Documents formed part of a continuous flow of communications, and turning to this broader framework it is easy to detect that contemporaries were well aware of the importance of each step in the transmission of information. In 1566, Philip II ordered that his secretaries personally read the reports used to make decisions in councils and that they not summarize them.³³ The secretary should not act as a counsellor. Therefore, he should neither talk nor express his opinion during sessions, limiting himself to answering direct questions.³⁴ In 1620, the historian and jurist Francisco Bermúdez de Pedraza described secretaries as ‘the throat of the mystical body of this monarchy’ and the ‘voice of [the king’s] tongue, since what the Prince wants, the secretary pronounces’.³⁵ Pedraza’s idealized secretary transmitted petitions of the kingdom both orally and in written form, and gave back His Majesty’s answers, which were ‘adorned by conversation’.³⁶ Concerns around the central role of the secretaries within this flow of communications stemmed from the difficulties of representing authority in written form, avoiding falsification and misinterpretation. The key position of the secretaries also led to power struggles, and some favourites took great pains to control the access to direct conversation with the king.

In the final years of Philip II and under the reign of his son, Philip III (1598-1621), favourites progressively replaced secretaries as the king’s main interlocutors, and previous modes of communication between the king and his councils were altered.³⁷ Cabrera de Córdoba criticized the way in which Cardinal Espinosa, favourite of Philip II, approached the king. According to Cabrera even

crucial decisions about vacant posts ‘were for the most part made in spoken form’.³⁸ The members of the *Junta de Noche* have been considered to have monopolized political debate, since they benefited from oral consultation with the king.³⁹ And Rodrigo Calderón, favourite of the duke of Lerma, was once described by a Venetian ambassador as ‘patron of the duke’s ears’.⁴⁰ These and other testimonies show that the management of orality had a essential role in this development, which can also be detected in sources not related to the Spanish Court. In Christopher Marlowe’s *Edward II*, for example, the favourite Gaveston whispers in the king’s ear and takes him away from his barons.⁴¹

The flow of conversation was sometimes interpreted as the single most important feature of government. Manuscript advice to the duke of Lerma on how to consolidate his relationship with Philip III explains the three forms of consultations practiced during the previous reign of Philip II.⁴² First, council presidents ‘consulted everything in spoken form, and His Majesty made his decisions in spoken form with them’. Second, the secretaries consulted orally with His Majesty ‘making a summary of the decisions’, and Philip II decided orally. Third, ‘councils consulted everything on paper’, secretaries sent those resolutions to the king, and in turn received his written responses.⁴³ Each of these methods affected power struggles. The first option meant that presidents ‘tyrannized things’ and His Majesty’s will, given ‘the power of live voice with the king’.⁴⁴ The last form ensured ‘the truth of things’ and correct decisions and was to be preferred. However, Lerma should ‘get His Highness to ensure that every memorandum reaches your Honour’s hands, and [that] Your Honour solve them in spoken form with His Highness’.⁴⁵ This implied overseeing the work of the

secretaries and was considered ‘all the substance of the monarchy’.⁴⁶ Lerma was moreover advised not to let anyone defeat or fool him on this point. It would be difficult to find a more explicit defence of the importance of speaking directly to the king.

Fernández Navarrete’s treatise, quoted at the start of this essay, was addressed to Philip III but it was in fact published during the first years of the government of Olivares. Navarrete’s work was thus conceived as a reminder of the need for multiple counsellors, and claimed that orality in particular was a crucial element of the relationships between the king and his councils. However, Philip IV and his favourite, the Count Duke of Olivares, would develop further the system of personal communication successfully employed by Lerma. The insistence in standardizing the oral procedures of formal council meetings towards the end of the seventeenth century similarly reflects the overall tendency to control the spaces of political debate within the court.

II

The most influential Iberian treatises on counsel indicate that counsellors were subject to constant scrutiny of their bodies, behaviour, and clothes in search of explicit and hidden messages. Furió Ceriol devoted a whole chapter to the ‘attributes of the counsellor regarding the body’, including his character, height, build, and face.⁴⁷ The Portuguese Bartolomé Felipe affirmed in 1584 that counsellors should not ‘lean back or sink into the chair, but listen attentively, straight, and correctly seated’.⁴⁸ In 1617, Lorenzo Ramírez de Prado listed beauty

and external appearance as signs of a good counsellor.⁴⁹ Juan de Madariaga explained how a good counsellor ought to dress in his *Del Senado y su príncipe* (1617), and Juan de Moriana, porter of the Council of Castile, described the capes and hats that councillors had to use.⁵⁰ In early modern Europe personal presence offered the greatest ‘epistemological certainty’, and speech was considered the most authoritative medium.⁵¹ Terms like ‘conversation’ or ‘communication’ referred to a broader framework of personal interaction, including appearance, gesture, and speech.⁵² Counsellors had to transmit their opinions according to overarching rules of conversation, and voice and bodily movements were basic tools to manage the presentation of different affairs.

Ideas on masculinity, seniority, and social hierarchy had also a clear influence on the representations of counsellors. According to contemporary notions, the ability to advise was embodied and evolved gradually with age. In 1574, for example, Philip II suggested that the marquis of Aguilar should participate in a meeting of the *junta* of galleys together with more experienced members, ‘so that he gets introduced to these matters’.⁵³ Throughout the sixteenth and seventeen centuries it was generally affirmed that older men were wiser and offered better advice. In around 1549, Estefanía de Requesens warned her son that particular interests, which easily blinded old and experienced people, were even more dangerous for younger people like himself.⁵⁴ Ten years later, Furió Ceriol suggested, echoing Plato, that councillors should be between thirty and sixty years old.⁵⁵ In the first decades of the seventeenth century, the son of the count of Portalegre was advised to rely upon ‘learned and aged men of laws’, for ‘God was fond of grey hair accompanied with virtue’.⁵⁶ The link between

physical appearance and the ability to counsel depicts counselling as a complex social activity and not an isolated intellectual pursuit.

