

ENGLISH RECUSANT CONTROVERSY IN SPANISH PRINT CULTURE: DISSEMINATION,  
POPULARISATION, FICTIONALISATION\*

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That disputation is a good meanes and profitable instrument to examine and try our truth, even in matters of faith, yf yt be rightly used and with due circumstances, no man can deny.

Robert Persons, *A Reviervv of Ten Publike Disputations*, 1604

*What's in a Poem? (I)*

At the turn of the sixteenth century, while Spain and England were at war, Pedro Sánchez

Mazo, a lesser-known author, published a verse account of how two Spanish soldiers were

tortured and killed by the English, under the title *Verissima relacion del riguroso y aceruo*

*martirio que la Reyna Inglesa dio a dos soldados de nuestra nacion española del exercito del*

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*Principe Cardenal* [Most truthful relation of the harsh and cruel martyrdom given to two Spanish soldiers of the Prince Cardinal's army by the English Queen].<sup>1</sup> The Spanish soldiers in the poem, who were fighting in the service of the Spanish army led by Albert of Habsburg, Cardinal and Archbishop of Toledo, were captured and sent to prison.<sup>2</sup> It was there that they suffered all kinds of torments. The worst of these, it would seem, were not in the interrogations aiming at extracting military information, but rather when their captors, identified as 'false Lutherans', attempted to make them forsake their Catholic faith. After depriving them of food and drink, they tried, further (with little success), to induce them to apostasy by promising them money, knighthood, and even their daughters in matrimony, all of which the Spanish soldiers refused. Such a response only made their tormentors even more cruel. They inflicted harsher tortures until the Spanish soldiers finally died, executed on crosses, in obvious resonance with Christ's crucifixion. In fact, the soldiers' miraculous endurance throughout this long and cruel ordeal was not attributed to their military heroism but to their faith and their expectation of gaining a martyr's crown, as announced by both the angels and the Virgin Mary.

Thus, though set in the context of the Franco-Spanish war, and quite probably in the aftermath of the Siege of Calais, Sánchez Mazo's actual focus is the religious confrontation

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<sup>1</sup> (Alcalá de Henares, 1596?). All bracketed translations are mine, unless otherwise stated. According to Julián Martín Abad, the printer of this piece was Sebastián Martínez, *La imprenta en Alcalá de Henares: 1502-1600*, 3 vols (Madrid: CSIC, 1991), III, no. 1133. See also Antonio Rodríguez-Moñino, *Diccionario bibliográfico de pliegos sueltos poéticos (siglo XVI)* (Madrid: Castalia, 1970), # 519. The only known copy of this poem is at the Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid.

<sup>2</sup> Albert of Habsburg was at the time Governor General of the Spanish Netherlands, where he succeeded in several military campaigns. After resigning his ecclesiastical position, he married Infanta Isabel Clara Eugenia, Philip II's daughter, and later in his life he would become the seventh Archduke of Austria. See Luc Duerloo, *Dynasty and Piety: Archduke Albert (1598-1621) and Habsburg Political Culture in an Age of Religious Wars* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2012).

between Catholics and Protestants.<sup>3</sup> Certainly, such interpenetration of the religious and the political should come as no surprise in late sixteenth-century texts, or in real life. But in this case the peculiarities that the poem presents us with are the result of a large number of contradictions, not to mention inconsistencies. It claims, for instance, to be a truthful account, while fiction and the supernatural take over the historical background. It is not the English queen who effects the martyrdom of the soldiers, as announced in the title, but rather a group of 'Lutherans', pejoratively branded as 'enraged Jews'. Surprisingly, the story ends with a group of Jews (and clearly differentiated from the 'false Lutherans') converting to Catholicism, after having buried the bodies of the Spanish soldiers. At first sight, the poem reads as a rushed mishmash of disparate elements making little sense all together. However, its idiosyncrasies, it will be argued here, make more sense if examined from the perspective of the progressive incorporation of English recusant texts into the Spanish print culture at the time. The penetration of this form of literature into Spanish circles was facilitated, it will be argued, by the presence of English Catholic colleges in the country.

### *Signs of the Times*

Were it possible to identify a 'Golden Age of Controversy', the years 1580–1625 would have a strong claim, as Michael Questier has argued.<sup>4</sup> Encompassing the apex and decline of Elizabeth I's power, the accession of James I and his reign, these years witnessed the

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<sup>3</sup> The poem is introduced as a narrative 'de lo que pasava en Francia' [of what happened in France] (l. 4), dating the events to 17 May 1596, shortly after Calais was taken (24 April 1596), and just a few days after France and England signed the Treaty of Greenwich (14 May 1596), by which Elizabeth I and Henry IV formed a league against Spain; the United Netherlands would join the league five months later. See R. B. Wernham, *The Return of the Armadas: The Last Years of the Elizabethan War against Spain, 1595–1603* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> Michael Questier, *Conversion, Politics and Religion in England, 1580–1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

intense, passionate, often sanguinary struggle between English Catholics and reformers of all hues. The global politics of the period rendered internal English religious conflict of keen interest abroad, nowhere more so than in Spain, England's political and colonial opponent, and the premier defender of the Catholic faith. In this climate of intense international, sectarian rivalry, inevitably the controversies born among Englishmen made their way across the Channel and beyond exiled recusant groups. Recusant Catholics found refuge on the Continent and gathered there to wage a campaign to re-establish the Church of Rome in England. The focus of these religiously displaced Anglo-Catholics was simultaneously outward and homeward.

