

MINORITY PLAYS: Two Interludes For Edward VI

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Lusty Juventus and *Nice Wanton*¹ are two moral interludes of the early Reformation, if we must begin with premises. In this paper I will explore the radical specificity of these two plays, and demonstrate how they contribute to a historical reading of the reign of Edward VI, or to the reconstruction of his inscrutability. First of all some terminological anomalies need to be exposed, some historical foreground to be drawn in.

There is more or less a consensus understanding of what constitutes a moral play or 'interlude', though the genre is not founded upon the rock of exemplary medieval referents which is often assumed. Apart from the textually corrupt *Pride of Life*, the three surviving morality plays of the pre-Tudor period, *Mankind*, *The Castle of Perseverance*, and *Wisdom*, survive in the single manuscript compendium known as the 'Macro Plays'. On these, and that well-known translation of a Dutch original, *Everyman*, the parameters of a whole native English dramatic genre have been based. All the other sixty-odd examples, which include *Lusty Juventus* and *Nice Wanton*, are late variants. They share with the prototypes a list of characters whose names are either, in the case of *Lusty Juventus*, mostly abstract qualities, or, in the case of *Nice Wanton*, biblical stereotypes of moral qualities. Their action too, conforms broadly to the (comic) pattern of crisis and resolution.

If, in the eyes of their critics, Tudor morality plays resemble their fifteenth-century prototypes structurally, they are equally acknowledged to diverge from them thematically, that is ideologically, as the vehicle of moral instruction in the precepts of the Roman Catholic faith is turned to serve the tenets first of Erasmian humanism (Skelton's *Magnificence*), then of the full-blown radicalism of Protestant reform (John Bale). Subscribing to the existence of the genre 'moral play', therefore, impels at this point the designation of sub-genres to account for these departures. One of these, to which both plays discussed here belong, is commonly referred to as 'the Prodigal Son play'. In Prodigal Son plays, the protagonist's learning experience became synonymous with the maturation process; consequently the plays are *fora* for the discussion of the good and bad influences which contribute to the education of youth. These influences take on the roles of

the vice and virtue characters. In its simplest form (*Youth* 1513-29), the young man's departure from the values of his elders and later restoration to them, clearly conforms to the pattern of the parable in Luke's gospel. When, however, the Reformation rendered the values of elders synonymous with those of the corrupt old faith, the youthful protagonist might be encouraged by characters representing the voice of Reformation to cast aside the values of his elders in order to conform to a new orthodoxy. The generational conflict evident in this group of plays, of which *Lusty Juventus* is a notable example, has been convincingly demonstrated to use Terentian New Comedy, where old values are laughed into impotence, to modify the narrative archetype of the parable.² Similarly, the reception of the Calvinist doctrine of predestination appears to have occasioned *Nice Wanton*'s curious distortion of the sub-genre, whereby two sons and one daughter of an indulgent parent demonstrate the conditions of, respectively, damnation, election, and last-minute salvation through God's promise of mercy. The superficial absence of a pattern of fall and restitution in this play has led at least one confused critic to claim it for tragedy.³

To sieve these plays in search of what they have in common is to marginalise their individual particularity. A critical reading which privileges what a text has in common with its predecessors over the text's singularity has well-established political implications for the reading of all historical texts:⁴

The past is read as — and for — evidence that change is always only superficial, that human nature, what it is to be a person, a man or a woman, a wife or a husband, is palpably unchanging. This history militates against radical commitment by denying the possibility of change.

Lusty Juventus and *Nice Wanton*, as well as being moral interludes (Tudor Protestant variant) are plays written for performance during a particular brief period of political and doctrinal turmoil in the English state. Wever's *Lusty Juventus*, on the evidence of built-in economy of production, was probably the property of a touring troupe of players, and therefore could have reached a geographically and socially wide audience; *Nice Wanton*, with its preponderance of female characters and more restrained scenes of debauchery, is a choir-boy play which may have been performed at court. They are both plays written about childhood, which, on internal evidence,

can be attributed incontrovertibly to the period of the brief reign of the child-monarch Edward VI.