Speaking well was considered fundamental for counsellors, not the least because learning the art of conversation was difficult, required much experience, and books only offered general suggestions. As Peter Burke has argued, the great number of manuals devoted to this topic indicates that norms for conversations were fluid and evolved quickly.⁵⁷ No fixed rules, noted Fernando Bouza, taught noblemen how to speak at court: experience, imitation, and a cautious understanding of social relationships were the only available guides.⁵⁸ Obviously enough, not every word said at court was a counsel, and some important differences between formal and informal environments can be traced. In formal councils, for instance, symbolic ceremonial and the order of the conversation were more strictly respected. But given that there did not exist two completely different modes of conversation inside and outside councils, treatises on council and manuscript advice allow reconstructing the basic characteristics of different modes of speaking at court.

First of all, speaking styles reflected a more complex series of personal characteristics and virtues. The Venetian ambassador Bernardo Navagero noted the gentle manners of Francisco de los Cobos, secretary to Charles V, and the Spanish friar and historian Bartolomé de las Casas praised his ‘mild voice and mode of speaking’.⁵⁹ According to another Italian diplomat, the ‘gentle manners (*sua dolce maniera*)’ of Gabriel de Zayas, secretary to Philip II, tempered the excessive distance and scarcity of the king.⁶⁰ At the beginning of the seventeenth century the son of the count of Portalegre was similarly advised to avoid ‘deaf

and dry counsel'. His counsellors should be secretive, free, and moderately acute rather than curious, indiscreet, sharp, and ardent. The first group managed all affairs without novelty—one of the great guiding principles of early modern political thought—but the latter were continually stirred up in discussions.⁶¹ Good counsellors were supposed to deploy a gamut of moral values, like freedom or secrecy (which was also a practical concern), intellectual abilities, and correct styles of speaking.

Second, an important debate on speaking styles revolved around wit (*ingenio*). This notion, which referred both to modes of speaking and to intellectual skills, was prominently discussed in aristocratic advice and in theoretical treatises on counsel. Furió Ceriol described wit as an innate quality, and Madariaga associated wittiness with *dinotica* (δεινός) or 'practical understanding', which he also defined as a kind of 'natural imperfect prudence'.⁶² For Furió a witty individual is one who speaks in a special manner, uses 'words that differ a lot from the common use', and reaches unexpected solutions. Wit was shown with 'acute speaking, prompt response, easy understanding, clear and resolute teaching, being funny in the jokes, cautious in serious affairs'.⁶³

For humanist authors, the oral qualities of a good counsellor were nevertheless much ampler, and wittiness was discussed together with broader recommendations about orality. The second-most important quality of a good councillor was, according to Furió Ceriol, his ability to speak properly regarding military and civil uprisings, negotiations with foreign ambassadors, and other standardized political scenarios. Furió also proposed that the prince interviewed a potential counsellor several times in order to see how he 'explains his intentions

in ordinary speech and conversation'.⁶⁴ In 1617, the learned counsellor Lorenzo Ramírez de Prado basically repeated the qualities that Furió had recommended in his pioneering work. Wit was conceived slightly differently, as a natural quality associated with astuteness and to the ability to dissimulate to attain successful results. Nevertheless, eloquence was also highly valued: 'elegant, restrained speech' moves and calms the people.⁶⁵ The counsellor also should excel in his knowledge of history and in other intellectual skills such as the ability to speak in foreign languages. Although wit was allowed an important role, humanist theories on counsel understood oral performance as a complete series of rhetorical abilities.

For aristocrats, wit was supposed to be completely natural and even inherited. One of the external signs of the nobility was, in fact, a special ability to respond quickly and sharply to complicated situations. But in practical terms noblemen cultivated speaking abilities with much more care than the general praise of wit might suggest. Before the noblemen Pietro Gaetano entered the service of Alexander Farnese around 1583 he was advised to speak only about matters he knew and to 'think (*premeditar*) before talking to His Highness, being completely decided and well organized on what to say and how to respond'.⁶⁶ Aristocratic advice sometimes included calculated and even prefabricated answers to difficult political problems, either in formal or informal settings.⁶⁷ Noble conversation, in sum, also involved a long preparation and a deep understanding of court dynamics.

Third, another important discussion on the correct modes of speaking is found on the opposition between quick response and lengthy speeches. This

debate can be detected already in classical sources and throughout the sixteenth century, but the long erudite discourse stereotypically associated to jurists and learned men became the aim of increasing criticisms in the seventeenth century. Some authors, such as Juan de Madariaga recommended qualified brevity. To him, brief speech was not quick. Rather, it was discourse that declared all the points of the affair, satisfied the hearers, and allowed one to vote without any qualms.⁶⁸ Basing himself on Cicero, Madariaga suggested accommodating speech to the age of the councillor, his seniority, the nature of the affair, time, and place. Long statements were therefore reserved for elderly men able to instruct a whole assembly.⁶⁹ Counsellors were expected to adapt their discursive practices to the changing political circumstances, but at the same time their interventions at council could advance their political careers and gain them reputation. Pedro Fernández Navarrete criticised *juntas* because of the allegedly lengthy votes pronounced in those gatherings, and pointed out that one of the causes of such long speeches was that counsellors tried to impress his peers. According to Navarrete, everyone tried to gain credit and show off their knowledge ‘in front of those who have not heard them before’. He preferred the regular meetings of councils whose members had ‘frequent communication’.⁷⁰ Modes of speaking were perceived to have a direct influence on the appropriate functioning of formal and less formal institutions of council.

