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## Holy War rhetoric in Elizabethan England

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## Introduction

“We shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people.” These were the concluding words of the speech that Queen Elizabeth I gave to her troops at Tilbury on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 1588, awaiting the Spanish Armada. The defeat of the Armada that followed was seen as a sign that God supported the Protestant Reformation in England. Preachers spoke of deliverances that England had received from God and that those deliverances “do farre exceed all the mercies that ever this nation did receive since the first Reformation.”<sup>1</sup>

Even though England was no longer a Catholic country after Queen Elizabeth I ascended to the throne in 1558, the idea of ‘fighting for God’ in a Holy War was still existent in the writings that were published, especially during the Anglo-Spanish War between 1585 and 1604. During this period the Protestants in England reintroduced St. George and his emblem of the red cross again as a protector of Protestant soldiers.<sup>2</sup> This is particularly remarkable since King Richard Lionheart had put himself and his crusaders under the protection of St. George during the Second Crusade in the twelfth century. In addition to this, the conflict with Spain was seen as a just war and the English soldiers that died in it were viewed as martyrs. In his work *Apologia of the Portingall Voyage*, that was published in 1596, the Protestant preacher Thomas Nun wrote that the English casualties “are a great blessing to the land they never returned to.”<sup>3</sup> The way the events of the Anglo-Spanish War were written down in Protestant England is not identical to contemporary Catholic ideas about crusading, but it is to a certain extent comparable. An example of this can be found in a tract that was published in September 1588. In this tract English bishops talked of raising troops to fight the Spanish Armada. They refer to the troops as “milites sacri”, a term used for crusaders in the preceding centuries.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the Protestant ideology of just war owed much to its medieval ancestor, the crusades, even if theology that supported the Catholic idea of crusade had been abandoned.<sup>5</sup> It seems that the originally Catholic concept of Holy War became adapted to a new era and a new faith. The aim of this thesis is to trace this development, during which the originally Catholic concept of Holy War was adapted to a new era and a new faith.

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<sup>1</sup> Barbara J. Shapiro, *Political Communication and Political Culture in England, 1558-1688* (Stanford 2012) 177.

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588* (Chicago 1988) 368.

<sup>3</sup> P. A. Jorgensen, ‘Theoretical Views of War in Elizabethan England’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 13, (1952) 480.

<sup>4</sup> Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 368.

<sup>5</sup> I only capitalize the word *crusade* if I refer to a specific one, for instance the First Crusade.

## Historiographical debate

With the studies of Jonathan Riley-Smith and Marcus Bull in the 1990s, medieval crusading and the motivations for going on crusade became important fields of research.<sup>6</sup> Scholars started to interpret the crusades, and the experiences and convictions of crusaders.<sup>7</sup> One of the most important consequences of this development was that crusades were no longer seen as separate responses to threats and changes in the East, the borders of Christian Iberia, and Eastern Germany, but as part of a larger movement. This movement was connected to and informed by other religious movements and reforms, and that shaped religious life in high medieval Europe.<sup>8</sup> This thesis builds on these recent trends in crusade scholarship that define the crusades as a broad religious movement, which developed within a broader cultural framework.

In the conclusion of an influential article on the historiography of the crusades, Giles Constable states that “today no less than in the past... writings on the crusades must be interpreted in light of different positions from which they were written.”<sup>9</sup> Constable analyzes the scholarship on definitions of what constitutes a crusade. The major categories he distinguishes are the traditionalist, the pluralist, the popularist and the generalist.<sup>10</sup> Constable explains how from the traditionalist point of view only journeys directed to the Holy Land, with the liberation of Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre as the main goal, were true crusades.<sup>11</sup> Crusades for the pluralists are an expression of a kind of penitential war with strong ties to the tradition of pilgrimage. A defining feature of the crusades for pluralists is therefore papal authority. By viewing papal authority as the essential factor in defining crusades, pluralists expand the scope of crusading on the geographical as well as the chronological level.<sup>12</sup> The third approach of the crusades, the ‘popularist school’, underlines psychological and spiritual aspects in giving definition to the crusades. This school was given its name by Norman Housley. He elaborates on the work of Constable, and explains how from the popularist point of view, religious enthusiasm, revivalism, and apocalyptic visions are the mental background that brought crusades into existence.<sup>13</sup> Well-known examples of these types of crusades are the Children’s Crusade and the Sheperds’ Crusades.

The broadest of all schools, however, is the generalist approach of the crusades. Historians from this school regard the crusades as wars authorized by God. According to generalists, religious wars fought for God, or in the belief that its prosecution was furthering his intentions for mankind, are to be classified as crusades. Wars were holy when it was claimed that they were fought in order to execute

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<sup>6</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The First Crusaders, 1095-1131* (Cambridge 1997) and Marcus Bull, *Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade: the Limousin and Gascony, c.970-c.1130* (Oxford 1993)

<sup>7</sup> Megan Cassidy-Welch and Anne E. Lester, ‘Memory and interpretation: new approaches to the study of the crusades’, *Journal of Medieval History*, (40:3), (2014) 232.

<sup>8</sup> Cassidy-Welch and Lester, ‘Memory and interpretation’, 232.

<sup>9</sup> Giles Constable, ‘The Historiography of the Crusades’, in: A. E. Laiou and R. P. Mottahedeh (eds.), *The Crusades from the Perspective of Byzantium and the Muslim World* (Washington 2001) 22.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, 10-17.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*, 12.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, 12.

<sup>13</sup> Norman Housley, *Contesting the Crusades* (Malden 2006) 5-7.

God's will by contemporaries. Papal approval is not a necessary requirement in this definition of a crusade, because crusaders were fulfilling God's will.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the generalist definition of crusades is the most inclusive one. It does not leave any expeditions from which the participants believed they were executing God's will, outside the definition. For this reason generalist classify the crusades as just another expression of religious war. They believe that any attempt to define the crusades is more limiting than helpful.

A well-known crusade-historian of the generalist school, is Christopher Tyerman. In his book *God's War. A New History of the Crusades*, Tyerman writes that during the later Middle Ages and the early modern era, Hussites and Protestants would fight 'holy wars' without the characteristics of Roman Catholic crusade theology. He explains that not every expression of hostility against infidels was wrapped in the formal crusader packaging of the Roman-Catholic Church. According to Tyerman a Holy War could also manifest itself in another ways, and was not always directly recognizable as a Holy War, because it could differ from the Catholic manifestation.<sup>15</sup> Therefore the Catholic idea of a crusade is just one form of Holy War. In the same book Tyerman explains how states could use crusading rhetoric, images, and mentality to sacralize political rule in order to create a common identity among the population. He calls this the process of sacralization.<sup>16</sup> He argues that numerous examples can be found of writers throwing a crusading mantle over secular warfare, and that the more powerful and lasting influence of this strategy occurred in countries where national wars were portrayed as of equal worth as crusading. These wars were then pictured as holy wars in their own right, independent of the Holy Land tradition.<sup>17</sup>

In short, different kinds of Judaeo-Christian ideas converged into different crusade ideologies, and different approaches to these ideologies, but one thing is certain: the concepts of just war and Holy War play an important role in defining a crusade, but the Catholic idea of crusading is just one expression of a much broader tradition of Holy War. Central to this thesis is the historical development of this concept of Holy War in sixteenth-century England. In an earlier book, *England and the Crusades, 1095-1588*, Christopher Tyerman claims that the post-Reformation Protestant English used, to a certain extent, the same language and emotions as their contemporary Catholic enemies who were crusading against them.<sup>18</sup> Seen from the point of view of the generalist approach to the crusades, the anti-Spanish English polemics at the end of the sixteenth century are an ideal case study to trace this development. My aim in this thesis is to investigate whether and how Christian Holy War remained a productive cultural concept following the Protestant Reformation in England. My hypothesis is that the concept of Holy War continuously changes and is adapted in order to stay a productive and meaningful concept within any given Christian culture, depending on the place, time and context. Therefore the main question of

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<sup>14</sup> Constable, 'The Historiography of the Crusades', 14-15.

<sup>15</sup> Christopher Tyerman, *God's War. A New History of the Crusades* (Cambridge 2006) 893.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, 912.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, 911.

<sup>18</sup> Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, 367.

this thesis is: how does the concept of Holy War emerge in the anti-Spanish polemics in Elizabethan England during the Anglo-Spanish war, and what were the socio-political functions of this concept?

### **Method**

To be able to answer this question it is essential to first establish in what way the conflict with Spain was perceived in the Protestant English society. Did the English experience it as a religious conflict, or even in some way as a Holy War? This is the subject of chapter one. The second chapter deals with the similarities and differences between Holy War rhetoric in England at the end of the sixteenth century and the crusader rhetoric of the high Middle Ages. Is it possible to discover a certain development? What has changed and what has remained the same between the thirteenth and the sixteenth century? The third chapter is centered around the question: what purpose did Holy War rhetoric have in the anti-Spanish polemics in England? What was the importance of this kind of rhetoric?

By investigating the development and purpose of Holy War rhetoric in English polemics, it becomes possible to answer the question why this phenomenon of Holy War occurs. This is therefore a qualitative study. The research question will thus be answered through close reading and interpretation of a corpus of selected primary sources, which is contextualized by using secondary literature to understand the cultural, religious, and political context of these sources. The first chapter, which deals with the question whether or not sentiments of fighting a Holy War were present in England, is mainly based on secondary literature. The aim of this chapter is to prove that the concept of Holy War, and corresponding rhetoric, was used in post-Reformation Protestant England. Only when it is firmly confirmed this was the case, it is useful to trace a development in the use of Holy War rhetoric and its function within the English society, the main goal of this thesis. For this reason a large part of the first chapter is more descriptive and historiographical. The second and the third chapter are principally based on primary sources.

### **Primary sources**

Eleven polemical works by different authors form the corpus of primary sources on which this thesis is based. A complete list can be found in the first part of the bibliography. All writings are popular anti-Spanish works that circulated in England at the end of the sixteenth century, and are written within the context of the increasing Spanish threat. Characteristic for these primary sources is that they were all authorized by the English government to get published. This is a significant fact, because strong censorship was exercised over printing in Elizabethan England. After the death of Mary Stuart and Elizabeth's ascendance of the English throne, the most pressing religious need was a clear and well-reasoned defense of the Church of England. After a tumultuous period of Catholicism under Mary, English Protestantism needed to be revived. The press became an effective tool in accomplishing this. However, printing was also soon being used by Catholics and the more radical Protestants as a tool to advance their cause. For this reason control over the press tightened from the 1560s onwards, as

Catholics and radical Protestants, such as the Separatists, Familists, but especially the Puritans, became more proficient at smuggling their literature into England, and at clandestine printing.<sup>19</sup> The English government and the Church worked effectively together in their mission to search and destroy printing presses used in illegal publishing ventures. The result of this strong censorship was that against the end of the sixteenth century, almost all offensive religious literature had to be printed abroad.<sup>20</sup>

With so many authors, printers, and booksellers imprisoned or no longer allowed to practice their occupation, a relatively small number of publishers and printers, no more than twenty-five, financed the largest part of Protestant literature in England.<sup>21</sup> This meant that it was relatively easy for the government and the Church to check and authorize the works that were printed. On all frontpages of the eleven sources that were used for this study, either the name of the place of publication, the writer, the printer, or the publisher are mentioned, and often even in combination with each other. This means that the origins of these sources were easy to trace, and it is therefore most likely that these writings were approved by government officials, or at least that the Church or the government was aware of the fact that these writings were published.