The milieu of the post-Reformation Tudor court, which is to say the legacy of Erasmian Humanism coupled with volatile political and ecclesiastical power-bases, both presented a new freedom to the forces of government to 'self-fashion',⁵ and exacted high social and political penalties for sending out inappropriate signals. Under the circumstances, hard on the heels of the 1534 Act of Supremacy and attendant legislation which had conferred unprecedented autonomy upon Henry VIII and his successors, it was peculiarly inconvenient for those interested in building on recent constitutional gains to have a delicate child of nine inherit the throne of England. The art and literature of his brief reign show, as one might expect, the semiotics of a royal supremacy in tension with another system of signs deriving from Protestant doctrines concerning the relationship between child and elder in the God-fearing society of the Elect. Edward VI's supreme power was wielded throughout his short reign by proxy: he was indeed, systematically fashioned by others. Irony and conflict may have no demonstrable part in the conscious intentions of the artists and writers in question, but are nonetheless available when the particular interface between the work of art and its social, intellectual and political milieu are explored: the individual 'moral interlude' may have been conceived as an expression of eternal verities, but may be perceived as a contribution to a particular historical moment. Furthermore, it is not just the reflection of, or vehicle for, propaganda, but witness to a received or nascent ideology and its subversions.

The shaping of Edward was controlled by his stepmother, Catherine Parr, reputedly a moderate Protestant of Erasmian piety,⁶ his tutors from St John's College, Cambridge — Cheke, Ascham, Grindal — all of whom would have educated Edward on the same humanist principles, and, of course, his uncle the Lord Protector, Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset. Real power lay not with the boy king, but, in the early years, with Somerset, who annexed Edward's monarchical power to his own personal use:⁷

... his conduct of government ... was highly unconventional. He had attained supreme power through the acquiescence of his fellow councillors, and common sense as well as custom suggested the need to maintain their support by consulting them regularly. In fact Somerset did almost precisely the opposite ... The Privy Council faded into the background during his regime and the result was that

when he needed the councillors' support ... he found himself politically isolated ... His preference for a highly 'personal' style of government is confirmed by his use of proclamations ...

After Seymour fell, government was conducted according to a more constitutionally conventional pattern by the Privy Council under the leadership of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, but there is still not a scrap of evidence that the monarch himself instigated legislation, and less likely still, that he was his own man.

The presentational make-over occasioned by the monarch's extreme youth was clear enough to contemporary commentators. Stephen Gardiner, the reactionary Bishop of Winchester, actually used the royal supremacy to argue against radical change, by pointing out that the duties of the Council were only to mind the shop for the king. He warns of the dangers of making irrevocable changes which Edward might wish to change when he reached his majority:⁸

A king's authority to govern his realm never wanteth, though he were in his cradle. His place is replenished by his Council, as we have now my Lord Protector. And yet it is a difference in the judgement of the people to direct and order things established, and to make in the highest innovations.

Looking back on the reign, a foreign commentator recorded the careful manipulation of the young king:⁹

On the death of King Henry he was succeeded by King Edward, a youth of very handsome presence, with which his mental endowments corresponded. Whilst under the guardianship of his uncle, the Duke of Somerset, he attended to his studies with marvellous success, learning not only Latin and Greek likewise, though when the government was changed and Somerset replaced by the Duke of Northumberland, who was a soldier at heart and by profession, he changed the king's studies accordingly, and had him taught to ride and handle his weapons, and to go through other similar exercises, so that his majesty soon commenced arming and tilting, managing horses, and delighting in every sort of exercise, drawing the bow, playing rackets, hunting and so forth, indefatigably, though he never neglected his studies.

Even Edward's Protestantism, the founding dogma on which his style of monarchical government depended, could be dismissed by its opponents as the product of undue influence exerted in his youth:¹⁰

... his Majesty's obstinate adherence to the heresy, alone detracting from so many merits, though for this also he may be excused as he was educated according to its precepts.

At the beginning of the reign too, the Spanish ambassador noted:¹¹

There is preaching every day before the King, and the preachers seem to vie with each other as to who can abuse most strongly the old religion, he who excels the others in this respect being most highly favoured.

The most celebrated preacher before the king was Hugh Latimer, whose sermons of the spring of 1549 accomplish amazing feats of intellectual balancing by simultaneously commending King Edward, by comparison with juvenile paragons from the Old Testament such as Josiah and Solomon, for his precocious wisdom in the matter of governing the realm, and exhorting the young king to do as he is told by his elders.¹²

It is in the nature of the contemporary theatre that it should both participate in this carefully orchestrated presentation of young Edward and expose its anomalies. The place of the theatre in the dissemination of the broader Protestant doctrines favoured by the Protectorate is abundantly substantiated.¹³ Again there is the witness of the Spanish ambassador:¹⁴

It is quite true that the Protector and those principally associated with him in the government are much attached to the sects, the result being that at present the common people, unrestrained by reason of the late king's death, publicly and undisguisedly confess their sentiments quite contrary to our religion, of which they make all sorts of farces and pastimes, above all of the good bishops ...