Understandably, the study of English controversial writing up to now has, like the authors themselves, focused primarily on their impact in England and the English mission. Comparatively little attention has been paid to examining what role texts of religious controversy produced by recusant Catholic Englishmen effected change 'overseas', in the countries that harboured them in colleges, in particular from the perspective of the dynamics of book production and print.<sup>5</sup> In the case of Spain, the recusant presence was important, yet its influence remains virtually unstudied, particularly in connection with local print culture. The following pages represent a prolegomenon to a much larger examination, still in progress.

In this article, the focus is on one aspect of the impact of England's religious turmoil in Spain: the way in which English recusant controversy was disseminated, popularised, and fictionalised through Spanish print culture during those crucial years, in particular

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<sup>5</sup> The production of recusant texts in the Continent has started to receive some scholarly attention lately. See, for instance, Paul Arblaster, *Antwerp and the World: Richard Verstegan and the International Culture of Catholic Reformation* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004).

Ana Sáez Hidalgo. "English recusant controversy in Spanish print culture: dissemination, popularization, fictionalization." In *Forming Catholic Communities: Irish, Scots and English College Networks in Europe, 1564-1918*, edited by Liam Chambers and Thomas O'Connor. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2018: 201-31.

from the official establishment of the English mission in Spain in 1589 until 1622, the year before Prince Charles visited Spain.<sup>6</sup> At the centre of this dissemination process were the colleges founded by the Jesuit Robert Persons, especially those in Valladolid and Seville (St Alban's and St Gregory's, founded in 1589 and 1592, respectively), to prepare Catholic exiles to return to England, armed with convincing arguments and ready to seize the martyr's crown.<sup>7</sup> Both 'controversy' (disputation) and martyrdom were considered as both the means and the 'frutos' (fruits) of the English mission abroad, that is, the conversion of lapsed English believers. Skilful disputations that argued the tenets of Catholicism, it was believed, effected conversion directly. Martyrdom had a comparable impact, because dying for the faith represented the ultimate sacrifice for the Catholic cause and had a powerful example.<sup>8</sup> The published writings of recusants distributed in Spanish for readers in Spain may be seen, therefore, to cultivate and produce both of these 'fruits', adapting over the years both in form and in focus as conditions altered in England and in Spain, at religious and political level, and in the sphere of print culture.

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<sup>6</sup> By 1622 many of the lines of action visible and significant in 1589 had become blurred and, as we shall see, the channels of dissemination had largely diversified into discursive structures different from and thus outside of the scope of this study. The most illustrative instances of this change are the accounts of Prince Charles' visit to Madrid, which had a major impact on the Spanish print market, largely displacing the attention previously paid to English recusant colleges. See Alexander Samson, *The Spanish Match: Prince Charles's Journey to Madrid, 1623* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006); Glyn Redworth, *The Prince and the Infanta: The Cultural Politics of the Spanish Match* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

<sup>7</sup> On the English colleges in Valladolid and Seville, see respectively Michael E. Williams, *St Alban's College: Four Centuries of English Catholic Presence in Spain, Valladolid* (London: Hurst, 1986); and Martin Murphy, *St Gregory's College, Seville, 1592-1767*, Catholic Record Society Record Series [or as commonly abbreviated, CRS] 73 (London: Catholic Record Society, 1992).

<sup>8</sup> On the discourse of martyrdom, see Brad S. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1999); Thomas M. McCoog, 'Construing Martyrdom in the English Catholic Community, 1582-1602', in *Catholics and the Protestant Nation: Religious Politics and Identity in Early Modern England*, ed. by Ethan H. Shagan (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 95-127; Susannah Brietz Monta, *Martyrdom and Literature in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). On the education of English seminarians into martyrdom, see Berta Cano and Ana Sáez-Hidalgo, 'Educating for Martyrdom: British Exiles in the English College at Valladolid', in *Religious Diaspora in Early Modern Europe: Strategies of Exile*, ed. by Timothy Fehler et al. (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014), pp. 93-106.

### *The Role of the Colleges*

But let us begin by reminding ourselves of the ultimate purpose of English recusant writing. The authors' great goal always remained the reconversion of England. While this is implicit in what has been noted above, the point cannot be stressed enough, as it underscores the primacy throughout of achieving that goal. Only later, as shall be shown, did Spanish interests add an element of commercialism to the enterprise. Underneath this umbrella, however, several secondary but nonetheless important goals can be identified.

The English recusant presence in Spain, then, was essentially and from the beginning an instrument of the English mission. The exiled English needed the Spanish not only to give them a base of operations, but also to fund that base and its activities. In 1589, it was thought that demonstrating the sincerity of the English faithful, and their desperation, particularly through the wide dissemination of martyrologies, offered the best way forward. Hence the Jesuits in charge of the English colleges, first Persons and Joseph Creswell after 1592, chose to use and adapt the highly popular Spanish format of 'relaciones de sucesos' to spread their message.<sup>9</sup> The 'relaciones de sucesos' or 'relaciones' have been defined by Víctor Infantes as 'brief texts printed for information purposes, of a non-periodical character'.<sup>10</sup> Infantes acknowledges some features common to news pamphlets throughout

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<sup>9</sup> On the role of Persons and Creswell in the Spanish mission see Víctor Houlston, *Catholic Resistance in Elizabethan England: Robert Persons's Jesuit Polemic, 1580-1610* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007); Thomas M. McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1589-1597: Building the Faith of Saint Peter upon the King of Spain's Monarchy* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012); and A. J. Loomie, 'Creswell, Joseph (1556-1623)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6675>