Except for two, one in 1578 and one in 1598, all sources were published in the 1580s, when the Spanish threat was strongly increasing. They were distributed in the form of pamphlets, just like most writings in those days, because books were still very expensive to print, publish, and distribute. The oldest polemical pamphlet that was used for this thesis, is *Allarme To England, foreshewing what perilles are procured, where the people live without regarde of Martiall lawe*. This work was written by Barnabe Riche and was published in 1578. The content of this pamphlet will be discussed further on in this thesis, as is the case for the other primary sources that were used. The *Allarme To England* pamphlet consists out of four parts, and the general theme is martial law. It was printed in London, by Henrie Middleton, for C. Barker. This means that C. Barker was the patron of Barnabe Riche. For financial support in printing, publishing, and distributing their literature, authors relied heavily upon a small group of persons. No more than a dozen or so patrons were addressed in the dedications in Protestant literature.<sup>22</sup> The words “perused and allowed” are written on the frontpage of this pamphlet, which means that this writing was investigated and allowed by the government.

Three writings date back to the year 1585, the most important one being the *Declaration of the Causes moving the Queene of England to give aide to the Defence of the People afflicted and oppressed in the lowe Countries*. This was a military tract, drawn up by Sir William Cecil, who was Secretary of State and later Lord Treasurer. It was initiated by Elizabeth herself, and even though the Anglo-Spanish War was never officially declared, this tract was a clear message that England would help the Low Countries, and therefore fight against the Spanish. The second pamphlet used in this thesis and published

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<sup>19</sup> William Calderwood, *The Elizabethan Protestant Press: A Study of the Printing and Publishing of Protestant Religious Literature in English, Excluding Bibles and Liturgies, 1558-1603* (London 1977) 2.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem*, 3.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibidem*, 3.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*, 3.

in 1585, is *A most necessary and godly prayer, for the preservation of the right and honourable the Earle of Leicester, Lieuetenant Generall of her Majesties Armie in the Lowe Countries*. This prayer, consisting of seven pages of written text, is dedicated to the Earl of Leicester, the commander of the English troops that were sent to the Low Countries. The author is anonymous, but it is indicated that this prayer was printed in London by Walter Mantell. The last writing from 1585 is *A true Report of the generall Imbarrement of all the English Shippes, under the dominion of the kinge of Spaine*. It is written under the initials R. D., printed in London by John Wolfe, and is dedicated to Thomas Butter, the patron of the writer. It is a report on how an English ship, called the *Violet*, escaped the Spanish. This source is important for this thesis, because it demonstrates how the average Englishman experienced God's providential hand in situations that occurred.

John Norden, a well-known writer of many devotional works, wrote the ecclesiastical tract *A Mirror for the Multitude*. This lengthy pamphlet, consisting of a hundred and sixteen pages, was published in 1586, by John Windet in London. Norden dedicated the work to Queen Elizabeth, and he elaborates on how the English subjects, as true Christians, should behave. This writing is interesting to use for this study, because there are multiple similarities to be found with medieval crusader rhetoric. In 1587 the rather aggressive, anti-Catholic pamphlet *The Complaint of England*, written by William Lightfoote, was published. This pamphlet of sixty-eight pages was "seene and allowed" by the English government, and printed by John Wolfe in London. This is a pre-Armada writing, and it elaborates on the growing tensions in England, and the dangers of Catholicism for the entire English nation.

Two works are used in this thesis that were published in 1588, after the defeat of the Spanish Armada that same year. The first one is *The Holy Bull, And Crusado of Rome*, an ecclesiastical tract in which Protestant comment was given on the Catholic papal bull that issued a crusade against England. The author is unknown, but again it was John Wolfe who printed this anti-Catholic pamphlet. He was also the printer of the other writing from 1588, *A true Discourse of the Armie which the King of Spaine caused to bee assembled in the Haven of Lisbon*. This was a report on all the resources the Spanish had at their disposal in fighting against the English. However, the message of the introduction is that, despite of all these resources, the Spanish still lost the fight. The core-text is translated out of French into English, but the introduction to the report has not been taken over, but is written by an Englishman under the initials E. B.

Under the initials I. L. *The Birth, Purpose, and Mortal Wound of the Romish holie League* was printed in London in 1589. On the frontpage is written: "Imprinted at London for Thomas Camden." This means that Thomas Camden was the patron of the author, and financed this publication. It is a small pamphlet, consisting of twelve pages. It is a ballad about the failure of the Holy League, which was an alliance between the major Catholic maritime states, and God's providence for England.

Also "allowed by auctoritie" is *An Historical Dialogue Touching Antichrist and Poperie*, written by Thomas Rogers and published in 1589. The work covers a hundred and fifteen pages, was printed by John Windet, and dedicated to Rogers' patron Aundrewe Maunsell. On the frontpage of this work is



written that people can buy it at the sign of the “Brasen Serpent in Paules Church-yard”. It is a dialogue between two ‘true’ professors of the Gospel, Timothie and Zelotes. The aim of this work is to show that Rome is on the wrong side of the religious divide.

The final source I have used while writing this thesis, is *The trumpet of warre A sermon preached at Paules Crosse the seventh of Maie 1598*. As the title already indicates this was a sermon, kept at the popular venue of St. Paul’s Cross, in the center of London. The sermon was held by preacher Stephen Gosson in 1598, was printed that same year by V. Simmes, and dedicated to I. Oxenbridge. It is a lengthy sermon about how to fight a war, and consists out of two parts.

I am well aware of the fact that these primary sources are all different kinds of writings, varying from military tracts to prayers, and that this corpus of primary sources is but a tiny piece of what there is to be found in the Elizabethan Protestant literature. However, since the aim of this thesis is to trace the development in the use of the concept of Holy War, and its function within the English society, the sources were selected on the basis of what they can tell about the English attitude towards Catholicism and the Spanish, and in what way wars were supposed to be fought. In addition to this, I have used writings that governmentally authorized to be distributed, or at could be traced back to their author, printer or patron, and are therefore likely to represent the opinion of the Elizabethan establishment. This will allow me to draw a clear conclusion, based on the primary sources, and contextualized by secondary literature.

## **The perception of the conflict with Spain in the English society**

The aim of this first chapter is to establish whether the concept of Holy War, and corresponding rhetoric, was used in post-Reformation England. Therefore the main question of this chapter is: how was the conflict with Spain perceived in the English society? Did the average Englishman experience the conflicts with Spain as religious conflicts, or even as a Holy War, despite their Protestant beliefs? Establishing this is important, because it indicates the value of this current study. If feelings of fighting a religious war were not dwelling among the English population, there is no use in studying the development and purpose of Holy War rhetoric. For the reason that answering this question is not the main purpose of my thesis, but nevertheless crucial in making a strong argument, this chapter is primarily based on secondary literature regarding this subject.

### **Religious changes in Europe**

During the sixteenth century attitudes towards the call for Holy War to regain Jerusalem or fight the Ottomans, begin to get compromised by new religious divisions in Europe. These new divisions reconfigured much of the intellectual as well as the confessional and political landscape of Christendom.<sup>23</sup> This led, in the words of Fernand Braudel, to a transition from a period of ‘external’ wars of faith, such as the crusades against the Muslims in the Holy Land, to a period of ‘internal’ wars of faith, such as the wars of religion.<sup>24</sup> Wars of faith were no longer only fought against non-Christians, but from the Reformation onwards, wars were also fought against fellow Christians.

Christopher Tyerman thinks that this development in Europe resulted in, and was paralleled by, an undermining of the humanist approach to the study of history in general, and the history of the crusades in particular. Central to this humanist approach had always been analysing the classical rhetoric, moral lessons, and individual, often heroic, actions the sources contained. Tyerman explains that this emphasis on classical rhetoric, style, morality, and individual actions of warriors and courtiers was increasingly replaced by a fragmentation of genres in literature and a more modern attempt to collect, organise and really study the primary sources.<sup>25</sup> The aim of the study of history became to reveal ‘the truth’, by enhancing the historical understanding, and not to picture a romanticised or educative image. The central question became: what do the sources really tell? In addition to this, the widespread use of printing in the sixteenth century, and a new generation of antiquarian scholars revolutionized the availability of crusade texts. This resulted in a more in-depth and wide-spread historical understanding of the crusades.

A result of this development in the study of history, in combination with the religious reforming tendencies in Europe, was that by 1550 the papal authority and the penitential system, the very basis of

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<sup>23</sup> Christopher Tyerman, *The Debate on the Crusades* (Manchester 2011) 37.

<sup>24</sup> Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (London 1973) 842-844.

<sup>25</sup> Tyerman, *Debate on the Crusades*, 37.

medieval crusading, was widely contested and rejected in Europe.<sup>26</sup> In contrast, from the 1550s onwards much interest was shown in crusades or religious wars against rival Christians. Both the Catholics and the Protestants wanted to assert ownership of the medieval past to support their visions on the past and the present. Alternatively to underline the power of the Catholic faith or the contradiction between popular devotion and ecclesiastical abuse, crusade history provided rich examples.<sup>27</sup> Crucially in this regard is that crusade-critics did not dismiss them as irrelevant. For the Protestants it appeared urgent to establish bridges to the medieval Christian heritage, and they looked for those bridges in crusade history. Their aim was to reconcile the present with a controversial past.<sup>28</sup> Late fifteenth- and sixteenth century England shared the continental tradition of interest in the crusading past. However, just like in continental France and the Holy Roman Empire, contemporary politics and theological debate determined much of the historical commentaries of English writers on the crusades.<sup>29</sup>

### **The crusade against England**

The year 1585 dawned with Pope Gregory XIII issuing yet another bull against the Protestant, and therefore heretic queen of England, in which he called upon her people to take up arms for the Catholic faith. He The pope agreed to give King Philip II of Spain an annual amount of nearly two million crowns to eradicate the heretical state of England. In March of that same year plans of this French-Spanish Catholic League “for the preservation of the Roman Catholic religion, the extirpation of heresy both in France and the Low Countries, and the exclusion of the heretic of Navarre from the throne of France” were revealed to Queen Elizabeth I.<sup>30</sup> Out of sheer anger she reacted by inviting King James VI of Scotland to join England in a Protestant League. The king of Denmark, Frederick II, and the Protestant German princes were also invited to join, as well as the Protestant king of Navarre, Henry.<sup>31</sup> Elizabeth received a letter from the Dutch States-General just a month later, in which they asked her to become their sovereign queen and they requested she would send four or five thousand men to relieve the city of Antwerp. By the autumn of 1585, most pieces on the chessboard had been moved into place for the coming military conflicts between England, Spain, France, the Low Countries, Rome, Navarre, and the German princes. When the head of Mary, the late Queen of Scots, was held up by the executioner on the morning of February 8, 1587, war with Spain became inevitable.<sup>32</sup> This war was never formally declared, but the mutual tensions and military conflicts have gone down in history as the Anglo-Spanish War. How was this war with Spain perceived in English society and circulating writings?

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<sup>26</sup> Tyerman, *Debate on the Crusades*, 38.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*, 41.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*, 43.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, 57.

<sup>30</sup> Conyers Read, *Mr. Secretary Walsingham and the Policy of Queen Elizabeth* (Hamden 2003) Vol 3, 94.

<sup>31</sup> Susan Ronald, *Heretic Queen: Queen Elizabeth I and the Wars of Religion* (New York 2012) 240.

<sup>32</sup> Shapiro, *Political Communication*, 261.

## Communication in early-modern England

To answer this question it is important to understand the ways in which communication to the people in general, but also about the war with Spain specifically, was conducted in early-modern England. Private letters, manuscript newsletters, manuscript poems, but also sermons and trials heard, seen and reported, frequently appeared in print at the end of the sixteenth century. However, in her study on the political culture and communication in England, between 1558 and 1688, Barbara Shapiro states that once the full range of paper-based and non-paper-based venues is taken into account, audiences were relatively fragmented and often stratified, which meant there were many different publics rather than just one, homogenized 'reading public' in a specific sphere.<sup>33</sup> Non-verbal forms of communication were also important as forms of public expression. Examples of this are the celebration of Gunpowder Day and the anniversary of Elizabeth's coronation. During the increasing Spanish threat the outlawing of dissenting congregations, the dismissal of dissenting preachers and the exclusion of Roman Catholics from office holding, certainly gave of clear messages to the English people.<sup>34</sup>

Shapiro explains how some genres and subgenres of communication lent themselves to praise and compliments, while others to criticism, and that opportunities for and restraints on various ways of publication meant that some were likely to receive a wider audience than others. This implied that the most politicized sermons, especially those supporting the divine right of kings and queens and obedience to the rulers, were more likely to get printed than others.<sup>35</sup> You could say that there was some sort of top-down manipulation present in the printing industry.