There is also the evidence of a deluge of legislation, first to unmuzzle the theatre, which had been subject to the late Henrician (1543) 'Act for the advancement of true religion and for the abolishment of the contrary',¹⁵ then to control it again, demonstrating eloquently its perceived power. First the Act of Uniformity (1549) forbade interludes 'depraving and despising' the Book of Common Prayer, then a royal proclamation of 1551 effectively introduced censorship, as it forbade the printing, publishing, or selling of any play without the permission of the Privy Council¹⁶.

In *Lusty Juventus* the eponymous hero is early supplied, in his evident need, with the support and assistance of two characters called Good Counsel and Knowledge, who give him a book. They also explain to him that his parents failed to instruct him correctly because they were misled by false preachers. They present no answer to the central problem: how can

the youth distinguish the good from the bad teacher? They preach a doctrine of self-reliance and knowledge, of casting aside the guidance of parents, and yet insist that youth is lost without good counsellors. Juventus is indeed lost without them, falling first into the hands of Hypocrisy, then of Fellowship and Abominable Living, all types of bad influence.

Juventus has to be isolated so that the temptation scene may take place. The absence of both Good Counsel and Knowledge, though necessary to the mechanics of the plot at this point in the play — to say nothing of the exigencies of doubling in performance — is allegorical nonsense. Free the play from the requirement to conform as a moral interlude, however, and it readily offers another possibility, that of representing a moralised, but non-specific, single instance. The play is underdeveloped as universal allegory, although there remains a latent possibility for reading the seduction scene and its actors as a reconversion to Catholicism, commonly designated in terms of whoredom. On the other hand, the play also resists the specificity of satire in which meaning is self-restricted by cumulative detailed reference to a single historical or contemporary reality. There resides in this middle ground a permissive metaphorical structure which is able to articulate the poignant isolation and vulnerability of the boy-king within the doctrinal and political systems in which he was trapped. The nature of these systems may be clearly read in a play which condemns as dangerous both parents and playmates, in effect all kinds of social intercourse attractive to the young, and warns both of the necessity of choosing good advisors and simultaneously of youth's lack of experience in doing this reliably. The youth is given study and prayer as his only props, and that is all that lies between him, despair, and damnation.

The protagonist is, however, restored to good spirits, for this is a comedy, by some brisk preaching from Good Counsel and God's Promises in the end. The play then ends with a triple epilogue, in which Juventus offers the generalised message of the play to his audience:

Neither kindred nor fellowship shall you excuse,
When you shall appear before the judgement seat,
But your own secret conscience shall then give an audit.
All you that be young whom I do now represent,
Set your delight both day and night on Christ's Testament:
If pleasure you tickle, be not fickle, and suddenly slide,
But in God's fear everywhere see that you abide:
In your tender age seek for knowledge, and after wisdom run,

And in your old age teach your family to do as you have done.

Good Counsel then dedicates the play to the youthful king, with the prayer:

That in his godly proceedings he may still persevere,
Which seeketh the glory of God above all other thing:
O Lord, endue his heart with true understanding ...

Then finally Juventus offers a prayer for the lords of the realm, the king's supposed good counsellors:

Also let us pray for all the nobility of this realm;
And, namely, for those whom his grace hath authorised
To maintain the public wealth over us and them,
That they see his gracious acts published;
And that they, being truly admonished
By the complaint of them which are wrongfully oppressed,
May seek reformation, and see it redressed.

These speeches propose that the play is a generalised instance of the folly of youth, and a vehicle for the basic tenets of the brand of Protestantism promoted by the Protectorate, a Protectorate which is merely fulfilling the wishes of the young king. Yet the action of the play resists so simple a reading.