<sup>10</sup> The breadth of this definition stems from the vast number of publications which, by incorporating the innovations resulting from the sociological, political, and ideological impact of the printing press, overlapped with other genres between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries. See Víctor Infantes, '¿Qué es una

this period: their topic is usually some historical event of importance; they are intended to inform about it shortly after it has happened; the texts are mostly in prose, and published in large format (folio or quarto), though ‘somewhat brief’ (four to forty pages). Finally, they are addressed to a wide readership and intended for large-scale dissemination.<sup>11</sup>

The year after the foundation of St Alban’s College in Valladolid, the first English college in Spain, Persons published *Relacion de algunos martyrios que de nuevo han hecho los hereges en Inglaterra*,<sup>12</sup> a compilation of *relaciones* and letters, providing all the information considered necessary to furnish an overview of the persecution of Catholics in England and to justify the need for the English college in Valladolid. It was certainly with this wide dissemination in mind that in the dedicatory to Philip II’s daughter, Persons referred to the Spanish King’s financial support of the English:

no puede dexar de dar gusto por su gran Christiandad a V. A. [...] el ver quan bien empleadas han sido las limosnas que la Magestad del Rey nuestro Señor con su Real y liberalissima mano ha hecho todos estos años, para sustentar, amparar y fauorecer a estos sieruos del Señor.

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relación?: Divagaciones varias sobre una sola divagación’ in *Las relaciones de sucesos en España: 1500–1750*, ed. by Henry Ettinghausen et al. (Alcalá: Servicio de Publicaciones, 1996), p. 211.

<sup>11</sup> Infantes, ‘¿Qué es una relación?’, pp. 209–11. On *relaciones*, see the proceedings of SIERS (International Society for the Study of the ‘Relaciones de Sucesos’) at <http://www.siers.es/publicacion/acta/listar.htm>; last accessed August 2017. The Research Group for ‘Relaciones de sucesos (1500–1800)’ has put together an online catalogue of texts and topics (<http://www.bidiso.es/estaticas/ver.htm?id=6>; [accessed August 2017]) with a large number of digitized *relaciones*.

<sup>12</sup> Madrid, 1590. According to A. F. Allison and D. M. Rogers, ‘A collection of narratives on the sufferings of the English Catholics, edited by Persons. Some are translated by him from English originals, others are written by him in Spanish’. See A. F. Allison, and D. M. Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation between 1558 and 1640: An Annotated Catalogue. Works in languages other than English* (Aldershot: Scolar, 1989–1994), vol. 1, no. 894.

[It will but please your Highness for your great Christianity [...] to see how well used are the alms that His Majesty the King has given us with his Royal and generous hand these last years in order to support, protect and favour these servants of the Lord].<sup>13</sup>

With this dedication, Persons was not only hoping for the continuation of royal support, but also, thanks to the anticipated wide readership of the *relaciones*, expecting a positive propaganda impact on other Spaniards. They might be moved to assist the precarious economic situation of the recently founded college.

Similarly, other recusant texts in Spanish published at the turn of the century adopted this genre, whether translating English originals – in texts like *Relacion de vn sacerdote Ingles, escrita a Flandes à vn cauallero de su tierra, desterrado por ser Catolico* (Antwerp, 1592),<sup>14</sup> and *Relacion que embiaron las religiosas del Monesterio de Sion de Inglaterra* (Madrid, 1594)<sup>15</sup> – or writing originally in Spanish, as is the case of Creswell's *Historia de la vida y martyrio que padecio en Inglaterra este año de.1595. el P. Henrique Valpolo* (1596).<sup>16</sup> Strong evidence of their success comes not only from the growing number of *relaciones* addressing English matters published in Spain at the end of the century, but also from the integration of some of these recusant accounts into larger texts,

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<sup>13</sup> Robert Persons, *Relacion de algunos martyrios que de nuevo han hecho los hereges en Inglaterra* (Madrid: Pedro Madrigal, 1590) (n. p.). In transcribing the early modern texts I have retained the original spelling and punctuation, except for the elongated 'j', which is rendered as 's'. Abbreviations are silently expanded.

<sup>14</sup> Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, no. 899. This text, and other *relaciones* connected with St Alban's College, have been edited in Berta Cano Echevarría and Ana Sáez-Hidalgo eds., *The Fruits of Exile: Emblems and Pamphlets from the English College at Valladolid* (Valladolid-London: Royal English College-Maggs Bros., 2009).

<sup>15</sup> Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, no. 741.

<sup>16</sup> The text had two editions in 1596: in Zaragoza, by Lorenço de Robles [Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, no. 277], and in Madrid by Pedro de Madrigal [Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, no. 276], who had also printed Persons' *Relacion de algunos martyrios*.



like Diego Yepes' *Historia particular de la persecución de Inglaterra, y de los martirios más insignes que en ella ha habido desde el año del señor de 1570*,<sup>17</sup> a highly popular narrative of persecution and martyrdom.<sup>18</sup>

Martyrdom, gruesomely depicted, was foregrounded in many of these early *relaciones* for a practical reason, not only homeward, but also outward. As Persons recognised at once, scenes of Catholics in the torturing clutches of Protestant heretics opened Spanish purse strings.<sup>19</sup> More to our purposes presently, however, is another theme, one which becomes increasingly prominent over time in recusant texts disseminated in Spain: the importance of arming the righteous not only with courage for their mission, but also with knowledge and the honed ability to wield it in dispute. Thus, similar discussions or arguments against Protestant beliefs are often found in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century Spanish texts, not only in theological treatises, but also in recusant *relaciones*, where the conversion of heretics was portrayed as a product of controversies and disputations successfully won in a variety of venues by well-trained

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<sup>17</sup> (Madrid, 1599).