## Preaching

One of the most important ways of direct verbal communication to the people in early modern Europe, was preaching. The great influence of the sermons that were held at Paul's Cross in London, in the second half of the sixteenth- and the first half of the seventeenth century, has been the specific theme in several, recently published, studies.<sup>36</sup> Paul's Cross was a large square in the centre of London, nowadays St. Paul's Cathedral is to be found here, with a big cross in the middle where the preacher was standing, preaching his sermon. This venue became an important platform from which to defend the Elizabethan settlement from opponents.<sup>37</sup> Mary Morrissey traces how anti-popery and anti-Catholicism became a constant of Paul's Cross preaching from the 1580s onwards. Preachers wanted to contrast zealous Protestantism with the sinfulness and error of the Catholic church. This way of preaching was not designed to convince hearers of the Catholic errors, because the preachers did not attempt to present arguments against Catholic practices or doctrines, but they just wanted to strengthen their hearers' sense

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<sup>33</sup> Shapiro, *Political Communication*, 285.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, 285.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, 267.

<sup>36</sup> Torrance Kirby and Paul Stanwood (eds.), *Paul's Cross and the culture of persuasion in England, 1520-1640* (Leiden 2013); Mary Morrissey, *Politics and the Paul's Cross Sermons, 1558-1642* (Oxford 2011)

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, 295.

of separation from 'popery' and remind them that they stood on the right side of the religious spectrum, far away from the 'anti-religion'.<sup>38</sup> According to Morrissey these sermons were essential polemical instruments in a confessional war.<sup>39</sup>

Shapiro also acknowledges this when she writes that anti-Spanish themes appeared more frequently over time at Paul's Cross. The venue became the place to justify the war against Spain and later in time, to give thanks for victory over the Armada and other English victories. Anti-Spanish preaching continued in the 1590s with the English that were, like Israelites, called upon to defend their country and its Protestant religion against Catholicism.<sup>40</sup>

### **Fighting a Holy War**

A preacher whose sermons were published on multiple occasions was Lancelot Andrewes. He was a court preacher under both Elizabeth and James I.<sup>41</sup> He emphasized the providential hand of God in history, and he reinforced the idea that the monarchy was divinely ordained. His sermons stress the deliverance by God of both the Anglican church and the Protestant English nation.<sup>42</sup> He preached that war "at this time against these enemies" is "a war sanctified", because England's wars were God's own wars, according to Andrewes.<sup>43</sup>

In the archive of Foreign State Papers is a document to be found, dating back to 1575, in which it is reported that Spain intends to destroy "all those who profess the Gospel".<sup>44</sup> Central to these pre-Armada writings was the idea of godly intervention. Pro-war propagandists in England involved traditional theological arguments in their writings, and they often gave definition to historical events with the 'logic' of biblical exegesis.<sup>45</sup> Most texts were meant to show the English reader or listener that England was on the right side of the moral divide and that the military conflicts of the second half of the sixteenth century were part of a great struggle against the threat of international Catholicism: a Holy War.<sup>46</sup> The English ambassador in France already used Holy War rhetoric in 1572, when he referred to the intervention in the Low Countries that same year, calling it an opportunity that "God hath provided to deliver his poor servants there from Anti-Christian tyranny."<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Morrissey, *Politics and the Paul's Cross*, 181.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*, 182.

<sup>40</sup> Shapiro, *Political Communication*, 173.

<sup>41</sup> Peter E. McCullough, *Sermons at Court: Politics and Religion in Elizabethan and Jacobean Preaching* (Cambridge 2011) 72-73.

<sup>42</sup> Jonathan McGovern, 'The political sermons of Lancelot Andrewes', *Journal The Seventeenth Century*, 1/34, (2019) 24.

<sup>43</sup> Lancelot Andrewes, *Ninety-Six Sermons*, Vol. 1. (Oxford 1841) 324-325, 335.

<sup>44</sup> Mark G. Sanchez, *Anti-Spanish sentiment in English literary and political writing, 1553-1603* (Leeds 2004) 122.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*, 121.

<sup>46</sup> David Trim, *Fighting 'Jacob's warres': The Employment of English and Welsh Mercenaries in the European Wars of Religion: France and the Netherlands, 1562-1610* (London 2003) 37.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, 196.

In his doctoral thesis about the great role of English and Welsh mercenaries as agents of Elizabethan and Jacobean Protestantism, David Trim claims that the wars that were fought against the Catholic states of Europe were seen by many in England and Wales as being, in some sense, Holy Wars.<sup>48</sup> He explains how the wars were fought not just for contested land or titles, or for dynastic reputation, but that they had become wars of truth. In this context he mentions how an English Protestant veteran used the rhetoric of Holy War, by calling the military conflicts at the end of the sixteenth century “Jacob’s warres”.<sup>49</sup> John Stubbs, a prominent Protestant Englishman, literally referred to the conflicts in a letter to Lord Willoughby, who commanded troops in the Low Countries, as: “These wars are holy”.<sup>50</sup>

Because Trim focus in this book lies with the mercenaries, he proves, multiple quotes underlining this, that the English mercenaries viewed the conflicts in which they were employed primarily in terms of Holy War.<sup>51</sup> In a review-article Trim states that literary figures, he specifically mentions how Barnabe Riche and Sir Philip Sidney supplied the intellectual justification for the Protestant ‘Holy War’ against the Antichrist and his servants, usually identified as the papacy and Spain. These leading literary figures also supplied propaganda to obtain support for the war effort, according to Trim.<sup>52</sup> The intellectual justification for a Protestant ‘Holy War’ that Barnabe Riche provided the English nation, will be discussed extensively in chapter three.

The aim of this chapter was to show that the idea of fighting a Holy War against the Spanish was very much alive in the English Protestant society. Preachers, ambassadors, but also merchants referred to the conflicts with Spain as being part of a Holy War, because they experienced the cause of these conflicts to be sanctified. Central to the following chapter will be the question how Holy War rhetoric presented itself in sixteenth-century English writings and how this differed from the crusade rhetoric of the Middle Ages.

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<sup>48</sup> Trim, *Fighting 'Jacob's warres'*, 35.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibidem*, 27.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibidem*, 34.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibidem*, 306.

<sup>52</sup> David Trim, ‘Holy War and English Culture under Elizabeth I: Rhetoric and Reality’, *Journal of Early Modern History*, 4/4, (2000) 450.

## Sixteenth-century Holy War rhetoric and medieval crusader rhetoric

That the English people had the idea they were fighting a Holy War against Catholicism and Spain has been established in the previous chapter. However, in what way was rhetoric concerning this Holy War used in sixteenth-century anti-Spanish and anti-papal English sources, and how does this kind of rhetoric relate to medieval crusade rhetoric? Central to this chapter is therefore the question: what are the similarities and differences between Holy War rhetoric in England at the end of the sixteenth century and the crusader rhetoric of the high Middle Ages? In order to answer this question, it is necessary to first establish the content of medieval crusade rhetoric. Medieval crusade rhetoric has been the subject of many crusade studies, and the information provided in this chapter about crusader rhetoric, is therefore based on secondary literature. This will be central to the first part of this chapter, while the second half of this chapter elaborates on the manifestation of Holy War rhetoric in the anti-Spanish polemics.

### Crusade preaching and propaganda

In the year 1095 Pope Urban II delivered his sermon at Clermont and during the following preaching tour in France, which was conducted by the Pope, the crusade movement began to emerge. This implies that the crusades were born out of preaching. One of the most frequently cited works about crusade preaching is *Crusade Ideology and Propaganda: Model Sermons for the Preaching of the Cross*. This study was published in 2000, and is written by Christopher Maier. He provides an interesting glimpse into the practice of preaching the crusade and the ideology of crusading in the Middle Ages. Maier explains how, from the twelfth century onwards, crusades were usually announced by sermons. They were meant to recruit participants, but they also marked the departure of crusade campaigns or were preached to comfort and activate the people who stayed at home.<sup>53</sup> As with medieval sermons in general, the problem is that we are not particularly well informed about what was said exactly in the sermons crusade preachers gave.<sup>54</sup> Sermons are seldom part of medieval chronicles or other narrative accounts. Most evidence comes from manuscript sermons preserved in sermon collections of the Middle Ages. Maier uses the *ad status* crusade model sermons of five authors.<sup>55</sup> *Ad status* sermons were sermons that were addressed to certain groups such as married couples, widows, or in this case *crucesignandi*, people who might become crusaders, and *crucesignati*, people who have taken up the cross and took a vow.<sup>56</sup>

In medieval times the main medium for communicating with society at large were sermons, and to preach as effectively as was desired by the church, preachers often used model sermons. This means

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<sup>53</sup> Christoph T. Maier, *Crusade Propaganda and Ideology: Model Sermons for the Preaching of the Cross* (Cambridge 2000) 3.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*, 3.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*, 4.

<sup>56</sup> Oxford Bibliographies, *Sermons*, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195396584/obo-9780195396584-0132.xml>, last visited: 25-5-2019.

that some aspects came back in every sermon they gave, depending on the subject.<sup>57</sup> When the crusade movement grew and moved into new fields of war against heretics, pagan peoples in the Baltic and political enemies of the papacy, the crusade propaganda that already existed became inadequate. The clergy, led by well-trained Dominican and Franciscan preachers, started to use crusade model sermons, which allowed the papacy to control crusade propaganda.<sup>58</sup> The oldest ones that remain, written by James of Vitry, a preacher and propagandist of especially the Fifth Crusade, date back to the period between 1229 and 1240.<sup>59</sup>

By the thirteenth century, crusade propaganda played a considerable public role throughout Europe.<sup>60</sup> Just like Maier, Miikka Tamminen, in his very recent study *Crusade Preaching and the Ideal Crusader* shows that crusade sermons were meant to give guidance to the *crucesignandi* and the *crucesignati* about how they should think and behave when they joined the movement, or how they should participate if they would join a certain campaign.<sup>61</sup> Therefore attitudes and actions of the participants are considered in a great deal of the model sermons that both Maier and Tamminen use in their studies. Tamminen claims that by explaining how ideal crusading was supposed to be carried out, the behaviour of crusaders could be controlled, and people's perceptions of the crusades itself could be governed, and therefore these sermons were very important.<sup>62</sup> How did the model sermons of that time portray the crusades and the ideal crusader?

### **The ideal crusader**

According to both Maier and Tamminen there is definitely uniformity to be found in the messages that were given in the crusade model sermons. They both attempted to describe some of the general ideas and common elements shared by all the crusade sermon authors they studied. According to Maier the most common way of describing in sermons what crusaders were actually doing, was referring to the crusades as an activity carried out for God or Christ.<sup>63</sup> Tamminen underlines this when he claims that there is agreement among authors of crusade model sermons, that the crusades were fought for God, in the name of Christ, and that this was God's will. Crusading was following Christ and expressing one's love and devotion to him. Crusades were also often depicted as holy wars similar to the wars fought by the Israelites of the biblical Old Testament.<sup>64</sup> Comparing crusades to the wars the Israelites fought, was an easy way of answering the question of the justification of the crusade: if God approved, and even

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<sup>57</sup> Maier, *Crusade Propaganda*, 5-6.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibidem*, 8.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibidem*, 8-9.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem*, 51.