Early modern Spanish debates on correct modes of speaking are equally detected on descriptions of individual counsellors. Juan de Idiáquez, who later became a member of Philip II’s Council of State and of the restricted *Junta de noche*, was praised as an ambassador in Genoa. He was extremely secretive, his

thoughts were difficult to penetrate, and he ‘was heard at the senate with applause and attention due to his authority and his eloquence’.⁷¹ This may be an idealized portrait, but if we compare Idiáquez with Baltasar Álamos de Barrientos, councillor of finance during the reign of Philip IV, there is little doubt of the importance accorded to communicative skills. According to his son-in-law, Álamos had wit, judgement, and maturity, but also an excessively copious style and ‘obscure discourse (*sermoni*)’. For that reason, ‘his writings are better than his live conversation (*viva oratione*)’.⁷² The criticism of Alamos’s conversation points to personal characteristics but once again reflects the somewhat stereotyped differences between noble ways of speaking and learned ones. Each group was usually identified by their particular relationship to knowledge, speech, and experience. However, the repeated council ordinances against digressions and repetitions suggest that the problem of lengthy discourse seemingly affected noble and learned counsellors equally.

Foreign ambassadors did not attend the formal meetings of Spanish councils, but they were extremely aware of the importance of oral communications at court. The constant scrutiny to which individual members of councils were subjected is apparent in their writings, which also offered relevant clues on how to engage in conversation with different counsellors. The 1605 report of the Venetian envoy in Madrid, Simon Contarini, described one by one the different styles and conversational interests of each member of the recently remodelled Council of State. Juan de Idiáquez, for instance, was described again as peaceful and secretive: ‘his words are not clear, and neither are his answers’. The count of Chinchón was ‘very subtle’ and ‘artful in dissimulation’, and the

way to win him over was ‘to talk to him about past matters’. The vote of these two aristocrats had credit at court.⁷³ These are only two examples of a long list aimed to provide detailed information on how to speak to the newly appointed Spanish counsellors.

Contarini described also the flow of oral information and influence at court analysed in the previous section. When speaking to Lerma or to the count of Vilallonga, who was then secretary of state and a close collaborator of Lerma, one should be careful to infer whether they had interest in the matter at hand or would pass it on to the council. In the latter case, it was better to ‘pressure the members of the council and talk to them so as not to lose them’.⁷⁴ Finally, Contarini described the duke of Lerma as being two-sided: on the one hand, ‘everyone is very happy after conversing with him’, but he also had fiercely melancholic fits when it was better not to speak with him. To stay on his good side, Contarini advised, one should ‘reply without arrogance and leave everything in Lerma’s hands’.⁷⁵

The Venetian ambassador offered useful tips to deal with these men, but he also condemned dissimulation and ambiguous speech in an open manner. In fact, Contarini had a very low opinion of the Spanish council system. For him, ‘in Spain everything is Council, but it is not free, and therefore it is Council only in the name.’⁷⁶ Contarini detected a fundamental tension between the institutional framework of councils and the actual practices of counselling, and his emphasis on Lerma’s control of information constitutes an early description of the restrictive and increasingly authoritative baroque court. Changes in oral practices

help understanding the growing amount of pressure put on counsellors and the strategies to control decision-making processes.

III

Counsel was generally conceived as the discussion of a difficult matter and its most important guiding principle was free speech. Different opinions were proposed in order to assess the whole range of circumstances that affected each particular case and provide the best solution. Free speech had been explored in a wide range of classical sources and was received and interpreted in shifting ways during early modern times.⁷⁷ But far from being an immutable theoretical principle, freedom of speech was jeopardized by attempts to suppress dissent and influence decisions in authoritarian ways. This kind of attacks could arise from a superior or derive from internal conflicts between counsellors.

Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Iberian authors constantly defended the freedom of the counsellors and the utility of counsel. In 1617, Juan de Madariaga, for example, argued that the ‘superior’ —anyone leading a council— acted incorrectly when making proposals while at the same time indicating that one option was preferred to another. ‘Senators’ —participants in councils— should always stay true to their opinion, Madariaga recommended. Since freedom of speech could be deterred by the king’s smallest gestures, Madariaga also stated that the prince should not be present in councils except in time of war.⁷⁸

However, while Furió Ceriol, who wrote in 1559, explored the straightforward relationship between a Prince and its counsellors, Madariaga described much

subtler dynamics of counsel. He justified the existence of ‘secret councils’ and recognized that on some occasions the prince speaks to the senate ‘as someone who is establishing or ordering something’, and on other occasions ‘the president speaks as someone who is consulting’ and the senator shows his respect by speaking, not remaining silent.⁷⁹ In around six decades, the open political scenarios in which Furió Ceriol had conceived the activity of the counsellors had been substituted for a more restricted notion of political advice. In fact, Madariaga’s analysis excels in indicating how subtle differences in oral presentation could transform the very institutions designed for counsel into channels for transmitting orders.