<sup>18</sup> On the *relaciones* on England and the English, see Henry Ettinghausen, “Muy grandes herejes”: los ingleses e Inglaterra en las relaciones españolas de los siglos XVI y XVII in *Representaciones de la alteridad, ideológica, religiosa, humana y espacial en las relaciones de sucesos, publicadas en España, Italia y Francia en los siglos XVI-XVIII*, ed. by Patrick Bégrand (Besançon: Presses Universitaires de Franche-Comté, 2009), pp. 159–71. The success of Yepes' *Historia Particular* (Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, no. 284) seems to have been assimilated to another contemporary work on the English religious situation, Pedro de Ribadeneira's *Historia del cisma de Inglaterra* (1588), according to José Manuel Prieto Bernabé, who has found both works referred to as *Historia de Inglaterra* in early modern inventories. See M. Prieto Bernabé, “‘Recibida y admitida de todos [...]’: la lectura de la historia en la sociedad madrileña del Siglo de Oro”, *Hispania: Revista española de historia*, 65 (2005), 877–938, at 892. See below, footnote 51.

<sup>19</sup> Donations were essential for the existence of the colleges. Before the English mission started in Spain, Persons himself had already used his *De persecutione anglicana* (1581) to raise money for the Rheims College (T. M. McCoog, ‘The Flower of Oxford: The Role of Edmund Campion in Early Recusant Polemics’, *Sixteenth Century Journal*, 24 (1993), 908–09). Possibly this experience prompted him to get a license to beg for alms since the foundation of St Alban's College: ‘Real Provision para que se pueda pedir limosnas para el sustento de los Clerigos y Estudiantes Ingleses residentes en la Ciudad to Valladolid’, 22 July 1589, St Alban's College Archive [hereafter ACSA], Series II, book 1, no. 2. See below, footnotes 35 and 36.

Catholics.<sup>20</sup> Actually, the depiction of Catholics who, under arrest, had to answer interrogators or refute their religious adversaries became quite common in this type of text. In his *Relacion de algunos martyrios*, Persons included a 1588 letter-report written by an unidentified priest in London on the repression of Catholics following the defeat of the Spanish Armada. After the so-called 'bloody questions' in the interrogation,<sup>21</sup> the anonymous author comments on other questions asked of the Catholic prisoners:

Preguntauan [los herejes] alguna vez a algunos legos, que no auian estudiado, cosas de Teología, pero ellos aunque podían responder a las necedades de los hereges, yuan con este auiso y recato, de escusarse en las disputas, diziendo que sus Sacerdotes responderian por ellos.

[[Heretics] sometimes interrogated some laymen who had not studied Theology. These, though capable of answering the heretics' nonsense, were advised and warned [by other Catholics] to excuse themselves in these disputes, saying that their priests would answer for them].<sup>22</sup>

Clearly, Persons' interest in this report is grounded in a perception that the letter provides argument to support the English colleges equipping priests in Spain to assist at such

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<sup>20</sup> See, for instance, Juan de Armenta's *Relacion sumaria, de la insigne conversion de treynta y seys cossarios [sic], Ingleses de nacion, y de profession hereges* (Cádiz: n. p., 1616) [Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, no. 505], in which he and the 'English theologian' Francis Forcer converted 36 privateers resulting from a series of theological disputations.

<sup>21</sup> Although the 'bloody questions' were constantly mentioned for propaganda purposes both in Protestant and Catholic accounts, I will not be dealing on them separately in my essay. On the use of these questions in propaganda, see Patrick McGrath, 'The Bloody Questions Reconsidered', *Recusant History*, 20 (1991), 305–19.

<sup>22</sup> Persons, *Relacion de algunos martirios*, fol. 12r. Similarly, Creswell emphasises the notion of the professional training in theology in seminaries abroad in his *Historia de la vida y martyrio*, fol. 39r.

moments at home.<sup>23</sup> The attempt in the letter-report to distinguish between the differing capacities for theological disputation of laymen and priests is not intended to disparage the former. It should rather be read as a means of presenting the priests as the most qualified persons for such theological debates. It is precisely this particular professional, even technical, profile for which the English students were trained in the seminaries of the English Mission in the Continent. There disputation or controversy was an integral part of the curriculum. As Claudio Acquaviva put it, ‘por esta via [the lessons of conscience and controversy] se hazen mejores obreros que no con estudiar la scholastica’, [By these means [the lessons of conscience and controversy], better workers are brought up than by the study of Scholastic theology].<sup>24</sup>

This is the case of St Alban’s College in Valladolid. Since its early years, the regime set up for the students’ education established that, although the English collegians took some of their courses at St Ambrose (a well-established and reputed Jesuit centre in the city), the training that was more specifically related to their mission, that is, the exercises in controversies, was to be carried out in their own college.<sup>25</sup> During the 1590s, it became clearer that publicising this particular form of priestly training and underlining its value as weapon in the war against heretics were powerful arguments for the value, and hence the existence and support of the colleges. The *relacion* format, familiar as it was to Spanish readers, was frequently used as a vehicle to carry this message. Examples abound of

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<sup>23</sup> On the practice of disputation in England, see Joshua Rodda, *Public Religious Disputation in England, 1558–1626* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014). For its connection with pamphlets, see Peter Lake, *Bad Queen Bess?: Libels, Secret Histories, and the Politics of Publicity in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth I* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2015).