<sup>61</sup> Miikka Tamminen, *Crusade Preaching and the Ideal Crusader* (Turnhout 2018) 280.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibidem*, 280.

<sup>63</sup> Maier, *Crusade Propaganda*, 54.

<sup>64</sup> Tamminen, *Crusade Preaching*, 280-281.



directed the wars of his people in the Old Testament, there would be no reason why he should not do the same in present times.<sup>65</sup>

When considering how crusade sermons portrayed the crusades, it is necessary to keep in mind that preaching, by nature, tends to focus on the moral and devotional aspects of life.<sup>66</sup> However, general aspects of crusading as a military activity, and the crusades therefore as wars, were not altogether absent in most sermons.<sup>67</sup> The military expedition of crusaders for the defence of religion was set against the devotional and penitential dimensions of a personal quest for God.<sup>68</sup> Tamminen explains how four ideological features of the ideal crusader were often manifested in the crusade sermons, and that those features highlight certain aspects of ideal crusading.

He first mentions the penitential feature. The penitential feature of crusading is one of the most important and consistently used themes in thirteenth-century crusade sermons. When the emphasis is placed on the penitence of a crusader, crusading becomes similar to pilgrimage.<sup>69</sup> Maier, however, claimed that, generally speaking, the terms employed for 'crusade' or 'crusader' were based on one, or more, of three concepts: 'the sign of the cross', 'being in the service of Christ or God', and 'pilgrimage'. The last mentioned concept, 'pilgrimage', is the least frequently used.<sup>70</sup> The authors of the crusade model sermons more commonly used the concepts of 'the sign of the cross' and being in the 'service of Christ or God' to describe the activity of crusading. In the anti-Spanish English polemics this penitential aspect of crusading is no longer present, because Protestants believed that man himself could never earn his own salvation. Salvation, and therefore forgiveness of sin, was an act of God alone.

The second feature Tamminen mentions and explains, is the mimetic, or the imitative one. This means that, as a crusader, you were supposed to use existing Christian ideals.<sup>71</sup> Preachers used examples of Christ himself, Old Testament kings and patriarchs, and New Testament apostles, martyrs, and saints. Those people who featured in these sermons were either fighters displaying extraordinary military prowess or war leaders who, trusting in God's commands in war, successfully fought for the good of their people and religion. The notion of 'imitating' or 'following' Christ had always been a very useful and versatile concept in the crusade model sermons. The concept carried a number of associations which could be exploited for the call for crusade. Maier first mentions the aspect of following Christ into battle. He concludes that the prevailing tendency of the crusade model sermons was to designate crusaders as 'soldiers of Christ' and members of 'the army of the Lord'. Taking up your cross, just like Christ, could be interpreted as a direct incentive to join a crusade. The second aspect he mentions is devotional, in the sense that crusaders were seeking a spiritual union with Christ by experiencing his love during a crusade.

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<sup>65</sup> Maier, *Crusade Propaganda*, 56.

<sup>66</sup> Ibidem, 54.

<sup>67</sup> Ibidem, 55.

<sup>68</sup> Maier, *Crusade Propaganda*, 58.

<sup>69</sup> Tamminen, *Crusade Preaching*, 281-282.

<sup>70</sup> Maier, *Crusade propaganda*, 52.

<sup>71</sup> Tamminen, *Crusade Preaching*, 283.

However, the concept of a crusader ‘imitating Christ’ also included a third aspect, namely that of following Christ into death, as a martyr. This concept of the *Imitatio Christi* created a complex image of a crusader being consumed by love for God and ready to die a sacrificial death while taking part in a crusade, in imitation of the crucifixion of Christ, combined with devotional and military aspects of crusading.<sup>72</sup>

The third aspect of ideal crusading that Tamminen mentions, is the crusading piety. Crusaders were urged to love Christ and to express true obedience and deep respect to God. The goal of the preachers was to turn sinners into true servants of Christ. In order to accomplish this, crusaders were not supposed to seek revenge, or kill their enemies in a state of anger. Ideal crusaders did not wage war out of hatred, but they were meant to burn with the love of Christ, and fight to serve God.<sup>73</sup>

The fourth and final feature of the ideal crusader Tamminen mentions, is his soldierly mentality. Crusaders were meant to fight with physical weapons in order to liberate the patrimony of Christ, or the occupied land of the Christians. Their goal was to protect the true faith, the Church, or the weak and the innocent who were persecuted and oppressed.<sup>74</sup> Crusaders reacted against aggression, and the measures they took were responsive and protective, but crusaders themselves were not supposed to be aggressive. Piety and love of God would make crusaders good soldiers.<sup>75</sup>

Protestant authors in England, three centuries later, also conveyed messages in their writings that they thought were important for understanding the situation, justifying the war against Spain, and promoting that same war. How did they do that, and does that differ from the way it was done in medieval times?

### **Portraying the moral superiority of the Protestant English**

The first way in which the English justified their war against Spain, was by pointing out their own moral superiority. In the years leading up to 1585 a lot of anti-Spanish and pro-war texts circulating in England were dedicated to Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester.<sup>76</sup> He was one of Elizabeth’s favourites and led the pro-war faction at court, called the Progressives. They wanted to declare war on Spain. In 1585 the Earl of Leicester was sent to the Low Countries to lead the English campaign in support of the Dutch Revolt. In that same year a prayer for the preservation of Leicester and his soldiers got published. At the beginning of this prayer the author speaks about the ‘church militant’: “To bee mercifull to thy poore Church militant, miserably vexed in this world, by the malice of Sathan and his broode.”<sup>77</sup> The term ‘church militant’ is connected to one of the three states of the Church within Catholic ecclesiology, and

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<sup>72</sup> Maier, *Crusade Propaganda*, 59-60.

<sup>73</sup> Tamminen, *Crusade Preaching*, 283-284.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibidem*, 285.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*, 285.

<sup>76</sup> Sanchez, *Anti-Spanish sentiment*, 115.

<sup>77</sup> Anonymous, *A most necessary and godly prayer, for the preservation of the right and honourable the Earle of Leicester, Lieuetenant Generall of her Majesties Armie in the Lowe Countries* (London 1585) A2v.

its first known use was in the fifteenth century.<sup>78</sup> The Catholic Church is traditionally divided in the Church Militant, the Church Penitent, and the Church Triumphant. The Church Militant consists of Christians who struggle on earth as soldiers of Christ against sin, the devil, and powers in Satan's service. The writer of this prayer writes that "those that have the marke of Intechrist seeke to swallow up thy people as a grave."<sup>79</sup> With this remark he refers to the Spanish. In a lot of polemics in those days, authors tried to magnify the extent of the Spanish threat, also in order to justify the war.

Especially the Progressives at court, the Leicester-lead war faction, wanted to intertwine faith and militarism. They wanted to show that Englishmen were morally superior to the Spaniards. For this reason English translations of the *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias* started to reappear from 1583 onwards.<sup>80</sup> The *Brevísima relación* is an account written by the Spanish Dominican friar Bartolomé de Las Casas, which was published for the first time in 1552. It was an account, addressed to prince Philip II, about the mistreatment of, and the atrocities committed against, the indigenous people of the Americas by the Spaniards in the New World. The pro-war party relentlessly recited these Spanish transgressions and acts of unnatural cruelty, also in other works they published. This strategy reinforced most of the moral arguments for their idea of 'Godly' military intervention. From the perspective of the Progressives, the cruelties and transgressions of the Spaniards could serve to legitimize a declaration of war upon Spain. Writings like this pictured a paradigm which could be applied to Spain's increasing influence and their policies towards Northern-Europe.<sup>81</sup>

Thus, what writers intended to do, was emphasize the moral difference between Catholic Spaniards and the Protestant Englishmen. In a pamphlet of 1585, written under the initials of R.D., the author reported on the English ships that were being held in a port called "Sebastian in Biskay".<sup>82</sup> He writes that "the children of darkenesse sometimes persecute, sometimes prevail against the children of light."<sup>83</sup> He compares the Spanish with children of darkness and the English with children of light.

In 1587 *The Complaint of England*, written by William Lightfoote and "seene and allowed" by the English government, appeared as a quarto pamphlet of sixty-eight pages on the English book market. The frontpage of the pamphlet states that it will "clearly prove that the practices of Traitrous Papists against the state of this Realme, and the person her Maiestie, are in Divinitie unlawfull, odious in Nature, and ridiculous in pollicie."<sup>84</sup> The aim of Lightfoote is to show that how and why the church of Rome, with Spain as the executer, wages war against England and other Protestant nations, is wrong in many ways. He states that Rome and the Spanish "wage battaile, and maintaine wars with God."<sup>85</sup> Waging

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<sup>78</sup> Definition on <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary> last visited: 23-5-2019.

<sup>79</sup> Anonymous, *A most necessary and godly prayer*, A3r.

<sup>80</sup> Sanchez, *Anti-Spanish sentiment*, 124.

<sup>81</sup> W. S. Maltby, *The Black Legend in England: the development of anti-Spanish sentiment, 1558-1660* (Durham 1971) 13.

<sup>82</sup> R.D., *A true Report of the generall Imbarrement of all the English Shippes, under the dominion of the kinge of Spaine* (London 1585)

<sup>83</sup> *Ibidem*, A3r.

<sup>84</sup> William Lightfoote, *The Complaint of England* (London 1587) A1v.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibidem*, B4r.

war with God is wrong per definition. The whole work, consisting of more than sixty pages, is an elaborate anti-papal and anti-Spanish tirade. Amongst other things Lightfoote states that it is odious to compare the pope to St. Peter, of which the pope was the successor, and that St. Peter would be ashamed.<sup>86</sup>

The cruelty of the Spaniards in the Indies is also an important theme in this work. Lightfoote elaborately describes how the Spaniards invented all sorts of games and sports out of killing Indians.<sup>87</sup> The anonymous author of the preface in the English translation of the *The Holy Bull, And Crusado of Rome* also emphasizes the moral superiority of the English. In this preface he discusses the Spanish attitude towards English and Dutch prisoners, but also the Spanish treatment of the Indians in the New World “whose life is more wretched then a thousand

deaths.”<sup>88</sup> Characteristics of moral superiority were to be found in the Bible, and this connects with the imitative element of fighting a Holy War, that was part of many anti-Spanish and anti-Catholic polemics

### Imitating Christ

A great example of the imitative feature in anti-Spanish polemics, is to be found in *A Mirror for the Multitude*, which was published in London in 1586. The message of preacher John Norden, the author of the ecclesiastical work, is “that it is not the name, or title of a Protestant, Christian, or Catholicke, but the true imitation of Christ, that maketh a Christian.” Norden writes that he dedicated this work to the Queen, and the frontispiece is therefore the royal coat of arms. This entire work is about the *Imitatio Christi*. It elaborates on how faithful Christians are supposed to behave themselves. He says: “Therefore let us not feare *Ieroboam* of Rome, who hath stretched out his handes even his multitudes, to laye violence upon our most gracious Queene, and upon our countrye.”<sup>89</sup> He urges his readers to put their trust in God, and follow him and his word. This implies that it will have a negative outcome if you do not trust God, but your own abilities. In this regard he mentions that “as in the tyme of Queene Mary in England, now in France, & Spaine, and in other countreyes where the truth of God’s word, is turned into

## The Complaint of England.

Wherein it is clearely proued that the practises of Traitorous Papiſts againſt the ſtate of this Realme, and the perſon of her Maieſtie, are in Diuinitie vnlawfull, odious in Nature, and ridiculous in pollicie.