Many of the preoccupations which are aired and revealed in the play are available in Latimer's sermons preached before the king in the spring of 1549. He spoke of good and bad counsellors, the purchase of offices, charity to the poor, worth versus birth, with a rhetorical style heavily dependent on the creation of hypothetical voices, and not far removed from the discourses of contemporary theatre. Powerfully metatextual, the sermons assert that the act of preaching is virtuous behaviour, and advise the young monarch that, instead of following the ways of his father, he should exercise personal power in consultation with suitable elders, and should, like all good monarchs, listen in matters spiritual to the advice of God's ministers.¹⁷

It is in the second (15 March) and third (22 March) sermons that Latimer confronts the subject of the child-king's exercise of supreme power:¹⁸

... we may be sure that God blessed this realm, although he cursed the realm whose ruler is a child, under whom the officers are climbing, and gleaning, stirring, scratching and scraping, and

voluptuously set on banqueting, and for the maintenance of their voluptuousness go by-walks. And although he be young, he hath as good and as sage a council as ever was in England; which we may well know by their godly proceedings, and setting forth the word of God. Therefore let us not be worse than the stiff-necked Jews. In king Josias's time, who being young did alter, change and correct wonderfully the religion, it was never heard in Jewry, that the people repined or said, 'The king is a child: this gear will not last long: it is but one or two men's doings: it will not tarry but for a time; the king knoweth it not.' Wo worth that ever such men were born! Take heed lest for our rebellion God take his blessing away from us!

The youth of the king is acknowledged, but the congregation is reassured in two matters: that he would not, on the example of Josiah, be the first child-monarch to rule well and autonomously, but that, in any case, he has an irreproachable council of ministers to rule on his behalf. As the point is developed through to the fifth sermon (5 April 1549), it becomes clear that, in recommending the king's independence of judgement, the preacher really intends chiefly that he should not seek to emulate his father:¹⁹

All sons are not to be blamed for not walking in their fathers' ways. Ezekias did not follow the steps of his father Ahaz, and was well allowed in it. Josias, the best king that ever was in Jewry, reformed his father's ways, who walked in earthly policy. In his youth he took away all idolatry, and purged his realm of it, and set a good order in all his dominions, and wrestled with idolatry.

Latimer then defends Somerset for his manner of guiding the young king, 'I am sure he hath been brought up so godly, with such schoolmasters, as never king was in England, and so hath prospered under them as never none did'.²⁰ The young king demonstrates his power, virtue, and autonomy, therefore, by the correct selection of those to whose authority he chooses to submit. This is the interestingly subversive sophistry to which those who would shape Edward subjected him: it is also the mainspring of dramatic tension in the Edwardian 'youth' plays under consideration.

The court itself was the milieu in which *Nice Wanton* was performed by children.²¹ This play reorganises what is essentially the same structural pattern as *Lusty Juventus* to present a more optimistic model for the young king's independent action. In *Nice Wanton* the protagonist is trifurcated,

not for the first time in the moral interlude,²² so that the prodigal can become three separate characters according to Calvinist principles, two males, one damned, the other elect, and one female who is retrieved from damnation by God's promise of mercy. The play remains comic in structure, as this composite protagonist is eventually purged of its corrupt elements.

Two stanzas of verse preceding the text set out the prospectus for the play's moral message:

Wherein ye may see
 Three branches of an ill tree:
 The mother and her children three,
 Two naught, and one godly.
 Early sharp, that will be thorn;
 Soon ill, that will be naught:
 To be naught, better unborn;
 Better unfed than naughtily taught.

There is immediate tension here between the fifth to seventh lines in which the pair of images suggest that 'naughtiness' is innate, a topical Calvinist argument, and the sense of the eighth line which suggests that the same 'naughtiness' is a product of nurture. This tension, a fundamental contradiction, invites a parallel with the issue of the theoretical and real extent of contemporary royal power, and is maintained throughout the play. It presents a problem, however, only in establishing responsibility for Ismael and Dalila's spectacular departures from the straight and narrow; Barnabas's unwavering virtuous conduct is the more striking and remarkable in the face of such apparently feckless parenting. In the character of Barnabas, therefore, I would suggest, there is available an idealised model for the young king from the beginning, reinforced by the prologue's reference to Solomon to whom Edward had publicly been compared by Latimer. That he is only one third of the whole protagonist, neatly allows the paradoxes evident in both *Lusty Juventus* and Latimer's preaching to be sidestepped.