Decision-making processes were complicated social acts, and various rhetorical, symbolic, and coercive strategies could be used to manipulate oral performances. More particularly, the ways in which the questions were posed and the dilemmas presented could influence the final decisions. The notes taken by an anonymous participant in the council of John of Austria during the war in the Low Countries, show how the Spanish governor strategically proposed matters to his counsellors. This exceptional ‘memorandum notebook’, recently discovered by Fernando Bouza, dates from 1578-1579 and is composed of brief statements taken directly from live conversation.⁸⁰ The manuscript notes appear to follow the original order of the talk and in fact, as Bouza pointed out, at one point the annotator wrote, ‘I did not understand him’.⁸¹

On 29 January 1578 John of Austria ordered the withdrawal of the army from Namur. He also asked whether troops leaving Namur should attack the nearby villages of Floreffe and Soye (called Sella and Selles in the notes). But

while he said that ‘if we go against Floreffe with two or three thousand men and the enemy charges, some inconvenience may occur’ he affirmed that ‘the Selles affair is substantial, and it will be of importance if accomplished’. The notebook demonstrates that John of Austria breached ideals of counsel, since he first presented a clear preference for attacking Soye, and only then recognized that he was ‘not experienced, and asks those who are’.⁸² Twenty days later, John of Austria made an even lengthier presentation of the situation before asking whether the army should besiege Brussels. His sentences were again reported one by one with short notes: ‘[He mentioned] the example of the last victory, which would not have been possible without taking risks’; ‘[He said that] to wait for supplies for everything would be endless’; ‘If we pass time attacking small villages it will embolden the enemy, and so he does not consider it [appropriate]’, and so on. Afterwards, John of Austria said that ‘if he had his people gathered and 20 pieces of artillery’ he would attack Brussels before the soldiers lost their willingness to combat. Finally, he asked for counsel, saying, ‘think about this and if there is any difficulty, whether it may be right to besiege Malinas (Mechelen)’.⁸³ Once again, there is little doubt that he had already outlined the options and hinted at his personal preferences before he asked for advice.

John of Austria’s calculated speech can be partly attributed to the exceptional context of warfare, but the use of similar and more elaborate strategies can be also detected in court councils of the same epoch. On March 13, 1582, shortly after the incorporation of Portugal, Philip II prepared a meeting to discuss the security of the Asian fleets of his recently expanded empire. Before the meeting of a mixed *junta* composed of Portuguese and Castilians, the king

ordered his secretaries Francisco Eraso, Juan Delgado, and Juan Nuñez 'to examine what should be examined and in which manner, because it may be inconvenient to deal with all the matters there'.⁸⁴ The marquis of Santa Cruz was also asked his opinion. Two days later, Eraso informed the king that Delgado and Nuñez had been told about the kind of matters that His Majesty wanted to be discussed in the *junta* and that they 'had already talked about what they will propose regarding the [West] Indies'. The king recommended proceeding with great 'dissimulation'.⁸⁵ Counsellors were given limited or distorted information, and a selective presentation of the subjects to be discussed helped pointing to the desired final option. These and other strategies altered the notion of free speech and created a complex ambience for oral discussions.

Oral performance was also fundamental in the internal dynamics that determined the hierarchical relationships between different counsellors. Councils were essentially aristocratic, and they gathered different opinions from experienced and virtuous men. But counselling was not an egalitarian practice and not all the members of councils were equally important or powerful. One's own status had to be established between aristocratic peers, and even more clearly with those considered socially inferiors. These struggles often menaced free speech.

Once again, the general view was that social hierarchy should not interfere with the freedom of council. In 1584, Bartolomé Felipe stated that a good counsellor had to listen to others in silence and complete calm, let everyone finish his speech, and wait some time before attacking and contradicting.⁸⁶ These indications were similar to instructions given to the president of the Council of

Castile in 1598. The president not only had to give his vote after everyone else, according to the customary procedures, but do so ‘without giving any clue or signal of his intentions and his opinion’ so that ‘other members in the same room could declare their intentions more freely’.⁸⁷ Physical behaviour, a correct attitude, and the order of the conversation needed to be carefully respected to avoid influencing decisions.

In Spanish councils younger or more recent members voted first, except in the Council of State, which had always followed the reverse order. This singular feature expressed the particular status of this council and the matters it examined.⁸⁸ Madariaga agreed that it was better that older, ‘more intelligent and experienced’ members spoke first to instruct younger ones. However, if matters had been considered slowly younger members could also vote first, ‘say freely what they feel, and what they have newly laboured and studied, without the fear or respect that will cause them to see the contrary opinions of older members’.⁸⁹ In theory, both methods offered considerable advantages. In practice, free speech was not only menaced by the king’s authority, but also by the hierarchical struggles within councils.

Repeated instructions to prevent that counsellors influenced his fellow advisors reveal the pressure experienced within councils. Shouting, quarrels, and other attempts to influence votes in more subtle manners were common features of councils. In June 1573 severe disputes between Francés de Alava and Francisco de Ibarra were reported. Both men ‘made their anger known, and it was necessary to take care to avoid that they were rude towards each other’.⁹⁰ Some counsellors took very seriously their prominent position and tried to manage councils in

authoritarian ways. In 1583, for example, the marquis of Aguilar reported that even though he was ‘the oldest member of the Council of State he was not given authority to order what should be done in it’, and the secretary Juan Delgado had to remind him that other members also had votes.⁹¹ Both conflicts are telling because they show not only a deviation from commonly accepted oral practices, but also how Philip II and his aides tried to control the compliance or cohesion of councils.

Excessive discord between counsellors did not produce the kind of harmonious decisions that the councils were supposed to offer and was therefore perceived as dangerous. Trying to control one of these situations, Philip III summoned a Council of State in his own chamber for three hours on Saturday, 22 June 1613. According to Cabrera de Córdoba, members of the council were ‘split and their votes very opposed’ regarding Mantua and Savoy, and the king wanted each member in his presence ‘to give the reasons for what he said, and his foundations’.⁹² In this case, Philip III wanted to demonstrate his ruling abilities by hearing—and controlling—the particular votes of his council directly.