<sup>24</sup> ACSA, ‘Instrucciones del P. General S. J. (Claudius) para el Seminario Ingles de Valladolid’, 18 May 1606, Series II, book 2, no. 17–18.

<sup>25</sup> On St Alban’s College and its relation to St Ambrose, see Javier Burrieza Sánchez, *Valladolid, tierras y caminos de jesuitas: presencia de la Compañía de Jesús en la provincia de Valladolid, 1545–1767* (Valladolid: Diputación de Valladolid, 2007), 209ff.; pp. 110–11.

*relaciones* put to this purpose. In the *relacion* published on the occasion of the first visit of a Spanish monarch to the Valladolid Seminary in 1592, just three years after its foundation, the English exiles, in an attempt to show their zeal in their missionary training, emphasised that:

Una vez cada semana [...] se hallan todos por dos horas a vnas disputas, o conclusiones de controuersias contra los hereges, principalmente contra los que aora ay en Inglaterra, y lo mismo hazen el Domingo a la mañana por hora y media. De suerte, que en espacio de vn año se passen todas estas controuersias.

[Once a week [...] all meet and hold disputations for two hours on controversies against heretics, especially those that are found in England: they do the same on Sundays for an hour and a half, so that throughout the year they practise all these controversies].<sup>26</sup>

The documentary evidence shows the growing prominence of this aspect of their education over time at Valladolid, particularly among the so-called ‘theologians’, whose schedule was detailed in the *Diario de Costumbres*:

Oyen nuestros theologos tres licciones, una de Controuersias en casa, y dos de Escolastico en S. Ambrosio. La liccion de controuersias sera en hibierno [*sic*] de siete y quarto à ocho, y despues de Pascua de Resurreccion de seis y quarto à siete.

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<sup>26</sup>*Relacion de vn sacerdote Ingles*, under the section ‘Orden, y distribucion del tiempo de los alumnos del Colegio Ingles’ and the subsection ‘De otras algunas cosas que hazen en algunos dias de la semana, mes, y año’ (fol. 25v). English translation slightly revised from Williams (*St Alban’s College*, p. 237). The exercises in controversy were probably based on Bellarmine’s *Disputationes de Controversiis christianae fidei*.

[Our theologians have three lessons, one of controversy at home and two of Scholastic theology at St. Ambrose. The controversy lesson will take place from 7:15 until 8 during the winter, and after Easter from 6:15 till 7].<sup>27</sup>

The increasing frequency of controversy lessons, from a weekly to a daily dose, reflects the original purpose of the colleges: to improve the English seminarians' expertise in the use of arguments intended first, to face the interrogations and disputations with their religious adversaries, and second, to persuade for conversion purposes. Recognition grew within these seminaries that this part of their curriculum could be advertised as a badge of distinction for the colleges of the English mission, and thus be particularly helpful when it came to securing and defending their activities on a foreign soil to political and financial benefactors like Philip II, as we have just seen, as well as religious authorities. As a result, the students' ability in controversy was constantly foregrounded at any suitable occasion for ecclesiastical dignitaries. The Archbishop of Compostela visited the college 'to show his benevolence towards it', and the grateful students received him:

with various literary efforts and greeted him on his entry into the building with a speech composed in Latin. Then, during the meal, they described the dangers and hardships of their journey. After supper, drawing on various appropriate themes

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<sup>27</sup> ACSA, 'Orden de los estudios de Theologia deste Colegio, segun el estilo y costumbres antiguas que en el ha audio', Series II, book 16, fol. 105r.

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from Scripture, they defended theses from arts and controversies of sacred scholastic theology against the heretics.<sup>28</sup>

As with the king, here the English seminarians were not only welcoming the Archbishop, but also showing him the fruits of their education in humanities (through their mastery of Latin, for instance), and in theology, by their prowess in defending orthodoxy in controversies. They were showing, as it were, the good results of their training, a matter that is constantly repeated in Spanish recusant texts. It is noteworthy also that some parts of the students' presentations on important occasions such as this included original poems, an element that would recur influentially in later publications in different formats.<sup>29</sup>

Tellingly, these 'fruits' are an aspect that receives greater attention in the texts published in Spain in Spanish and addressed to Spanish consumers of *relaciones* rather than in those published for English readers: in the abovementioned 1592 *Relacion de vn sacerdote Ingles*, the description of the time spent learning controversy at St Alban's college only appears in the Spanish, but not in the English version of the royal visit. Also, when the students were asked 'how they knew of this seminarie here in Spaine, and whereby principallie they weare moved to come hither, rather then to other places', the English text indicates that, 'divers of them haue answered me, that the late proclamation set out by the

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<sup>28</sup> John Blackfan, *The Blackfan Annals*, ed. by Peter Harris (Valladolid-London: The Royal English College-Maggs Bros., 2008), p. 213.

<sup>29</sup> Poetic texts were used in several royal visits to St Alban's College. See Cano and Sáez-Hidalgo, *The Fruits of Exile*. For the connection of Catholic controversy and literary texts in England, see Alison Shell, *Catholicism, Controversy and the English Literary Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Ana Sáez Hidalgo. "English recusant controversy in Spanish print culture: dissemination, popularization, fictionalization." In *Forming Catholic Communities: Irish, Scots and English College Networks in Europe, 1564-1918*, edited by Liam Chambers and Thomas O'Connor. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2018: 201-31.