Barnabas first enters quoting a text from Ecclesiasticus, 'Man is prone to evil from his youth'. This is the text of his preaching: the moral play in which he takes part is a preacher's exemplum, an analogy to the substance of the text. Ismael and Dalila are every bit as bad as Barnabas is good, although they are clearly a lot more fun. They enter singing. Barnabas upbraids them for cutting school, wasting time and learning, for:

Learning bringeth knowledge of God, and honest living to get.

His parting shot is actually a text from St Paul. Unmoved, they plan a day of truant vice in the alehouse with 'lusty companions two or three', and, before they leave, they throw away their schoolbooks:

Away with book and all!

John N. King has demonstrated the iconographic power of the book²³ in representations of Edward VI: knowledge of the Bible is the only way to know God's laws, obedience to which is the only passport to eternal life. At this moment in the play a kind of anti-iconoclasm, a potent image for its time, occurs, as Ismael and Dalila reject at one blow the Erasmian doctrines of education on which the young king had been reared, and the substance of faith as available in the book alone.

The central section of the play introduces more characters, firstly Eulalia, the voice of the incorrupt older generation, who vows to correct the mother in a neighbourly way. She, like Barnabas, is both preacher and exemplum, this time of responsible parenting. Balancing her supportive influence is the subversive influence of Iniquity, the 'conventional' Vice figure and agent of Ismael and Dalila's fall. It is not entirely clear what Iniquity's role is in the play beyond the opportunity for burlesque, as the splitting of the protagonist into the elect Barnabas and his already corrupt brother and sister leaves him with no-one to tempt, for he never comes into contact with Barnabas, and the other two are quite capable of falling all by themselves. There follows a playground orgy of gambling, scrapping, singing, and stolen kisses.

Necessarily there is an abrupt change and visual shock necessary to allow an improving message to be retrieved from the romp the play has become. Dalila enters, crippled and hideously disfigured, 'stuffed with diseases'. Like Robert Henryson's venerably leprous Cresseid, Dalila has come to realise too late what has brought her to this pass. Barnabas meets her, preaches repentance, and takes her in, extending the hand of corporal mercy to her in approved manner. Ismael's fall is enacted in a courtroom scene, where he is found guilty of felony, burglary and murder, and is condemned to hang. He turns king's evidence against Iniquity, and both are led out in chains.

Yet another character, Worldly Shame, then takes credit for Xantippe's negligence as a parent. He comes with news of the two errant children in order to induce her to suicide. Xantippe turns fallen protagonist and is saved from knifing herself at the last moment by her son Barnabas in the

role of preaching Virtue. And preach is precisely what he then does to end the play, first addressing thirty-four lines to his mother on the upbringing of children, then turning the full force of his gospelling zeal upon the audience, interpreting the interlude as an example of the frailty of youth and the need for good parental guidance:

Even so by children: in their tender age
Ye may work them like wax to your own intent.

The play ends on a prayer for the king.

The play is a comic celebration of the triumph of incorrupt Protestant youth, armed with gospel text and a sense of innate rectitude, over the misguided recidivist tendencies of parents. The old morality play protagonist is divided into 'three branches of an ill tree', two of whom fall, while the third is never even tempted. Barnabas is able to select Eulalia, a right-thinking neighbour, as his support in preference to his wrong-headed mother. Edward VI, son of Henry VIII, who was widely believed to have slithered back into popery towards the end of his life, was also one of three children of the same parent, the other two being girls whom, it was greatly feared,²⁴ would marry unwisely and hand the throne back into the hands of the church of Rome, the Whore of Babylon, of whom Edward himself had obediently written a play. The most immediate influences in his young life had also come from the domestic circle, his Protestant uncle, Edward Seymour, and his Protestant stepmother Catherine Parr.

Nice Wanton must belong to the period of Somerset's Protectorate, as it supports in quite precise detail the mythography surrounding Edward VI, the young king Solomon with a wise head on young shoulders, capable of autonomous virtuous action, capable on one hand of advising children to obey their elders, but also showing himself able to discriminate the sensible from the fond amongst those elders from an early age. But as a play clearly written for performance at court at a particular period, it also echoes in fairly precise detail the propaganda to which the young king was subjected by the dominant faction at court. It illustrates precisely how malleable, how devoid of true power, the young king was, and how, within the closed circle of the court, his generation could be theatrically directed, fashioned by their elders, to serve whatever myth of ideal youthful behaviour happened to be current.

