

noticeably lacks, however, is evidence of the rebels' voice: we know they swore an oath of loyalty but not what it was; and no petition of demands survives. Nonetheless, it is clear from their actions that religion was the key issue: they burned Protestant books, victimized married priests and their wives, held traditional church services, and restored the fabric of parish churches.

There are plenty of parallels to be drawn with earlier English popular rebellions. As in the Pilgrimage of Grace of 1536, church bells were rung to raise rebellion: after 1569 churches with more than one bell had the others confiscated as punishment. Men were gathered together using the established (and legal) practice of mustering the local militia under the leadership of village constables, a method used at least as far back as Jack Cade's Revolt of 1450. Once gathered, the banner of the five wounds of Christ was held aloft once more, as it had been in 1536 and during the Western Rebellion of 1549. The actions of the rebels were very largely symbolic, and as in many rebellions, the leaders seemed unsure what they should actually do once the fighting force had been gathered. There are elements that set this rebellion apart, however. There is no doubting that the 1569 rebellion was started by an aristocratic and gentry clique. None of England's other large-scale popular rebellions, for instance, 1381, 1450, 1536, or 1549, were started by the gentry or aristocracy. Can a movement be popular without having popular beginnings? This is an interesting question, which the book does not tackle as directly as it might have. The second element that makes the rebellion unusual is the government's response. At no point was a general pardon offered, and many more were hanged as punishment for taking part than in earlier revolts. Not only that, but under a system of martial law, lists of participants were drawn up and men selected in cold blood to be punished as examples. Some were selected for their actions, but others were chosen because they had property the Crown wished to confiscate. This shows the Elizabethan state at its most brutal, not scrabbling around to restore order and making compromises, but clinically seeking to both punish and profit from the events.

Kesselring's detailed examination of the Northern Rebellion of 1569 adds a great deal to our understanding of both English popular rebellion and Elizabethan government. It joins a growing body of work that convincingly demonstrates that political knowledge and action were not the preserve of the elite in sixteenth-century England. It might perhaps have been rewarding to have more details about the ordinary people who took part, given that the popular nature of the revolt is such an important strand of the argument presented. But some valuable morsels are provided, particularly about women's role in the rebellion: not just widows petitioning for their property after the revolt had ended, but women carrying lime and sand to restore the alter stone to Sedgefield parish church, the rebel who sought to avoid hanging by claiming he had been led astray by his wife, and Anne, Countess of Northumberland, who "rode daily with the rebels despite her pregnancy" (78), joining her husband as a result of her own religious and political convictions.

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CHRIS R. KYLE. *Theater of State: Parliament and Political Culture in Early Stuart England*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012. Pp. 288. \$60.00 (cloth).  
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In *Theater of State*, Chris Kyle argues that a radical break in political culture in the 1620s, not in the 1640s, as others have argued, placed Parliament at the center of the post-Reformation public sphere. This process produced a sustained political discourse that moved the epicenter of politics from the court to Parliament in preparation for the earthquake that shook English society in 1640. In support of this thesis, the author presents evidence about where the

transition had substantial consequences: issues of free speech, the roles of laughter and silence, recording of parliamentary business, and networks of communication. By 1629 this development had made Parliament the focal point of the political nation, well before the advent of the Short Parliament in 1640.

With respect to these different questions, Kyle provides arguments that are novel yet also steeped in a long scholarly tradition. For example, the author makes excellent use of work on public and private space in the early modern period. In addition, in regard to parliamentary free speech, the change from oratory to debate is well documented. Yet there is also room for Wallace Notestein's *Winning of the Initiative*, an argument now nearly a century old. Government control of debate by any measure had declined in the 1620s, especially by the standard of Elizabethan politics.

With that evidence accepted, it still remained that a majority of speeches in the House of Commons were made by a relatively few members. Increased reporting, however, sparked interest in political discussion well beyond the confines of London. Printed lists of MPs removed the cloak of anonymity and made them more available to petitioners and lobbyists and cast them in a public role hitherto unanticipated. The problems between Crown and Parliament that took center stage in the 1640s had been rehearsed twenty years earlier by the transformation of the public sphere.

Without dissenting from the book's primary conclusions, however, it is important to note, as the late Geoffrey Elton asserted on numerous occasions, that what Parliament did mattered most, not the manner in which business was transacted. Thus the Petition of Right in 1628 gained its importance by virtue of what it did and did not accomplish, not the style accompanying its passage. Sufficient accounts of the political narrative exist, so this work adds an interesting dimension to the understanding of the prelude to the Civil War.

Although firmly grounded in empirical research, the book also conjures powerful imaginative scenes. Parliamentary chambers no longer afforded sanctuary from public intrusion but were often crowded by individuals with widely divergent agendas to pursue. Such scenes no doubt featured excited crowds, mixing together news, gossip, and rumor, and waiting for some information that made sense in the contemporary context. Finally, one might also imagine the throngs that played such an important part in affecting the grave parliamentary decisions of the day in national politics.

The Civil War has never lacked for interpreters, and the author emphasizes that "the Crown dispensed with Parliament because it was too powerful and too popular" (182). The blame game, court versus country, Crown versus Parliament, feudal versus capitalist economic organization, will last forever, so the author clearly has scant sympathy for Charles I. In 1640 Parliament had to be recalled, and the circumstances inaugurated in the 1620s came into full operation. The public sphere had expanded so dramatically that royal authority no longer proved decisive.

In the end, therefore, this book will appeal primarily to specialists and graduate students working in the early Stuart era. However, I believe that, with appropriate tutelage, it deserves consideration from undergraduates as well. Concise and well written, the volume makes a contribution to the political atmosphere that provided the context for the destruction of trust in 1640. It was theater in one sense, but it had real consequences.

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