Neither did free speech mean endless debate. Counsellors should not trespass certain limits and respect of authority had to be maintained. In early modern Europe counsellors faced increasingly complex ritual at courts and kings generally demanded to be addressed in more and more respectful and regulated ways. An appropriate functioning of councils, and a flowing rhythm of decisions was considered as a sign of good government and smooth administration. Free speech was not an end, but a means to reach the best solutions, and collective consensual decisions were certainly favoured.

The second major guiding principle of early modern counselling practices was consensus, and one of the distinctive 'epistemological' characteristics of council was that the sum of individual opinions helped to develop solutions that could have not been found by any of the participants on their own.⁹³ Already in the fifteenth century, the French historian and diplomat Philippe de Commynes had expressed this corporative notion affirming that while individuals can err and yield to passions, when a whole council talks together 'each balances the other'.⁹⁴ More than a century later, discussions were still considered to create knowledge, since 'what one does not know, another says, and if everyone says what he comes up with, the truth is finally reached'.⁹⁵ In practical terms, consensus led to easy resolution of problems and also manifested the correct functioning of councils.

Reaching consensus was both a practical concern and a valuable political goal, and in order to attain these two ends, modes of discussion and voting at councils were constantly regulated. Voting consisted in expressing a reasoned opinion on the matters discussed, and councils informed the king of their resolutions pointing out whether all members had agreed. The opinions (called 'particular votes') of those who spoke against the general decision were also written down.⁹⁶ Too much disagreement at councils questioned the abilities of the monarch and his ruling elites, but complete absence of dissent was also a sign of insufficient freedom.

Strategies for manipulating collective decision and provide a fabricated image of consensus are recognized in particularly open form in sources that deal with less institutionalized and less 'aristocratic' meetings. In 1582 Alonso de Leiva wrote a letter to his brother containing general notions on counsel and

particular advice on how to deal with sailors and manage assemblies in the navy. For Leiva, matters has to be presented in detail to those giving advice, arguments needed to be weighed carefully, and sometimes it was necessary to incorporate different opinions into one decision.⁹⁷ By combining different judgements, one could avoid being ‘blamed for any disaster’.⁹⁸ Leiva then focused on how to avoid assuming responsibility and bend opinions towards one’s own ends. The commander would explain his opinion and reasons only if after every sailor had spoken no one had expressed what he himself had thought. Even then, however, the commander should allow sailors to talk in order to see whether they confirmed and approved his opinions.⁹⁹ In this case, fear of mutinies obliged commanders to meticulously respect the appearance of collective decision, but free exchange of opinions was not the main objective of such assemblies. Rather, it was the appearance of harmony that was sought. Although Leiva commented on a very particular decision-making process, his testimony reminds us that consensus was not a natural product of councils, but rather a result that was actively searched for.

Written transmission of oral debates and record-keeping could also be used as a form of coercion, suppressing evidence of dissent. The author who most vehemently argued in favour of writing down all particular votes was Lorenzo Ramírez de Prado. For him, the resolutions of the councils had to reflect each and every one of the different votes. Ramírez de Prado also explained in a note that this procedure was used in several Spanish councils, and considered that dissent demonstrated the counsellors’ interest in finding the best solutions. A variety of opinions also helped the prince to choose between different options and

prevented that the prince had to order to debate the matter for a second time.¹⁰⁰ But for many others, particular votes only reduced the rhythm of debate and complicated decision-making. In September 1652, Cristóbal Crespí Valdaura ordered that the particular votes of the Council of Aragon be noted in a blank book, since he considered that those counsellors 'would be satisfied with this registry'. In his personal diary Crespí argued that multiple particular votes only created 'confusion and doubts in His Majesty' and that it was 'better to err occasionally following the greater part than be right following a singular vote'. Crespí's arguments asserted his own authority within the Council of Aragon and complied with monarchs' many instructions for accelerating voting procedures.¹⁰¹

In general terms, some degree of dissent was considered useful, and sometimes even promoted. On some occasions monarchs even struggled to hear dissenting opinions from their counsellors. Philip II, for instance, sometimes controlled distribution of information so that councillors could not follow the authority of the most respected members of the Council of State. In a note to Antonio Pérez, the king asked his secretary to consult first the duke of Alba, and afterwards the marquis of Vélez before seeking the opinion of Gaspar de Quiroga, archbishop of Toledo, 'because if these two agree, [Quiroga] and the rest will agree with them'.¹⁰² Correctly managing a calculated amount of dissent was part of the relationship between the Spanish king and his councils.

From 1555 to 1700, successive Habsburg kings tried to strike a balance between soliciting cautious advice on crucial events—which usually included particular opinions—and obtaining rapid solutions for common or easy affairs. Instructions regulating speaking practices aimed at an equilibrated functioning of

councils, which reflected a correct mix of free speech and collectively agreed results. Ordinances regulating the procedures of the Royal Council in 1556 already stated that both judicial cases and government matters had to be ‘voted upon in a resolute manner, without repeating the reasons and motives given by other members, keeping complete silence and paying attention when others vote’.¹⁰³ Similar instructions urging councils to speed up voting, reduce the duration of speeches, and write down particular votes only when they truly contradicted the common opinion of the council were issued in 1627.¹⁰⁴ The 1681 ordinances of the Council of Indies condensed this large chain of complaints about the ways councils handled affairs, their lack of secrecy, and the excessive duration of their deliberations. In 1681, councillors were once again instructed to pay attention, maintain silence, and vote promptly, avoiding repeating or summarizing what had already been said. They should also vote freely, but ‘without saying words or showing any intention to persuade others to follow them’, and they should neither dispute nor ‘hamper nor stop the person who is voting’.¹⁰⁵ Other councils were given similar orders in 1683, 1684, and 1692.¹⁰⁶ Even though changes in the political culture of the court tended to restrict the individual role of counsellors and promote the judicial and administrative functions of councils, these ordinances suggest that a equilibrium between freedom of speech and practical consensus was constantly looked for. The oral performance of counsel was closely observed to try to attain such balance and control the most important deliberative institutions of the monarchy.