Lois Potter has observed²⁵ that the 'spare the rod' message is made nonsense of in plays, notably *Nice Wanton*, in which Calvinist teaching about predestination is confirmed. Yet she, like many who have studied

these plays, stops short, in adopting a generic approach to the material, of examining how plays about children, even performed by children, are repositories of information about the specific problems of the Reformation state with its child-monarch. Not only do the plays adapt old tools to the self-conscious promotion of Protestant doctrine; simultaneously they reveal for us the shaping of policy at a moment of peculiar political and ideological crisis within the state.

For whom was the mythologising of Edward intended? Sidney Anglo sounds a note of caution in reminding us of how little of its detail would have penetrated ordinary people's consciousness.²⁶ The scepticism of influential voices outside the immediate court circle has nonetheless already been noted. The Spanish ambassador, smarting from a perceived social snub at Edward's coronation, wrote further:²⁷

When the king himself came out I bowed to him, and having commenced my greeting to him in French the Protector told me to address the King in Latin, which he said he understood better than French; but, truth to tell, he seemed to me to understand one just as little as the other.

For the sake of the prosperity and stability of the state, against such voices the public relations campaign had to be relentless:²⁸

What people are they that say, 'The king is but a child?' Have we not a noble king? Was there ever a king so noble; so godly; brought up with so noble counsellors; so excellent and well-learned schoolmasters? I will tell you this, and I speak it even as I think: his Majesty hath more godly wit and understanding, more learning and knowledge at his age, than twenty of his progenitors that I could name, had at any time of their life.

Whether Edward himself fell prey to the image created by his managers is a trickier question. In his own writings, notably the *Discourse on Reform*,²⁹ he wrote that the ills of the Commonwealth must be put right by: good education; devising of good laws; executing the laws justly, without respect of persons; encouraging the good; ordering well the customers, and engendering the friendship in all parts of the commonwealth, all of which shows him tractable enough. That he remained childlike, however, is borne out by his thoughtful addition that the more 'tedious' statutes of the realm should be made short and understandable.

Contemporary portraits of the boy king demonstrate the same tensions I have been exploring. Two portraits of Edward survive by the court

painter William Scrots. One shows the young monarch, full-length, legs apart, his gloves in one hand, the other on the hilt of his sword, in every detail the youthful personator of his father in the Holbein mural formerly in Whitehall, so that to modern eyes it verges on the pastiche. Only the base of the classical column in the background indicates any new departure. The other Scrots painting is the grotesque anamorphic portrait of 1546, merely an exercise in perspective or a most tangible testimony to the young monarch's malleability.³⁰ Elsewhere, John King³¹ has pointed out that in many representations, Edward, although afforded the trappings of monarchy, is rarely shown alone, but is accompanied by influential adults. The woodcut in the printed edition of Latimer's sermons is a case in point, as it shows the preacher in his wooden outdoor pulpit facing the monarch: 'two adult men share the viewer's attention with Edward in what constitutes a symbolic dilution of his authority'.

Around 1548 an unknown artist painted Edward at the centre of the larger composition known as 'Edward VI and the Pope'.³² Here the boy-king sits in state, but at an angle, his head tilted towards his father. Henry VIII, on his deathbed, points at his son, either electing him his successor or admonishing him to do what he is bidden. The whole picture seems to represent the monarch surrounded by the trappings of his power, but that power has moved out to the edges of the picture, as the forlorn figure at the centre, dwarfed by the throne on which he diffidently perches, is surrounded by too many choices of parental authority. Below his feet, lending the picture its usual title, is the defeated figure of the pope. The rejection of the pope as authority is unambiguous: 'all fleshe is grasse' is written on his chest, he wears scrolls reading 'idolatri' and 'supersticion', and 'feyned holines' is written to his left. The Holy Father appears to have had his neck broken by a book open at the page which reads, 'The worde of the Lorde endureth forever'. To the young king's left stands the figure of Somerset, the Lord Protector, and beyond him members of the Council are seated at a table. Above them, through a window as it were, is a scene of iconoclasm, as soldiers with pikes or poles are shown in the process of knocking a statue of the Virgin and Child from its column. All of the alternative sources of authority are compromised except the committee of ministers, each of whom is pictured in his robes and chains of office, not looking deferentially or expectantly to their young monarch, but, self-absorbed, staring straight ahead.