*In the which they are repproued of wilfull blindnes, in that they ſee not the filthines of the Romiſh gouernment: and conuincd of deſperate madneſſe, in that they feare not the miſchiefe of Spaniſh inuafion: The former whereof is exemplified by the Popes practiſes both here in England, and abroad in other countries: the later by the Spaniards outrages, in his exactions raiſed vpon Naples, and his tyrannies executed in the Indies.*

Laſtly the neceſſitie, equitie, and benefits of the late proceeding in iuſtice are ſet downe; with a friendly warning to ſeditious Papiſts for their amendment; and an effectuall conſolation to faithfull ſubiectes for their encouragement.

*Fata viam inuenient, aderitq; vocatus Apollo.*

**Scene and allowed.**

LONDON

Printed by Iohn Wolfe, dwelling in Diſtaffe lane, nere the ſigne of the Caille.

1587.

<sup>86</sup> Lightfoote, *The Complaint of England*, G3v.

<sup>87</sup> Ibidem, G4v.

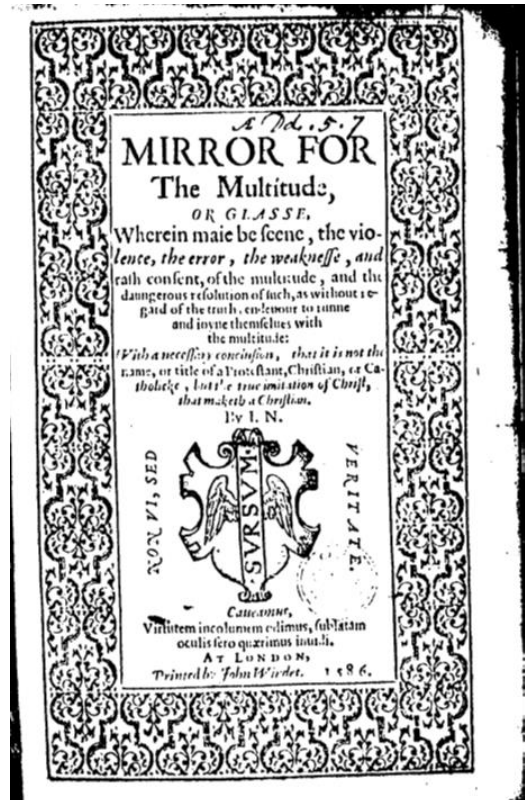
<sup>88</sup> Anonymous, *The Holy Bull, And Crusado of Rome* (London 1588) 8.

<sup>89</sup> John Norden, *A Mirror for the Multitude* (London 1586) 21.

mens owne inventions.”<sup>90</sup> He calls up his fellow Protestant Christians in England to take up arms against Rome and the Spanish when he writes:

*Let us march-on as we have begunne, nay (if it be possible) more valiauntly, more willingly, and more circumspectly, through the brunt of al contemptible things, namelie, through the darcksome night of ignorance unto the day-light of the sincere truth, not fearing the force of the pikes of whatsoever persecution threatened.*<sup>91</sup>

Norden continues to identify Christ as the guide and captain of this fight against Spain, and he urges his readers to fight in his name “without feare of bodilie affliction, for we must followe him in patient acceptance of his crosse for the truths sake, as hee himselfe hath trayned the way.”<sup>92</sup> This entire work shows overt similarities with the pious, imitative, and soldierly aspects of crusade-preaching in the thirteenth century. Norden needs his readers to courageously fight for God, in the name of God, and in order to lead the ignorant enemy to the truth. He takes Jesus as an example in the way he took up his cross for the sake of the truth. Norden, however, also writes how God detests unnecessary killings, and therefore he urges the English soldiers to not behave themselves the same way the Spaniards have behaved. He writes that God wants nothing to do with people “whose desire and onely seeking is for the shedding of blood.”<sup>93</sup>



In 1588 the English translation of the “Bull of the holy Crosse newly granted by our most holy father Gregory the thirteenth... for the aide and assistance of the wars against the faithlesse and heretiques, the enemies of our fayth and Christian religion” got anonymously published in London. It was the English translation of the papal statement of 1585 that had defined the war against Protestantism as a crusade. It is rather striking that this bull was even translated. However, the importance of the translation can be found in the preface that has been added by an English Protestant:

*Gentle Reader, whereas it is not to bee doubted, but that by the meere Instigation and Rage of the Diuill, who through the Pope and his adherents, is now come to the uttermost prooffe of his*

<sup>90</sup> Norden, *A Mirror for the Multitude*, 8.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibidem*, 3.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibidem*, 3.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibidem*, 14.

*foolish arrogancy against God and his holy word, as you may perceive by this Bulle, ... which doth very arrogantly describe the Royall army, and provision of the King of Spayne, against the Queenes Maiestie of Engelande.*<sup>94</sup>

This preface was written during the time that people knew that the Spanish Armada was about to set sail towards the Protestant nations of Europe. The author speaks of the foolish arrogancy of the pope and his followers, against God and the Bible. They think they have it right, but they could not be more wrong. Hope is expressed that “the power of Satan shall shortly take an ende, and that our delivery is at hande.”<sup>95</sup> The author identifies the pope, “with the spirite of Satan”, to be the instigator of the bloody enterprise that the Spanish are about to take on, and he warns his readers against the Spaniards who “were to roote out, and murther without any respect of religion, all the Inhabitants of England, or the countries they should lande.”<sup>96</sup> He really wants the English to see the dangers of Catholicism and the vital threat in the coming of the Spaniards.

Also interesting is the English introduction in the translated report on the assembled army of Spain in the port of Lisbon in 1588.<sup>97</sup> This introduction is written by someone under the initials E. B.. The assembled army in the port of the Portuguese city of Lisbon, was the Spanish Armada that would later set sail for England. This report and the introduction were only published in pamphlet-form after the defeat of the Armada. The author of the preface starts by saying that it had always been a practice of the ungodly “not onely neglecting the almightie to trust in their owne might: but relying on themselves and their own power to glory and boast thereof unto the world.”<sup>98</sup> While the battle was so uneven, “so manie and mightie Monarchies against so smal and little and Iland”, England had still managed to win this battle against Spain.<sup>99</sup> E. B. writes that he did not publish this report in English “as the adversarie would to discourage thee, but to make shew unto thee how vayne it is to trust in outward meanes, and then to learne thee to trust in the Lord.”<sup>100</sup> The purpose of the author with this translation, is that his readers see the providential hand of God in the events that are happening, and to show that God is on their side, since the Spaniards had much more ships, equipment, men, horses, and so on to their disposal. This is also the reason why E. B. refers to several biblical situations and people and compare these to situations of that present day. Biblical and historical figures and situations were also used by crusade-preachers in the thirteenth century to show how God, in given situations, influenced and interfered with

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<sup>94</sup> Anonymous, *The Holy Bull*, 3.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibidem*, 8.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibidem*, 8.

<sup>97</sup> Anonymous, *A true Discourse of the Armie which the King of Spayne caused to bee assembled in the Haven of Lisbon* (London 1588)

<sup>98</sup> *Ibidem*, 5.

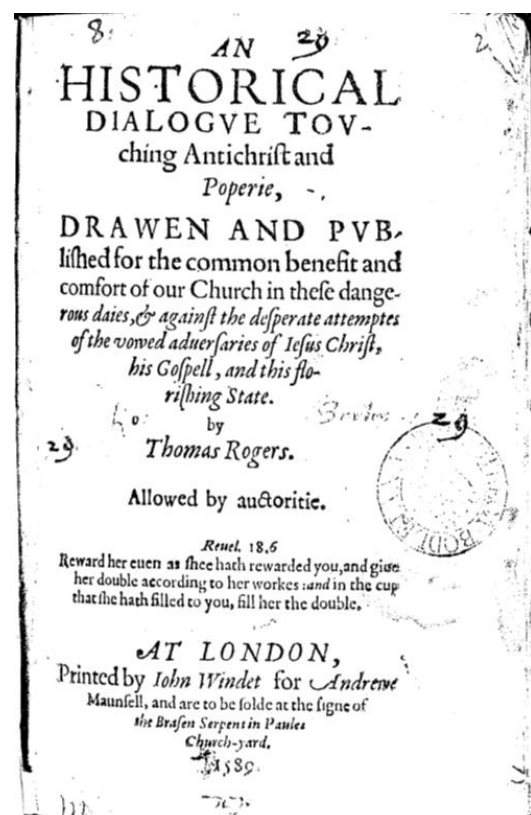
<sup>99</sup> *Ibidem*, 11.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibidem*, 14.

human society.<sup>101</sup> This idea was still present in this literature, more than three hundred years after the first medieval crusades.

Also after the retreat of the Armada, the author of *The Birth, Purpose, and Mortal Wound of the Romish holie League* writes that Lord Seymor awaited the fleeing Spanish ships and “this Fleete and all the rest of their worthiewarre-fellowes overshadowed with the wings of the Almightye, honorable vowed to sell their worthie lives in the defence of this Iland.”<sup>102</sup> According to this author, the English soldiers were willing, and even vowed, to die in order to defend England against the Spanish. Previously in this chapter the attitude of medieval crusaders was discussed, and one of the characteristics of the ideal crusader was that he was consumed with love for Christ, and ready to die a sacrificial death in battle. Apparently this was still an important part of what it meant to be a good soldier in Protestant England in the sixteenth century.

In the year 1589 *An Historical Dialogue touching Antichrist and Poperie*, written by Thomas Rogers was published, as it was “allowed by auctoritie”. Rogers was a religious pamphleteer throughout his entire career as chaplain. His published works include a tract that defends and explains the Articles of Religion, translations of well-known Protestant works, a meditation about the end of time, and the before-mentioned anti-papal tirade.<sup>103</sup> On the frontpage of the *Historical Dialogue*, Rogers has written that it was “drawen and published for the common benefit and comfort of our Church in these dangerous daies and against the desperate attemptes of the vowed adversaries of Iesus Christ, his Gospell, and this flourishing state.” In the preface he identifies “that Whore of Babylon in the holie boke of Revelations... to bee the church of Rome.”<sup>104</sup> Right from the start it was made perfectly clear



that Rome was on the wrong side of the religious divide. The core of the book consists of a dialogue between Timothie and Zelotes, “two professors of the Gospell.”<sup>105</sup> The dialogue presents a specific understanding of the *Imitatio Christi*. What does it take to be a good Christian? Who were faithful Christians during that time, and who were not? Those questions are central to this work. The entire

<sup>101</sup> Maier, *Crusade Propaganda*, 55.

<sup>102</sup> I. L., *The Birth, Purpose, and Mortal Wound of the Romish holie League* (London 1589) A3v.

<sup>103</sup> Nanda Perry, ‘Imitatio and Identity: Thomas Rogers, Philip Sidney, and the Protestant Self’, *English Literary Renaissance*, 35/3, (2005) 365.