Early modern counsel was, in short, a living institution. Either in well-established councils or in informal meetings, conversation was a key element to

make decisions. Voice, style, and cautious silence were some of the tools which counsellors used in giving their opinions and advancing their careers at court. But the ways in which the matter under discussion was presented orally by secretaries, noblemen, or respected counsellors also affected the final outcome. Literature on counsel not only examined the political functions of counsellors but also reflected on these problems and offered practical guidance. This included directions on how to represent oneself as a good speaker, and modes of addressing other counsellors and the powerful.

Oral practices were not an alternative, hidden mode of dealing with political matters. Even if the political importance of counsellors decreased throughout this period, oral performance was central at court and adapted constantly to changing political conditions. Early modern states developed increasingly impersonal administrative practices and, as is well known, an ever-growing bureaucracy. However, the importance of voice, manners, and direct conversation did not decrease instantly. The repeated instructions that monarchs issued for secretaries and counsellors reflect the importance of controlling oral debate and performances of counsel in order to transmit a favourable image of the governing procedures of the Spanish Monarchy.

¹ Bernardino de Mendoza, *Theorica y práctica de la guerra* (Madrid, 1596), p. 4.

² Pedro Fernández Navarrete, *Conservación de monarquías y discursos políticos* (Madrid, 1626), p. 27.

³ Leah S. Marcus, 'From oral delivery to print in the speeches of Elizabeth I', in Arthur F. Marotti and Michael D. Bristol, eds., *Print, manuscript, & performance: the changing relations of the media in early modern England* (Columbus, OH, 2000), pp. 34-5. See also Greg Walker, *The politics of performance in early Renaissance drama* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 3-9 and 33-6.

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- ⁴ Donald F. McKenzie, 'The sociology of a text: oral culture, literacy and print in early New Zealand', in Peter Burke and Roy Porter, eds., *The social history of language* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 161-97.
- ⁵ Adam Fox, *Oral and literate culture in England, 1500-1700* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 5-10; Margit Frenk, *Entre la voz y el silencio: la lectura en tiempos de Cervantes* (Alcalá de Henares, 1997), pp. 37-8 and 44.
- ⁶ Norbert Elias, *La société de cour* (Paris, 1985); Clifford Geertz, *Negara: the theatre state in nineteenth-century Bali* (Princeton, NJ, 1980).
- ⁷ John Guy, 'The rhetoric of political counsel in early modern England', in Dale Hoak, ed., *Tudor political culture* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 292-310; José Antonio Maravall, *Teoría del estado en España en el siglo XVII* (Madrid, 1997), pp. 273-316; Jacqueline Rose, 'Kingship and counsel in early modern England', *Historical Journal*, 54 (2011), pp. 47-71.
- ⁸ Santiago Fernández Conti, 'Los consejos de Estado y Guerra de la monarquía hispana durante la época de Felipe II (1548-1598)' (D. Phil. thesis, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1996); Dolores del Mar Sánchez González, *El deber de consejo en el estado moderno: las juntas 'ad hoc' en España (1474-1665)* (Madrid, 1993); José Luis Bermejo Cabrero, *Estudios sobre la administración central española (siglos XVII y XVIII)* (Madrid, 1982), pp. 49-60; José Antonio Escudero, *Los hombres de la monarquía universal* (Madrid, 2011).
- ⁹ Fernando Bouza Álvarez, *Comunicación, conocimiento y memoria en la España de los siglos XVI y XVII* (Salamanca, 1999) pp. 20, 24, and 38. Fernando Bouza Álvarez, *Palabra e imagen en la corte: cultura oral y visual de la nobleza en el Siglo de Oro* (Madrid, 2003).
- ¹⁰ David Colclough, *Freedom of speech in early modern England* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 62-76; Carmen Peraita Huerta, 'La oreja, lengua, voz, el grito y las alegorías del acceso al rey: elocuencia sacra y afectos políticos en *Política de Dios* de Quevedo', *La Perinola. Revista de Investigación Quevediana*, 5 (2001), pp. 185-205, at 193-8.
- ¹¹ Bartolomé Felipe, *Tractado del consejo y de los consejeros de los Principes* (Coimbra, 1584), fo. 76r-77v. See Nicole Reinhardt, 'Spin doctor of conscience? The royal confessor and the Christian prince', *Renaissance Studies*, 23 (2009), pp. 568-90, at 579-87; and Maravall, *Teoría del estado*, pp. 276-8.
- ¹² Fadrique Furió Ceriol, *El Concejo i consejeros de principe* (Antwerp, 1559), fo. 1v. See also Fernández Navarrete, *Conservación de monarquías*, pp. 23-4.
- ¹³ Sebastián de Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana* (Madrid, 1611), s.v. *Audiencia* and *Oidor*.
- ¹⁴ Juan de Solórzano Pereira, *Memorial o discurso informativo iuridico, historico, politico de los derechos, honores ... que se deben dar i guardar a los consejeros honorarios i iubilados* (Madrid, 1642), pp. 24-9.
- ¹⁵ Harald E. Braun, 'Counsel', in Mark Bevir, ed., *Encyclopedia of political theory*, London, 2010, pp. 326-7. See also Guy, 'The rhetoric of political counsel', p. 293.
- ¹⁶ Barrios Pintado, *La gobernación de la monarquía*, pp. 388-90; Escudero, *Felipe II*, pp. 453-61. See also Ranum, *Richelieu and the councillors of Louis XIII* (Oxford, 1963), p. 25.
- ¹⁷ Roger Chartier, *The order of books* (Stanford, CA, 1994), p. 9.