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NOTES

1. The plays are printed together in *Early English Dramatists: the Dramatic Writings of Richard Wever and Thomas Ingeland* edited John S. Farmer (Traylen, Guildford, 1966), *Lusty Juventus* from 1–42, and *Nice Wanton* from 93–115. The edition gives no line numbers.
2. See Ervin Beck 'Terence Improved: the Paradigm of the Prodigal Son in English Renaissance Comedy' *Renaissance Drama* NS VI (1973) 107–122.
3. John N. King *English Reformation Literature* (Princeton UP, 1982) 276
4. Catherine Belsey *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (Methuen, London and New York, 1985) 2.
5. The term, which has been perhaps over-used in recent works on this period, is borrowed from Stephen Greenblatt *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare* (Chicago UP, Chicago and London, 1980).
6. King *English Reformation Literature* 23.
7. Alan J.R. Smith *The Emergence of a Nation State: The Commonwealth of England 1529-1660* (Longman, London and New York, 1984) 65–70.
8. D.M. Loades *Politics and the Nation 1450-1660* (Fontana, London, 1986) 198.
9. *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts relating to English Affairs existing in the archives and collections of Venice ... Volume 5: 1534-1554* edited Rawdon Brown (HMSO, Longman, London, 1873) 18 August 1554, 934, 'Report of England made to the Senate by Giacomo Soranzo, late ambassador to Edward VI and Queen Mary' 535.
10. *Calendar of State Papers Venetian* 5, 18 August 1554, 934, 'Report of England made to the Senate by Giacomo Soranzo, late ambassador to Edward VI and Queen Mary' 536.
11. *Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers, relating to the negotiations between England and Spain, preserved in the Archives at Vienna, Simancas and elsewhere Volume 9: Edward V, 1547-1549* edited Martin A.S. Hume and Royall Tyler (HMSO, Longman, London 1916), 7 March 1547, 'Van der Delft to the Queen Dowager' 50.

12. Hugh Latimer *Sermons*, edited Revd George Elwes Corrie (Parker Society, Cambridge, 1844) 84—281. Particular references to Latimer's sermons and preaching style are noted below.
13. See also David Bevington *Tudor Drama and Politics: a Critical Approach to Topical Meaning* (Harvard UP, Cambridge, Mass., 1968) 97—106.
14. *Calendar of ... State Papers, Spanish*, 9: 7 March 1547, 'Van der Delft to the Queen Dowager' 50.
15. Virginia Crocheron Gildersleeve *Government Regulation of the Elizabethan Drama* (Greenwood Press, West Port Connecticut, 1975) 8.
16. Gildersleeve 9.
17. Latimer *Sermons* 85.
18. Latimer *Sermons* 119, 131—32.
19. Latimer *Sermons* 176—77.
20. Latimer *Sermons* 187.
21. H.N. Hillebrand *The Child Actors: A Chapter in Elizabethan Stage History* (University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature 11, nos 1, 2: Urbana, Illinois, 1926) was first to point out the evidence that *Nice Wanton* was adapted for its performance before Elizabeth shortly after its printing in 1560, 'queen's' being substituted for 'king's' (rhymes with 'things') in the dedication at the end of the play. He also believed that it could have been adapted for Mary, which in view of its doctrinal stance is quite impossible. It could, of course, have been revived by Elizabeth because she was present at the first performance and enjoyed it.
22. John N. King *Tudor Royal Iconography: Literature and Art in an Age of Religious Crisis* (Princeton UP, 1989).
24. E.g. Latimer *Sermons* 91.
25. Lois Potter 'The Reformation and the Moral Play' in *The Revels History of Drama in English 2, 1500-1576* edited Norman Sanders, Richard Southern, T.W. Craik, and Lois Potter (Methuen, London and New York, 1980) 177—206, at 194—95.
26. Sidney Anglo *Images of Tudor Kingship* (Seaby, London, 1992), especially final chapter.
27. *Calendar of State Papers Spanish* 9, 7 March 1547, 'Van der Delft to the Queen Dowager' 147.
28. Latimer *Sermons* 118.
29. *The Chronical and Political Papers of Edward VI* edited W.K. Jordan (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1966) 159—167.

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30. The first hangs in the Renaissance Gallery at Hampton Court, the second in the National Portrait Gallery.
31. *King Tudor Royal Iconography* 90, 97.
32. National Portrait Gallery.