<sup>104</sup> Thomas Rogers, *An Historical Dialogue Touching Antichrist and Poperie* (London 1589) A2v.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibidem*, 1.

dialogue is a warning against everything Catholic, papal and Spanish. Rogers ends his work by glorifying Queen Elizabeth. She is pictured as the great defender of the realm and the truth, and the author prays that she may live to overthrow the enemies of the truth, in order to glorify God and keep England safe.<sup>106</sup>

Also in 1589, under the initials I.L., *The Birth, Purpose, and mortall Wound of the Romish holie League* was published. In secondary literature this work is usually ascribed to James Lea, a rather famous poet in those years, but one cannot be sure about that.<sup>107</sup> On the frontpage of this poem are the verses two and four of Psalm 2 written down: “The Kings of the earth band themselves, and the Princes came together against the Lord, and against his Anointed. But hee that dwelleth in Heaven shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.” With the ones who came together against the Lord and his anointed, the author refers to the Catholic church of Rome and its followers. This becomes clear when you read the preface, which summarizes the contents of the following poem. In the poem Satan visits the Papal palace in Rome in the middle of the night to talk to the pope, because he had seen the decay of his empire. Satan advises the pope to form a Holy League against their enemies, and especially “our Arch-enemies, Elizabeth Queene of England and Henrie King of Navarre.”<sup>108</sup> Despite the cunning conspiracy of the devil and the pope “Navarre fortified from heaven, armed at all points like a Christian *Chevalier* defended the Gospel and England happie through her Elizabeth, fate crowned with a wreath of peace as a Rocke unmoveable.”<sup>109</sup> With help from God Protestantism had overcome Catholicism. King Henry of Navarre was being referred to as a Christian knight defending the Gospel. In medieval times, defending the Gospel had always been one of the most often mentioned reasons for going on crusade. The preface ends with the words: “Thus is this divelish League devised by the Divell, and confirmed by the Pope, weakened and wasted through the Spirite of Truth and Power of our Lord Iesus Christ: To whom let England sing so all her victories.”<sup>110</sup>

At the beginning of this chapter the medieval crusade rhetoric was discussed. Christoph Maier identified a basic framework of ideas in the model sermons he studied. The first general element was the idea that the crusades were wars authorized and supported by God, the second element is the idea that participating in a crusade was a form of religious devotion, and the third element consists of the idea that becoming a crusader was a conversion to a more thoroughly Christian life.<sup>111</sup> Tamminen wrote about the aspects of an ideal crusader. He mentioned the penitential, imitative, pious, and soldierly as the four aspects of ideal crusading. When comparing these frameworks to the anti-Spanish English texts, discussed later in this chapter, there are a lot of similarities to be found. The sources have shown that

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<sup>106</sup> Rogers, *An Historical Dialogue*, 115.

<sup>107</sup> Sanchez, *Anti-Spanish sentiment*, 174.

<sup>108</sup> I. L., *The Birth, Purpose*, A3r.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibidem*, A3r.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibidem*, A4r.

<sup>111</sup> Maier, *Crusade Propaganda*, 67.



the writers of anti-Spanish polemics also aimed at giving their public the idea that the war against Spain was authorized by God and that he was on their side. They did this by underlining how the Spanish were intrinsically bad, while the English were on the good side. An often used strategy in accomplishing this, was pointing at the behaviour of the Spanish in the New World. People who behaved this way, could not have God on their side, and by this the war with Spain was justified. In addition to this all writers urged their readers to behave in a similar way as the writers of crusade sermons had urged their public to behave: by imitating Christ. According to the English writers this would make honourable soldiers, not afraid to loose their lives in battle, because it was to prevent Catholicism, usually referred to as the religion of the Antichrist, of spreading. In the sources that were central to this chapter the strong belief of the English that God, in given situations, influenced and interfered with human society, was recognized. In the next chapter this idea of a divinely hierarchised society is one of the themes that will be further explained, because it is of vital importance in assessing the function of Holy War rhetoric for the English society.

## The purpose of Holy War rhetoric in anti-Spanish polemics

The previous chapter showed how Holy War rhetoric was used in English polemics, and how this relates to the Catholic concept of Holy War in the Middle Ages. The main question of this last chapter is: what purpose did Holy War rhetoric have in the anti-Spanish polemics in England? What was the socio-political importance of this kind of rhetoric? That it must have had socio-political importance is a given, based on the fact that the English government applied different rhetoric in their explanation about why England will interfere in the Low Countries. The tract in which the government elaborates on these reasons, is the first point of attention in this chapter. To understand this governmental tract better, it will be placed in its political and legal context in the second part of this chapter. The final two primary sources will be introduced in the third part. These sources elaborate more specifically on the Protestant theory of Holy War.

### England's declaration of war

It was already mentioned in the introduction that the Anglo-Spanish War was never official declared, however, the un-official declaration of the war from the side of the English, appeared in 1585. That year the English court published a declaration in which the causes that moved the queen to support the Dutch Revolt in the Low Countries, were explained to the English people. In the introduction it was also made clear that the tract was meant for the English people. The declaration was a military tract, drawn up by the Secretary of State, Sir William Cecil, and it was initiated by Elizabeth herself. With this declaration of war from her side, and sending royal forces to provinces to fight against Spain, Elizabeth openly intervened in the continental religious conflicts. Although England would not have any open warfare on the home island, it would not have peace on the continent or in Ireland until after Elizabeth's death in 1603.

The title of the tract on itself already contained a clear message: *A Declaration of the Causes moving the Queene of England to give aide to the Defence of the People afflicted and oppressed in the lowe Countries*. It gave the impression that the people in the Low Countries needed to be defended, because they were being afflicted and oppressed by the Spaniards. At the beginning of the pamphlet it is stated that Queen Elizabeth, as a sovereign prince and queen, did not need to give an account of her actions to anyone, but that she had chosen to do so in order that all people would understand the justice of her decision.<sup>112</sup>

First the natural causes of ancient contact and continual traffic between England and the Low Countries are mentioned. There has always been trade between the countries and good connections, alliances and confederations. Not only between governments, but also between their subjects.<sup>113</sup> There

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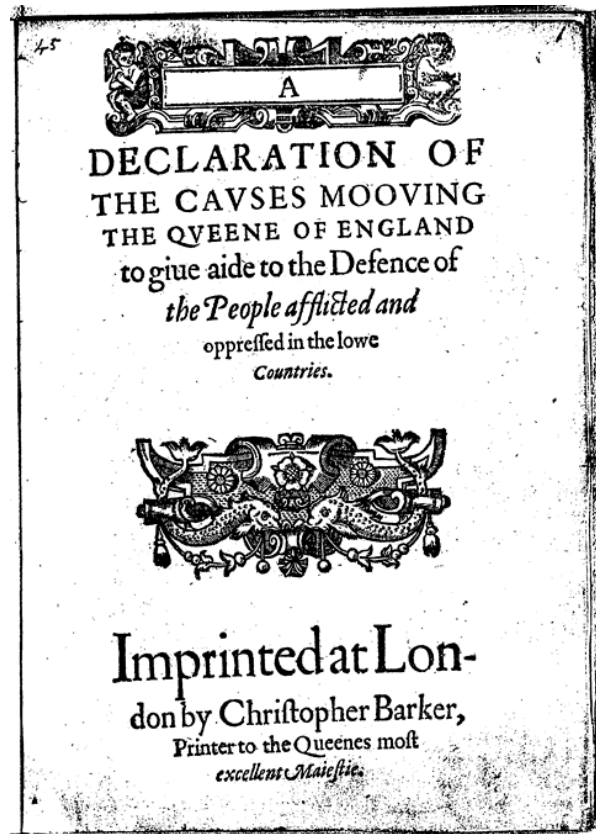
<sup>112</sup> *A Declaration of the Causes moving the Queene of England to give aide to the Defence of the People afflicted and oppressed in the lowe Countries* (London 1585) 1.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibidem*, 2.

had always been a “mutuall amitie” between the inhabitants of both countries, on the ecclesiastical as well as on the secular level.<sup>114</sup> William Cecil writes how, “contrary to the ancient laws and customes thereof, having great plentie of noble, valiant and faithfull persons naturally borne”, the king of Spain has appointed Spaniards as the highest governors of the Low Countries: “foreners and strangers of strange blood, men more exercised in warres then in peaceable government.”<sup>115</sup> This was seen as the breaking of ancient laws and a violation of the liberties of the people in the Low Countries.<sup>116</sup> The result of this was that the rich and strong cities and towns were now possessed by the Spaniards, which had a negative effect on the Dutch trade with England.

Cecil goes on to say how the queen, during these times, continued to give friendly advices to the king of Spain on how to restrain the tyranny of his governors in the Low Countries. However, her advices were ignored: “our requests and advices given to the king of Spayne, manifestly for his owne weale and honour, wee found him by his counsell of Spayne so unwilling in any sort to encline our friendly counsell.”<sup>117</sup> Things even worsened: “his governors and chiefetaines in his lowe countries increased their cruelties towards his owne afflicted people.”<sup>118</sup> Therefore the *Declaration* also deplores King Philip neglecting his task, as a monarch, to protect his subjects.

Very important to underline in this declaration, was the danger of the Spanish presence in the Low Countries for England itself:



*And ioyning thereunto our own danger at hand, by the overthrow and destruction of our neighbours, and accesse and planting of great forces of the Spanyards so neere to oure countries, with precedent arguments of many troublesome attemptes against our Realme: we did therefore by good advice and after long deliberation determine, to sende certaine companies of souldiers to ayde the naturall people of those countries.*<sup>119</sup>

<sup>114</sup> *A Declaration of the Causes*, 3.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibidem*, 5.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibidem*, 6.

<sup>117</sup> *ibidem*, 11.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibidem*, 11.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibidem*, 18.

With the Spaniards settled so near to their own country, and only a small sea between them, also formed a risk for the security of the nation. In another part of the *Declaration* it is stated that the English could never be sure what the plans of the pope and the king of Spain might be, and therefore they were forced to take action.<sup>120</sup> Based on this I believe that having the Spanish so near to their own country was the primary reason for the English to send companies to the Low Countries. From a geographical point of view, England was isolated from the other Protestant areas in Europe, and vulnerable to the great Catholic powers, Spain and France. This made the communication and reciprocated assistance between the English and continental Protestantism of mutual importance in their survival.

In the introduction, and in the closing pages of this tract, the English government claims that their decision to help the Dutch is “to the honour of God, whome they desire to serve sincerely as Christian people according to his holy word.”<sup>121</sup> This implies that, without the help from the English, the people in the Low Countries were not able to serve God the way they wanted to and according to his word. This idea is confirmed a little further on in the text: “as in no age the Devill hath more abounded with notable spirites replenished with all wickednesse to utter his rage against the professours of Christian Religion.”<sup>122</sup> The devil used all of his means to rage against Protestantism.

In the conclusion of the *Declaration* William Cecil summarizes the primary reasons of the decision of the queen to send soldiers to the Low Countries. She wanted to accomplish three things: to end the war with restitution of the Low Countries to their ancient liberties, to prevent an invasion in her own country, and to renew the mutual bond of friendship and trade between the English and the Dutch. Although fighting for the honour of God is mentioned, and the Catholic threat and suppression are made explicit, religious reasons were not presented as decisive for this unofficial declaration of war on Spain.

Nevertheless, as mentioned in the previous chapters, Catholic as well as Protestant Englishmen saw the conflicts at the end of the sixteenth century as religious wars. The English Protestants, however, had different ideas about the way in which Holy War was supposed to be fought, than Catholics.<sup>123</sup> Wars needed to be lawfully justified, and it was no longer possible to accomplish this on religious grounds only. In England an elaborate set of laws of armed conflict was developed as a result of its political situation. This had resulted in a changed legal perception on justified wars. So, in order to understand why it was important for the English to fight lawful wars, it is necessary to elaborate on the political situation of the country, and the effect this had on fighting wars.

### **The political situation in Elizabethan England.**

As a result of the rejection of Catholicism, and therefore the pope as the authority in ecclesiastical affairs, the religious settlement in post-Reformation England established the ruling monarch of the kingdom as

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<sup>120</sup> *A Declaration of the Causes*, 11.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibidem*, 18.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibidem*, 20.

<sup>123</sup> Justin S. E. Smith, “*The Sword and the Law*”: *Elizabethan soldiers’ perception and practice of the laws of armed conflict, 1569-1587* (Glasgow 2017) 60.

the absolute and supreme spiritual authority in England and its dominions.<sup>124</sup> Article 37 of the English church regulations established the superiority of the state, through the institution of the monarchy, over the church and over war:

*The Queenes Maiestie hath the cheefe power in this Realme of England, and other dominions, unto whom the cheefe government of all estates of this Realme, whether they be Ecclesiasticall or Civile, in all causes doth apparteyne, and is not, ought to be subiect to any forraigne iurisdiction. [...] The Byshop of Rome hath no iurisdiction in this Realme of England. [...] It is lawfull for Christian men, at the commaundment of the Magistrate, to were weapons, and serve in the warres.*<sup>125</sup>

Only the English monarch had the authority to declare war, and this made monarchical power absolute in terms of ‘war and peace’. Justin Smith explains how the Elizabethan approach to religion created a state-church that emphasized national loyalty through the visible obedience to the institution of the Church of England. This meant that religion became a matter of state.