Queene in Nouember last [1591], against this Seminarie, did first of all geue them notice thereof, as also appetite to see the place'.<sup>30</sup>

Certainly, many recusant texts delighted in pointing out how Elizabeth miscalculated the impact of the 1591 royal proclamation which eventually boosted rather than hindered the English mission, as we will see later. However, the Spanish translation of this passage, instead of dwelling on that aspect, suggests additional reasons for the English recusants' presence in Spain 'juntamente vn desseo muy grande de venir a biuir, y criarse en el, por estar en Reyno tan Catolico, y donde tanto florece la virtud, religion, y buenas letras', [As well as a major wish to come to live and be brought up in it [Spain], in order to be in such a Catholic kingdom, where virtue, religion and good letters flourish so much].<sup>31</sup>

The triad of virtue, religious zeal, and learning is actually quite frequent both in the poetry used for these events and the *relaciones* that narrate them, often combining the power of letters and religion with warlike symbolism.<sup>32</sup> This connects two essential aspects for St Alban's: the seminarians as members of the militant church in their fight against heresy, and the intellectual education required for it. Both aspects, with undeniable Jesuit resonance, went hand in hand in recusant texts published in Spain. In a *relación* written on the occasion of a second royal visit to St Alban's in 1600, the first of the appendices is 'an advertisement to the Catholikes of England, of the present state of their children brought up

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<sup>30</sup> *A relation of the King of Spaines receiving in Valliodolid, and in the English Colledge of the same towne, in August last part of this yere. 1592* ([Antwerp]: n. p., 1592), p. 13. On the different versions of these *relaciones*, see their edition in Cano Echevarría and Sáez-Hidalgo, *The Fruits of Exile*; also, Berta Cano, Ana Sáez-Hidalgo, Glyn Redworth and M. Hutchings, "'Comfort without offence?' The Performance and Transmission of Exile Literature at the English College, Valladolid, 1592–1600," *Renaissance and Reformation*, 31 (2008), 31–67.

<sup>31</sup> *Relacion de vn sacerdote Ingles*, fols. 12r–13v.

<sup>32</sup> See, for instance, the second hieroglyph in the 1592 *relación*, where Castile is presented as the force of 'Of learning, vertue, and of sacred zeale' that restrains 'savage people', *A relation of the King of Spaines receiving in Valliodolid*, p. 54.

in this Colledge of Valladolid and of the comfort they may worthely expect of them heer-after'. In it, these seminaries are described as the places where:

being brought vp trayned and exercised in vertue and learning (the armes where with they must fight against heresie) they [the seminarians] become as valiant Capitaines in this spiritual warfare of the Church, as were Cyrus, Hannibal, Alexander, Augustus Caesar, and Daudid in their temporal warres, for that they began to exercise themselves in them betimes (as their histories reporte) what may wee then hope for, but a short and happie end of this combate sithence they go to it, with the skil, courage, and fortitude that becometh the soldiours of Christ, as there imperisonment, their disputations with the heretikes, their torments, and deaths do testifie.<sup>33</sup>

Indeed, presenting their children in the role of soldiers of Christ carrying out a spiritual fight against heresy comparable to the military actions of historic model warriors would comfort recusant parents separated from their children during their training period in the Spanish seminaries or elsewhere in the Continent. But the author adds a new source of comfort:

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<sup>33</sup> I cite from the English version of the *relación*, translated by Francis Rivers: *A Relation of the Solemnitie wherewith the Catholike Princes K. Philip III and Quene Margaret were receyved in the English Colledge of Valladolid the 22. of August. 1600* ([Antwerp]: [A. Coninx], 1601), pp. 69–70. The original Spanish text from which this was translated is Antonio Ortiz's *Relacion de la venida de los Reyes Catholicos al Collegio Ingles de Valladolid, en el mes de Agosto. Año de 1600* (Madrid: n. p., 1600). Unlike the 1592 *relación*, this translation is quite literal and does not omit passages.



They profit notably in all kynde of studyes, specially in philosophy, divinitie, and controverses against hereses, wherein they defend their conclusions and publique acts with so great satisfaction and approbation of the whole universitie, as they are loved and esteemed not only in this citie, but of the grave and learned persons of al these kingdomes, ecclesiasticall, and temporal, and divers of them have adopted from one, some moe [*sic*] of these students for their childeren, providing them of maintenance and apparel, and comforting them with gifts and lettrrs [*sic*], and visiting them in person as they were their owne children.<sup>34</sup>

The colleges' financial straits were frequently addressed in campaigns for alms which, as we can see, were carried out not only through martyrdom accounts, but also by publicising the intellectual achievements of the students, whether in the public defence of their theses, at academic events, staged visits by influential dignitaries, or increasingly through *relaciones*, all with the goal of the conversion of England in mind.<sup>35</sup> Although the focus on education in controversy in English seminaries in Spain and its usage for propaganda purposes in Spanish recusant written culture have received scant attention, the documentary evidence shows its relevance in the campaigns both to attract benefactors (some of whom sponsored individual students) and to sway public opinion.<sup>36</sup> This shows

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<sup>34</sup> Rivers, *A Relation of the Solemnitie*, pp. 66–67. The author is making an implicit criticism to the exclusion of Catholics from English universities.

<sup>35</sup> Several documents related to the collection of alms are extant in St Alban's College Archive, including a petition, ACSA, 'Carta del Padre Personio para el Rey D. Phelipe 2º pidiendole mande pedir socorros de limosna para este y otros seminarios Yngleses', n. d., Series II, book 2, no. 10, and a list of the due alms, 'Memoria de las limosnas del Seminario Ingles de Valladolid que le deuen al fin deste año de 1606'; ACSA, Series II, book 2, no. 20–21. See above, footnote 20.