- ¹⁸ Fernando Bouza Álvarez, *Imagen y propaganda. Capítulos de la historia cultural del reinado de Felipe II* (Madrid, 1998), p. 42-50.
- ¹⁹ *Carta que escribió al señor Rey Felipe II D. Luis de Manrique, su limosnero mayor*, British Library (BL), Egerton 330, fo. 811. Cit. in José Antonio Escudero, *Felipe II: el rey en el despacho* (Madrid, 2003), p. 19.
- ²⁰ Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, *Filipe Segundo, Rey de España* (Madrid, 1619), p. 276, 271.
- ²¹ *Recomendaciones de Fr. Pablo de Mendoza a Felipe II, sobre el gobierno de sus Estados*, 11 Jan. 1583, Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional de Madrid (BNM), Mss. 9405, fos. 108r-v.
- ²² Instituto Valencia de Don Juan (IVDJ), E60, C80bis, 21.
- ²³ IVDJ, E60, C80bis, 26.
- ²⁴ Carlos Riba, *El consejo supremo de Aragón en el reinado de Felipe II* (Valencia, 1914), pp. 5, 9, 22.
- ²⁵ Carlos Riba, *El consejo supremo*, p. 26. Same indication in pp. 52-3.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 21.
- ²⁷ British Library (BL), Egerton 2052, fo. 134, Cit. in José Antonio Escudero, *Los secretarios de estado y del despacho: 1474-1724* (4 vols., Madrid, 1976), IV, p. 976.
- ²⁸ BL, Additional 28360, fos. 9-13. Cit. in Escudero, *Los hombres de la monarquía universal*, p. 88.
- ²⁹ Cristóbal Crespí de Valdaura, *Diario de su vida y asistencia al Consejo de Aragón desde el 9 de junio de 1652 al 1691*, BNM Mss. 5742, fos. 85v-86r.
- ³⁰ Alonso Carnero, *Formulario de lo que debe observar un secretario que lo fuere de Estado*, BNM Mss. 10932, fos. 183r-184v.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, fos. 188r-v.
- ³² *Ibid.*, fo. 195r.
- ³³ *Instrucción dada al secretario [Diego de] Vargas y a los otros secretarios de su Majestad real de lo que han de observar. año de 1556*, BNM Mss. 1752, fo. 284v.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, fo. 284v
- ³⁵ Francisco Bermúdez de Pedraza, *El secretario del rey* (Madrid, 1620), fo. 15r.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*, fo. 68r.
- ³⁷ Antonio Feros, *Kingship and favoritism in the Spain of Philip III, 1598-1621* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 111-12.
- ³⁸ Cabrera de Córdoba, *Filipe Segundo*, p. 699-700.
- ³⁹ Francesco Benigno, *La sombra del rey: validos y lucha política en la España del siglo XVII* (Madrid, 1994), pp. 52 and 65.
- ⁴⁰ Orazio della Rena, 'Relazione segreta' (1605), Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, Magl. CI.XXV, cod. 79, fo. 48. Cit. in Feros, *Kingship and favouritism*, p. 168.
- ⁴¹ Cit. in Keith M. Botelho, *Renaissance earwitnesses: rumor and early modern masculinity* (New York, 2009), p. 43.
- ⁴² Pedro Franqueza, *Advertencias que el secretario Franqueza dió al duque de Lerma quando la Mag.d de Philippo 3º succedió cuyo privado fue*. IVDJ, E29, C42, 37. This manuscript seems to be the oldest one preserved. It was copied in BNM Mss. 10857, but this copy is incomplete and has notable differences.

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- ⁴³ Franqueza, *Advertencias*, fos. 104v-105r.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., fo. 105r. BNM 18275 does not contain this mention.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., fo. 105v. BNM 18275, once again, does not contain this reference to orality.
- ⁴⁶ Franqueza, *Advertencias*, fo. 105v.
- ⁴⁷ Furió Ceriol, *El Concejo*, fos. 54v ff.
- ⁴⁸ Felipe, *Tractado del consejo*, fo. 98r.
- ⁴⁹ Lorenzo Ramírez de Prado, *Consejo i consejero de príncipes* (Madrid, 1617), pp. 114-16.
- ⁵⁰ Madariaga, *Del senado y de su principe*, p. 303. Juan de Moriana, *Discursos generales y particulares del gobierno general y político del Consejo Real y Supremo de Justicia de estos reinos de Castilla y León y ceremonias de él* (1614-1654), BNM Mss. 7467, fo. 94r.
- ⁵¹ Gary Schneider, *The culture of epistolarity: vernacular letters and letter writing in early modern England, 1500-1700* (Newark, NJ, 2005), p. 29.
- ⁵² Peter Burke, *The art of conversation* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 95.
- ⁵³ Archivo General de Simancas (AGS), GM, leg. 78, n° 261. Cit. in Fernández Conti, 'Los consejos', p. 161.
- ⁵⁴ *Instrucción de la señora doña Estefanía de Requesens ... para don Luis de Requesens su hijo*, c. 1547-49, BNM Mss. 2058, fo. 9v.
- ⁵⁵ Furió Ceriol, *El Concejo*, fo. 57r.
- ⁵⁶ *Aviendo muerto el conde de Portalegre, don Juan, a su hijo don Diego, ya heredado, le imbia un amigo estos avisos para gobernarse* (1601-1622), BNM Mss. 4304, fo. 28r. See also Madariaga, *Del senado y de su principe*, p. 237; and Ramírez de Prado, *Consejo i consejero*, p. 137.
- ⁵⁷ Burke, *The art of conversation*, pp. 91-3.
- ⁵⁸ Bouza Álvarez, *Palabra e imagen*, p. 18.
- ⁵⁹ *Relazione di Bernardo Navagero, ritornato ambasciatore da Carlo V nel luglio 1546*. Cit. in Escudero, *Los secretarios*, I, p. 415.
- ⁶⁰ *Relatione delle cose di Spagna del 1577*. Cit. en Escudero, *Los secretarios*, I, p. 139.
- ⁶¹ *Aviendo muerto el conde de Portalegre*, fo. 28r.
- ⁶² Madariaga, *Del senado y de su principe*, p. 235.
- ⁶³ Furió Ceriol, *El Concejo*, fo. 16v.
- ⁶⁴ Furió Ceriol, *El Concejo*, fo. 19v.
- ⁶⁵ Ramírez de Prado, *Consejo i consejeros*, p. 197.
- ⁶⁶ Cit. in Bouza Álvarez, *Imagen y propaganda*, pp. 240-1.
- ⁶⁷ *Instrucción del Duque de Osuna [Aparicio de Uribe] a D. Pedro Girón, su hijo, embiándole a la jornada de Alemania desde Nápoles*, 1619, BNM Mss. 10857, fo. 131v.
- ⁶⁸ Madariaga, *Del senado y de su principe*, p. 305.
- ⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 316.
- ⁷⁰ Fernández Navarrete, *Conservación de monarquías*, pp. 35-6. See also Felipe, *Tractado del consejo*, fos. 89v-90r.
- ⁷¹ Cabrera de Córdoba, *Filipe Segundo, Rey de España*, p. 771.
- ⁷² Nicolás Antonio, *Bibliotheca Hispana nova*, Madrid, 1783, vol. 1, p. 180.