With regard to this, it is crucial to elaborate more on Queen Elizabeth as a divinely ordained monarch. Alexandra Walsham wrote about this royalist myth around Elizabeth. She explains how in sixteenth-century English literature the queen and her actions were compared with biblical heroes, such as Deborah, Judith, Josiah, Solomon and Hezekiah, and according to her, this was a didactic device.<sup>126</sup> By doing this preachers were not so much saluting the queens achievements, as outlining a set of ideals to be aspired to. The aim was to school the queen in her duties as a providentially instituted ruler.<sup>127</sup> Walsham convincingly shows how the English writers might have viewed Spanish militarized Catholicism negatively, because of the lens of their own national theology that Queen Elizabeth was divinely ordained to be their head of state. They saw the providential hand of God in their history, and for this reason they constantly advise their readers to put their trust in God and the queen, as was shown in the previous chapter. Walsham also writes how there is much to suggest that the practice of commemorating Elizabeth’s accession day was a by-product of militant Protestantism and aggressive anti-Catholicism. She explains how the Elizabethan regime could have recognized the usefulness of this day, because it inserted focus for patriotic loyalty and religious uniformity.<sup>128</sup> The English believed, and were constantly reminded, that God granted the English monarch the right to declare war, and keep the

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<sup>124</sup> Smith, “*The Sword and the Law*”, 62.

<sup>125</sup> Church of England, *Articles, whereupon it was agreed by the archbishops and bishops of both provinces, and the whole cleargie, in the conuocation holden at London in the yere of our God 1562 according to the computation of the Churche of Englande for auoiding of the diuersities of opinions, and for the stablishyng of consent touching true religion* (London 1571) 23-24.

<sup>126</sup> Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (eds.), *The Myth of Elizabeth* (London 2003) 147.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibidem*, 148.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibidem*, 156.

peace within the realm, and this became fundamental to the Elizabethan world-view.<sup>129</sup> It formed the cultural lens through which Englishmen interpreted their society, and how they understood the conflict with Spain. Later in this chapter, when discussing the Protestant theory of Holy War, the cultural lens of the English will be further discussed.

As said, the queen would not permit the church to invade the monarchy's supremacy, and she was supported in this by important church leaders. The queen, her government, and the Anglican church leaders believed that any loss in royal supremacy in ecclesiastical affairs would result in a loss of royal supremacy in civil affairs.<sup>130</sup> That is why it was so important for an English monarch to be head of the Church of England. The result of this was that Queen Elizabeth favoured a subordination of religion to politics, which naturally extended to war.<sup>131</sup> Therefore, whether or not a war was declared, depended on political reasons more than on religious reasons.

In addition to this it is essential to recall that the Elizabethan regime often acted in a rather pragmatic way, with underlying political reasons. A good example of this is that Elizabeth and her government cultivated the relations with the Ottoman empire, the enemy of Christendom, following the excommunication of the queen. In addition to this, the regime did not only condemn Catholics, but it also, occasionally, supported them. For instance, during the siege of Malta in 1565 the state promoted prayers for the Knights of St. John who were trapped on the island. Promoting prayers for Catholics idolaters and reconciling with Turkish infidels, shows how the state often acted in its political interests rather than following the dictates of religion.<sup>132</sup>

The most important duty of the English monarchy was the defense of the realm, the Church, and the preservation of peace. Only to these ends could Queen Elizabeth lawfully raise armies and command military agents to act.<sup>133</sup> Important in this regard, is that the defense of the Church was historically accomplished through the tradition of crusade, the Catholic representation of Holy War. However, following the English Reformation, the defense of the Church of England became connected with the defense of the state.<sup>134</sup> This meant that, according to the English law, defenders of the Church of England were either legally fighting a regular war in the case of external threat, or it meant that domestic law was applied within the kingdom against rebels. In this way the Elizabethan government managed to reframe the concept of Holy War.

Justin Smith explained how in sixteenth-century Europe there were three legal spheres wherein military action was recognized as legitimate. The first sphere in which military action could be rightly applied was international conflicts between states which were generally recognized as war, and the

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<sup>129</sup> Smith, *"The Sword and the Law"*, 209.

<sup>130</sup> Ibidem, 72.

<sup>131</sup> Ibidem, 72.

<sup>132</sup> Lisa Jardine, 'Gloriana rules the waves: or, the advantage of being excommunicated (and a woman)', *Transactions of the royal historical society* 14 (2004) 213.

<sup>133</sup> Smith, *"The Sword and the Law"*, 210.

<sup>134</sup> Ibidem, 210.

second sphere was the state's use of the military against domestic insurgency.<sup>135</sup> In Protestant England the third category, Holy War, in form endorsed by the Catholic Church, was thoroughly rejected. Protestant English writers had condemned the Catholic interpretation of Holy War, because they were convinced that it used religion to promote tyranny and rebellion.<sup>136</sup>

However, that Holy War could use religion to incite tyranny and rebellion was not the only reason the English government pursued a legally justified form of warfare. More important was that Holy War on its own, outside the framework of just war, had the potential to challenge or even weaken, the authority of Queen Elizabeth. The medieval and Catholic interpretation of Holy War had justified rebellion by subjects against their sovereign if Catholic authority, such as the pope, granted their permission. In contrast, the English argued that to take up arms against your lawful sovereign for any reason, threatened the previously discussed divined order of society.<sup>137</sup> The divine hierarchy, Elizabeth being appointed by God as England's sovereign, became unassailable. This principle had important consequences. With regard to war and military conflicts the English considered rebellion, regardless of religious justifications, a capital crime.

Protestant, university trained jurists therefore drew up comprehensive doctrines on the laws of war.<sup>138</sup> These laws of war were largely in line with international laws of warfare across Europe. However, religion as a justification for war was less agreed upon across the divergent Christian doctrines.<sup>139</sup> To defend her authority, the English government had limited theological power in temporal affairs. This led Queen Elizabeth to also reject more radical Protestant calls for a religious war against Spain, because she wanted to pursue a just and legal war policy.<sup>140</sup> In addition to this, it resulted in the previously mentioned strong censorship the English government practiced over writings that were printed and distributed. Printed works needed to be as uniform as possible in order to create unity among the English population, posed against Catholicism, but the aim of the censorship was also to keep radical ideas from getting the upper hand in the English society.

This part of the chapter showed that the theoretical justifications for the Catholic understanding of Holy War did not have legitimacy in Protestant England. However, England did see their own war against Spain in some sense as a Holy War, because the previous chapters showed how appeals for Holy War were made by the English Protestants, and that these appeals were, to a certain extent, similar to the medieval crusading messages. Thus had defending the faith always been the most important aim of any Holy War, God's cause was represented as England's cause, and the English soldiers were urged to not fear death, because they served God in serving their monarch and fought for the honour of their country. The English emphasis on temporal and spiritual authority of the monarch in matters of war,

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<sup>135</sup> Smith, *"The Sword and the Law"*, 49.

<sup>136</sup> Ibidem, 212.

<sup>137</sup> Ibidem, 210.

<sup>138</sup> Ibidem, 38.

<sup>139</sup> Ibidem, 212.

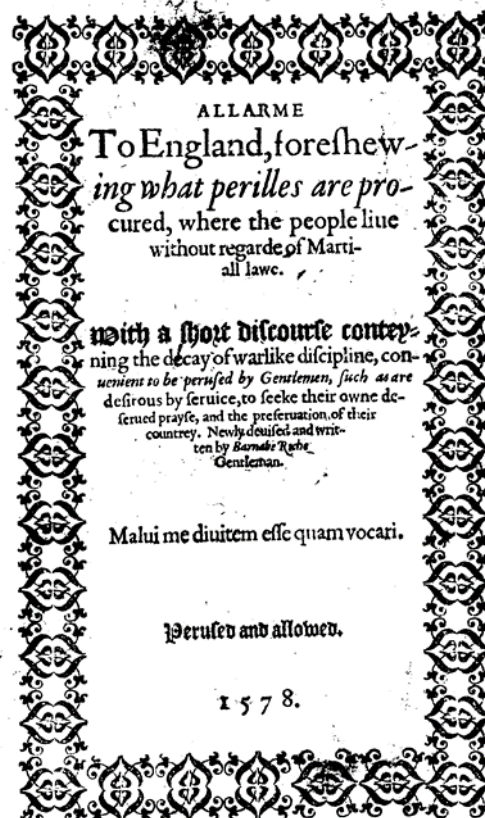
<sup>140</sup> Ibidem, 214.

explained in this part of the chapter, did, however, make it necessary to re-evaluate the causes of and actions in Holy War. A theory evolved which presented Holy War as a, in essence, just war with a religious cause.

### The Protestant theory of Holy War

One of the writings that highlight this newly invented theory of Holy War, is Barnabe Riche's *Allarme To England, foreshewing what perilles are procured, where the people live without regarde of Martiall lawe*, which was published in 1578. It has already been mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis that Barnabe Riche was viewed as an important literary figure who supplied the intellectual justification for the Protestant principle of fighting a Holy War. Riche was an author and a soldier, who served, rising to the rank of captain, in the Low Countries. As the title already implies, the work is about the importance of martial law for a society. In the first part he discusses the reasons for fighting wars and how these wars should be fought. By discussing the *Declaration of the Causes* at the beginning of this chapter, it has become clear that, despite a common Protestantism and a common anti-Catholicism, the English government continued to emphasize the uniqueness of English law and institutions, especially in the case of war and international conflicts.<sup>141</sup>

Religious conflicts were no longer enough to legitimately declare a war. For this reason Barnabe Riche's *Allarme To England* was a controversial work. The author shows himself to be aware of this when he writes that he knows "a number will scorne me, and think me to be simple."<sup>142</sup> On the first couple of pages he states that peace is not always the best thing to pursue. He goes on to refer to several biblical examples of when God preferred the Israelites to fight another tribe or people, than living in peace with them. Riche does not only mention scriptural texts, but he also writes how "divers excellent authors, and learned writers" feel that, on many occasions, it is more convenient to take up arms. He argues that it is often necessary for princes to become enemies, in order to become "perfect



<sup>141</sup> Shapiro, *Political Communication*, 276.

<sup>142</sup> Barnabe Riche, *Allarme To England, foreshewing what perilles are procured, where the people live without regarde of Martiall lawe* (1578) A2r.



friends”.<sup>143</sup> Riche believes that, at given times, it is better for a country to go to war instead of keeping a peace that, in the end, is harmful to the country. He then continues to explain justified causes for war, according to him. The first statement he makes with regard to this, is that, when oppressed, no prince should just give up his crown. On the contrary, it is their duty to maintain their God-given right.<sup>144</sup>

For Riche it is thus lawful to take up arms when the security of the country is at risk, to overthrow an oppressor, or to defend people who are not able to defend themselves, but he also mentions the maintenance of the true religion. To prove that it is also lawful to declare wars on religious grounds, and that it is sometimes even necessary to do so, Riche refers to opinions and statements of Plato, Augustine and Bernard of Clairvaux.<sup>145</sup>

Riche writes: “first therefore, I can conceive no reason why they should despise warfare when it is rightfully begunne and taken in hand in the defence of religion, whereas we see it wonderfully extold in innumerable places of holy scripture.”<sup>146</sup> So, although the English government in their *Declaration of the Causes moving the Queene of England to give aide to the Defence of the People afflicted and oppressed in the lowe Countries* did not literally mention religious causes as lawful reasons for their aide to the Dutch people in the Low Countries, there were English intellectuals who did think that religious causes could also be lawful reasons to declare a war. By writing about this subject, they invented a Protestant theory of Holy War. Crucial for the spread and acceptance of this pamphlet was the fact that it was “perused and allowed”. The work was investigated, and afterwards allowed by the English government. This tells us that the government, who kept a close eye on radical works, did not think of it as a threat to the religious establishment or the monarchy in any way. Apparently they wanted this work to be spread throughout England.