<sup>36</sup> See the List of all the Lords that have students of this English College as their sons [Lista de los Señores que tienen Alumnos por hijos en este Colegio Ingles], SAC Series II, book 2, no. 3, published by Edwin Henson, ed.

that the intellectual training, and training in controversy in particular, was essential for the spiritual, professional, and economic lives of these institutions.

### *Reading and Making Books*

The focus on controversy was reflected not only in the manner in which this type of controversy was presented in Spanish written culture, but also, tellingly, in the holdings of the libraries and archives of the English colleges in Spain. Books, so essential for Counter-Reformation culture generally, as was constantly stated in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, were particularly so for the purposes of the English mission. The central role of controversy in the education of English seminarians in exile required the use of books, both for students and professors. The holdings of the library of St Alban's seem to confirm the centrality of controversy in college formation: of a total of about 10,000 books currently in the college library, about ten per cent are titles on controversy.<sup>37</sup> These include Continental polemicists such as Francis Coster, Martin Cromer, Jean Hessels, or Robert Bellarmine, copies of whose *Disputationes* show signs of frequent use. Notably, the library also had several polemical works by English controversialists Edmund Campion, Cardinals

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*Registers of the English College at Valladolid, 1589–1872*, CRS 30 (London: Catholic Record Society, 1930), p. xi.

<sup>37</sup> Of the three English colleges founded in Spain, St Alban's is the only one whose library has remained untouched by the diverse waves of confiscation of monastic property (*desamortización*), or major dissemination, or selling of its holdings (as was the case of St Gregory's), which makes it possible to reconstruct the profile of the collection throughout this period. On the Valladolid college library, see Michael E. Williams, 'The Library of St. Alban's English College Valladolid: Censorship and Acquisitions', *Recusant History*, 26 (2002), 132–42; Ana Sáez-Hidalgo, 'St Alban's English College, Valladolid: Enclave or Doorway to the Reception of English Books in Spain?', *South Atlantic Review*, 79 (2014), 105–23.

Ana Sáez Hidalgo. "English recusant controversy in Spanish print culture: dissemination, popularization, fictionalization." In *Forming Catholic Communities: Irish, Scots and English College Networks in Europe, 1564-1918*, edited by Liam Chambers and Thomas O'Connor. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2018: 201-31.

Fisher and Allen, Thomas Stapleton, Gregory Martin, Joseph Creswell, and Robert Persons himself.<sup>38</sup>

Obtaining English works, and ensuring a sufficient supply, was a formidable challenge facing recusants abroad. This was especially true in Spain where the importation of printed matter related to Protestant polemic, knowledge of which was essential to prepare effective disputation, was banned. In view of the importance of the English seminarians' training in disputation, the Spanish Inquisition granted them unique permission to 'read all kinds of English controversies' in the colleges, an exceptional privilege in Spain, where foreign books were regarded with deep suspicion by the Holy Office.<sup>39</sup> Besides allowing the importation of English Catholic texts of controversy, this licence may also have opened the door to some Anglican texts too, including Camden's *Annales* which, though not religious, was nevertheless essential for the political side of controversy.

Yet while such measures might suffice for instruction in the colleges, the larger mission of the recusants, to restore Catholicism in England, necessitated the more ambitious sort of financial and public support described above. Creswell recognised early that production and dissemination of books in significant numbers was essential to make the broad English case to Spanish readers. The printing press established at the English college in St Omer was a crucial, but costly, cog in the wheel. Creswell opened his famous appeal for funding for St Omer's printing press to Philip III, saying:

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<sup>38</sup> The core of Persons' own controversial writings are represented in the library; none of these copies, however, belonged to the founder of the College.

<sup>39</sup> 3 September 1611, ACSA, Series II, book 2, no. 39. A specific permission was also granted for entry of copies of Persons' *Responsio contra edicta Reginae Angliae*, ACSA, Series II, book 2, no. 42.

Señor. Es cosa sabida que uno de los medios mas eficaces que el demonio hallo para peruertir la Alemaña, Inglaterra y las demas Provincias que se han inficionado con heregias, fue, sembrar en ellas libros malos y llenos de errores.

Y al contrario, se prueba por esperiencia, que no ay ni a abido medio mas eficaz para conservar las mismas Provincias de total perdicion y ruina que sembrando continuamente en ellas libros buenos y catholicos: vnos que tratan de devocion – para conseruar la virtud en los bien intencionados; y otros en que se descubren los artificios de los hereges, para desengañar y reduzir los que van errados.

[Lord, it is known that one of the most efficient means found by the devil to pervert Germany, England and other provinces that have become infected with heresy was to cover them with bad books full of errors. By contrast, experience has proved that there isn't nor has been a most efficient way to save these same provinces from a complete downfall and ruin than to cover them constantly with good and Catholic books: some dealing with devotion to preserve virtue in those of good will; and some others which discover the heretics' tricks, so that those who are in error will stop being deluded [i.e., controversy books]].<sup>40</sup>

This was not merely a rhetorical way of persuading the King of the strategic value of financing the recusant printing press, however. Importantly for present purposes, it is noteworthy that Creswell was putting forward the crucial role of the controversy book for

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<sup>40</sup>Madrid, Real Biblioteca, *Memorial de Joseph Cresuelo a S. M. para la provisión de lisbros católicos*, 10 August 1617, II/2225 # 26. The text has been edited by Fernando Bouza in an article discussing Creswell's petition and the relevance of the Anglo-Spanish relations in the printing dissemination of recusant books in England: 'Contrarreforma y tipografía ¿Nada más que rosarios en sus manos?', *Cuadernos de historia moderna*, 16 (1995), 73–88.