- ⁷³ *Relación que hizo a la República de Venecia Simón Contarini, al fin del año de 1605, de la embajada que había hecho en España*. Appendix to Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, *Relaciones de las cosas sucedidas en la corte de España desde 1599 hasta 1614* (Madrid, 1857), p. 568.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 569.
- ⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 570.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 570.
- ⁷⁷ Colclough, *Freedom of speech*, pp. 62 and 71.
- ⁷⁸ Madariaga, *Del senado y de su principe*, p. 369.
- ⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 369.
- ⁸⁰ *Libro de memorias 1578-1579*. Biblioteca de Catalunya Ms. 2785. Ed. in Bouza Álvarez, *Palabra e imagen*, pp. 56-8 and 64-5.
- ⁸¹ *Libro de memorias*, fo. 53r.
- ⁸² Ibid., fo. 21r.
- ⁸³ Ibid., fo. 41r.
- ⁸⁴ AGS, GM, leg. 124, n° 380, Cit. in Fernández Conti, 'Los consejos', p. 239.
- ⁸⁵ AGS, GM, leg. 138, n° 23, Cit. in Ibid.
- ⁸⁶ Felipe, *Tractado del consejo*, fo. 97v.
- ⁸⁷ 'Orden que ha de guardar el Consejo en el despacho de los negocios de gobierno y justicia, Madrid, 14 de febrero de 1598', AGS, *Diversos de Castilla*, 1-59. Cit. in Salustiano de Dios, *Fuentes para el estudio del Consejo Real de Castilla* (Salamanca, 1986), p. 118.
- ⁸⁸ Barrios Pintado, *La gobernación de la Monarquía*, pp. 392-3.
- ⁸⁹ Madariaga, *Del senado y de su principe*, p. 308-309. See also Bermúdez de Pedraza, *El secretario del rey*, fo. 73.
- ⁹⁰ IVDJ, E60, C80, 22, cit. in Fernández Conti, 'Los consejos', p. 155n. Call number is incorrect.
- ⁹¹ AGS. GM, leg. 154, n° 293, cit. in Fernández Conti, 'Los consejos', p. 244.
- ⁹² Cabrera de Córdoba, *Relaciones*, p. 520.
- ⁹³ Madariaga, *Del senado y de su principe*, pp. 102-3.
- ⁹⁴ Philippe de Comynnes, *Mémoires de Philippe de Comynnes* (3 vols., Paris, 1840-47), I, pp. 124-5.
- ⁹⁵ *El Cardenal D. Gabriel Trejo a sus sobrinos y amados hijos*, BNM Mss. 4304, fo. 46r.
- ⁹⁶ Escudero, *Felipe II*, p. 30.
- ⁹⁷ *Carta de D. Alonso de Leyva a su hermano, en San Lúcar de Barrameda a 13 de noviembre de 1582 años*, BNM Mss. 2058, fo. 68v.
- ⁹⁸ Ibid., fo. 68v.
- ⁹⁹ Ibid., fos. 69r-v.
- ¹⁰⁰ Ramírez de Prado, *Consejo i consejeros*, fo. 13r.
- ¹⁰¹ Crespí de Valdaura, *Diario*, fo. 12r.
- ¹⁰² BL Add. Mss. 28.262, fo. 544v. Cit. in Fernández Conti, 'Los consejos', p. 310.
- ¹⁰³ *Ordenanzas del Consejo Real de su Majestad* (Valladolid, 1556). Cit. in Dios, *Fuentes para el estudio del Consejo Real*, p. 104.
- ¹⁰⁴ AHN, *Estado*, leg. 2812. Cit. in Escudero, *Los secretarios*, III, p. 895.

¹⁰⁵ *Ordenanzas del Consejo real de las Indias: nuevamente recopiladas ... por Felipe IV* (Madrid, 1681), XIX, p. 31.

¹⁰⁶ AHN, *Estado*, legajo 247. Cit. in Bermejo Cabrero, *Estudios sobre la administración*, pp. 215-17.