Twenty years after Riche’s influential publication, on the seventh of May 1598, Stephen Gosson held a sermon at St. Paul’s Cross in London. This sermon was called *The trumpet of warre*. The entire sermon is about fighting wars: when it is lawful to go to war, who has the right to decide over war, how individuals should behave during combat, what aims a war must have, and so on. In the second section Gosson elaborates on the causes for war, and this is an interesting part for this thesis. He explains how certain, what he calls ‘injuries’, make a war lawful and just. If “the Turk, Pope, or Idolatrous Princes conspire to drive out the Gospel from those Christian kingdomes where it is preached” it is just and lawful to take up arms.<sup>147</sup> He continues to state that “to banish the Gospel is to do an iniurie”. By having established the Spanish Inquisition in the Low Countries, the Spanish had banished the Gospel, and suppressed the people in their religious believes. According to Gosson it would therefore be lawful to aide the Dutch. However, this is not the only reason he mentions in light of the war against Spain.

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<sup>143</sup> Riche, *Allarme To England*, A3v.

<sup>144</sup> Ibidem, A4v.

<sup>145</sup> Ibidem, B2v.

<sup>146</sup> Ibidem, B1r.

<sup>147</sup> Stephen Gosson, *The trumpet of warre A sermon preached at Paules Crosse the seventh of Maie 1598* (London 1598) f.29v.

Gosson also refers to biblical passages in which princes or army-commanders had send help to friends that were abandoned by their own soldiers, or who were suppressed by a foreign king or commander.<sup>148</sup> On biblical ground, it was your duty, as a divinely instituted monarch, to help your fellow companions or friends.

Concluding, what makes a war justified and lawful, according to Gosson, is first that the true Gospel is banished from a country. The second reason he mentions, is when another monarch withholds something that is not lawfully his or hers, and when the laws of a certain nation are violated. The third reason is when the fame and honour of a monarch is disgraced or disrespected, or when indignity is shown to ambassadors or friends of the royal head of state. The final reason he mentions for lawfully declaring a war, is when a country is invaded. He urges his English readers, like the biblical hero Jehoshaphat, to “fight for their wives, children, goodes, landes, their owne lives, & their religion, against the invader.”<sup>149</sup>

Gosson mentions the pope when he lines up people who would drive out the Gospel from Christian kingdoms and against whom it is therefore lawful to declare war. Later in the sermon he even states that these reasons make it necessary to declare war, and that is the duty of the monarch.<sup>150</sup> So, Gosson believed that religious causes could be used to justify a war, but he also emphasized that while conducting war it is important to preserve customary restraints. He stated, for instance, that is “against humanitie to kill more than needs”.<sup>151</sup> It was already mentioned in the previous chapter that this was also a sign of soldierly behaviour educated in the crusading sermons of the Middle Ages.

So, when this work of Gosson is connected to the *Allarme To England* from Riche and the official, state-initiated *Declaration of the Causes*, it might be possible to state that the war against Spain was considered a just war, justified by secular causes and laws by the government, but also with underlying important religious causes that were highlighted by English intellectuals. In the introduction it was already discussed that it is important to keep in mind that Protestant authors depended on their patrons for financial support. The themes and aims of Protestant writers must therefore have been in line with the convictions of their patrons, usually prominent Protestants, because they were the ones who maintained good connections with the printers and people who distributed the Protestant literature.<sup>152</sup> In addition to this, the English government practiced strong censorship over writings that were printed and distributed. Nevertheless, writings containing Holy War rhetoric, such as the source I have used in this thesis, were published and spread in England. What could have been the reason for this?

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<sup>148</sup> Gosson, *The trumpet of warre*, f.29v.

<sup>149</sup> Ibidem, f.30r.

<sup>150</sup> Ibidem, f.36r.

<sup>151</sup> Ibidem, f.37r.

<sup>152</sup> Calderwood, *The Elizabethan Protestant Press*, 8.

### **The importance of Holy War rhetoric for the English society**

This thesis showed that Protestant Englishmen employed religious rhetoric and symbols indicative of Holy War in defence of their war against Spain. However, when the legal context of just war, as discussed in this chapter, is considered, there is much to say for the conviction that the Holy War rhetoric was part of a greater war between good, Protestantism, and evil, Catholicism.<sup>153</sup> The use of this rhetoric might therefore have been a sense of self-preservation that united the English, especially when the Spanish Armada threatened both the English church and state. Not anti-Spanish sentiment helped bring unity to the nation, but the threat of anti-Protestant, and therefore anti-English, forces. During Elizabeth's reign multiple military conflicts threatened to consume her kingdom. France had reclaimed Calais in 1558, and by 1560 French soldiers were stationed in Scotland, threatening the northern border of England. So, when King Philip II decided to send an army to the Low Countries in 1566, and ordered the duke of Alba to suppress the growing Protestant rebellion there, the English felt more threatened than ever. Being a Protestant state, the English interpreted the Spanish occupation of the Low Countries as part of an attack on Protestantism in general, and a prelude of invasion into their own territory. The English feared that once Spain had eradicated Protestantism from the Low Countries, it would turn against the heretics in England. Logically, the ever-present threat of prevailing Catholicism posed a risk for the Elizabethan royal regime, and endangered the religious freedom of the entire Protestant English nation. It can be said that anti-Catholicism, and in it the Holy War rhetoric the polemical works contained, therefore became part of national ideology. It was Catholicism against Protestantism.

Not to be underestimated is the world-view of the English with regard to this national ideology. They believed, as was discussed earlier in this chapter, that God hierarchized their society, and that he had appointed Elizabeth to be their sovereign queen. What can be recognized in a lot of the sources that were used for this thesis, is that they argue that it is unlawful to take up arms against a divinely ordained monarch such as their queen. This endangered God's plan, his divine hierarchy, with England. In addition to this, the queen was also seen the defender of the true faith. If the Spanish, and with them Catholicism, would find its way to the English Island, the revival of the Gospel would be in danger. Defending the Gospel had always been the spear-point of medieval crusading, and it still was in the sixteenth-century in England.

The sources that were used for this thesis have showed how religious and legal writers acknowledged that religion could provide justifications for war, but when the *Declaration* was considered, the conclusion was that the arguments of the English government did not amount to a declaration of Holy War or crusade against Spain. This had everything to do with the political situation in England. Because Queen Elizabeth was head of the Church as well as the state, these two institutions were connected, and no longer separate entities. For this reason the English developed a code of law for

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<sup>153</sup> Smith, "*The Sword and the Law*", 74.

armed conflicts, and Holy War was no longer part of this code, because of the risk it could be for the secular authority of the queen, and for the simple reason that it was a Catholic abomination.

By making law and order the key point in England's military campaigns, the Elizabethan regime managed to avoid theological debates and presented England as the defender of justice both within the borders of the kingdom and abroad. It was made perfectly clear in the *Declaration*, but also in other sources that were used in this thesis, that the English severely criticised the behaviour of the Spanish in the Low Countries, stating it was cruel and tyrannical. The Low Countries, without a doubt, represented the weaker power, and it was therefore legally justified for the English to aid the Dutch.

Therefore, while the government provided the legal justifications for war, the English intellectuals tried to unify the English by underlining the dangers of Catholicism for the entire English nation, and keep on referring to Gods providential hand over the English nation, and highlighting the sacred position of the queen. In short, the English intellectuals made sure that the secular reasons for the war with Spain were anchored in the belief in the sanctity of the military cause. As was showed in the second chapter, a constant pamphleteering objective, for instance, was to free the Protestant English people of fear by showing that the Lord would fight for them, just as he did for his people the Israelites. The secular causes in combination with the religious justifications that were exhibited, made the war against Spain a legal and just war, and in the eyes of the English Protestants also a Holy War.

## Conclusion

The goal of this thesis has been to trace the development and the adaption of the originally Catholic concept of Holy War to the post-Reformation era, and a new faith, Protestantism. For this reason one part of the main research-question of this thesis was how the concept of Holy War emerged in the anti-Spanish polemics, and the other part deals with its socio-political functions within the English society. Nowadays, the concept of Holy War is very much connected to medieval crusading-rhetoric. One of the main purposes of this thesis was therefore to make clear that the language, the emotions, and some theoretical justifications for violence against religious and political foes of the 'True Religion' in England, resemble crusading rhetoric of the twelfth and thirteenth century.

Naturally, there was no such a thing as an officially formulated Protestant doctrine of the crusades or Holy War in Elizabethan England. However, if we take into account the writings of Barnabe Riche and Stephen Gosson, discussed in the last chapter, and the several polemical works discussed in the previous chapters, it becomes clear that the Protestant concept of Holy War derived as much from the Bible and church fathers, as from the crusades. The concept of Holy War, and its characteristics, can still be recognized in the polemics about the war with Spain, and concerning the papacy. This might be attributed to a common Western culture and intellectual heritage; an interesting topic for further research.

For historians of the crusades who belong to the 'generalist school', wars are classified as crusades when the people who fought them claimed they were executing God's will. As stated in the introduction of this thesis, the generalist approach of the crusades made it possible to study the English polemics concerning the war against Spain, in light of the crusading framework. By explaining how ideal crusading was supposed to be carried out, people's perceptions of the crusades could be governed and the behavior of crusaders themselves could be controlled. The same idea is to be recognized in the anti-Spanish polemics in England, where the authors use countless examples to teach their readers how they should imitate Christ in their fight against Spain and Catholicism.

Pious, imitative, and soldierly aspects of medieval crusading-rhetoric can be recognized in sixteenth-century anti-Spanish polemics. Writers of these polemics who have been studied in this thesis, frequently urge their readers to fight for God, and in the name of God, in order to lead their ignorant and idolatrous enemy to the truth. These examples of how Holy War rhetoric are very similar to the rhetoric used during the crusades of the twelfth and thirteenth century.

Just as any other war, however, the war against Spain needed to be justified by the state towards the English population. In Elizabethan England the state shifted to emphasizing secular causes, instead of religious causes, in justifying this war. However, in much of the polemics that were not initiated by state-officials, private works of English intellectuals, religious reasons were actually brought to the attention of the reader. This goes hand in hand with the idea that the English monarch was divinely ordained. Preachers and writers underlined the providential hand of God in the history of England, and

they concluded that England's wars were therefore God's own wars. Like the crusades a few hundred years earlier, the war against Spain and Catholicism was depicted as a Holy War similar to the wars the Israelites fought in the Old Testament. If God approved and if he was on your side just like he was on the side of his biblical people, the Israelites, there would be no reason why he would not do the same in present times. In crusade preaching, as well as the sixteenth-century anti-Spanish polemics, this idea can be recognized. Most texts tended to give the reader the impression that he was on the right side of the moral divide and that the war was part of a great struggle against the threat of international Catholicism. Preachers wanted to contrast zealous Protestantism with the sinfulness and errors of Catholicism. Their aim was to strengthen the sense of separation from 'popery', and remind their audience that they were standing on the right side of the religious spectrum. The war was considered holy by Protestant Englishmen, because it was all about the religious truth. For this reason the war was often pictured, in the English polemics, as a war against Antichrist and his servants.

To conclude, the purpose of Holy War rhetoric in the anti-Spanish polemics was a way to sacralize political rule in England and to strengthen the English national identity. To maintain Protestantism, Catholicism needed to be fought. By strengthening the national Protestant identity and sacralizing the political rule, Holy War had become a productive cultural concept that continued to be present in the English society of the late sixteenth century.

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