the English mission. He was not alone in this. Many other contemporary authors coincided in presenting this ‘battle of the books’ as one of the front lines of the religious confrontation. Yepes, in his history of English Catholicism for Spanish readers, the *Historia Particular de la Persecución de Inglaterra*, located some texts at the centre of this confrontation, particularly the Anglican translations of the Bible and John Jewel’s *Apology*, which in his view stirred the Catholics to write in order to refute the published mistakes, and thus ‘la presuntuosa ostentación de los hereges causó la conversión de muchos’ [the heretics’ vain boasting brought about the conversion of many].<sup>41</sup> Yepes went as far as to affirm that the success of these first Catholic controversy books was what prompted Allen to found the English mission.<sup>42</sup> Irrespective of the questionable historical accuracy of this assertion, this evinces how Yepes contributed to a print culture with both controversy and the practice of disputation as the main means used by the English mission for conversion, a notion that pervades books 1–3 of his *Historia Particular*, before focusing on other aspects of the persecution.

While Yepes represented the dissemination of the value of controversy in the vernacular, and Stapleton’s *Antidota apostolica contra nostri temporis haereses* (1595) showed its more professional usage, the beginning of that decade saw an even more crucial publication.<sup>43</sup> The year 1592 marked what Freddy Cristóbal Domínguez has called ‘the consummation of a (textual) relationship’ between Spain and the English recusants as a

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<sup>41</sup> Yepes, *Historia Particular de la Persecución de Inglaterra* (book 1, ch. X, 16) cited in Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, no. 284.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, (book 1, ch. XI).

<sup>43</sup> Stapleton became a champion of controversy for Spanish readers, particularly in religious communities whose libraries still have numerous copies of his *Antidota*, as well as some of his earlier works like *Principiorum fidei doctrinalium demonstratio methodica per controuersias septem* (1578); *Promptuarium catholicum, ad instructionem concionatorum contra haereticos nostri temporis* (1591). For a survey of these and other texts in Spanish libraries, I have used the online Catálogo Colectivo del Patrimonio Bibliográfico español (<http://ccpb.opac.mcu.es/cgi-brs/CCPB/abnetopac>; [accessed August 2017]).

result of Philip II's support of the publication of Persons' *Elizabethae Angliae Reginae haeresim caluinianam propugnantis saeuissimum in catholicos sui regni edictum*, [...] *cum responsione* (1592), popularly known as 'Philopater'.<sup>44</sup> Elizabeth's 1591 proclamation against the English mission and attack on Philip's protection of its colleges prompted an immediate response, widely disseminated in print in 1592.<sup>45</sup> The 'Philopater' was probably the most widely disseminated of these polemics all over Europe, and in Spain too, where the large number of extant copies suggests the success of the campaign.<sup>46</sup> Another work published in 1592 that has rarely been connected with this campaign is the *Relation of the King of Spaines receiving in Valliodolid*, the pamphlet occasioned by Philip's visit to St Alban's.<sup>47</sup> This text is, however, highly relevant in the context of this campaign, not only because it was intended to publicise the fruits of the English college and the monarch's support, but also because it provides some interesting information on the dissemination of recusant print culture, presenting the publication of recusant texts in Spain as the result of neatly-designed propaganda.<sup>48</sup> The *relación* was first published in English, but the author expresses his wish that

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<sup>44</sup> Freddy Cristóbal Domínguez, "We Must Fight with Paper and Pens": Spanish Elizabethan Polemics 1585–1598' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Princeton University, 2011), p. 204.

<sup>45</sup> See Houlston, *Catholic Resistance in Elizabethan England*, 51ff. Ernest A. Strathmann, 'Raleigh and the Catholic Polemists,' *Huntington Library Quarterly* 8.4 (1945), 337–58. Stapleton's *Apologia pro Rege Catholico Philipo II* evinces the combination of the political and the religious aspects involved in the confrontation.

<sup>46</sup> Surprisingly, the 'Philopater' was only translated into French and German, not into Spanish (Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, nos. 885–92), which probably indicates that it must have been disseminated mostly among religious communities.

<sup>47</sup> Houlston, though connecting the 1592 *Relation* with the reaction to the 1591 Proclamation, has focused on Persons' discourse of Providence to account for the foundation of St Alban's (*Catholic Resistance*, 67ff.).

<sup>48</sup> On the propaganda intended with this and other *relaciones*, see Cano and Sáez-Hidalgo, 'Comfort without Offence', 31, 31–67.

the superiours of this Colledge [will] put the whole [account] in printe or at least wise the chief points thereof, with a larger and more particular narration of all in the Spanish tongue then this is, which no doubt will be verie grateful vnto this nation, for that thereby they shall not onelie see, what passed in this acte of the Kings coming hither, but also further vnderstand manie things of the present state of Ingland, which they desyre to do, as hath appeared by their greedie acceptaunce of diuers bookes published in this language of late yeares, touching the affaires and present persecution of Ingland, especiallie the translation of Doctor Sanders booke, *de Schismate Anglicano*, and of the late booke of *Andreas Philopater* in answeare to the proclamation of Nouember last against this King by name, and Catholique English Preestes, and a third booke writen in Spanish of the particular martyrdomes of the Priestes and other Catholiques put to death theis later yeares and monethes, haue greatelie informed this nation, and put them in extreme wonder of our affaires, and made our Catholique cause more famous throughout the world then euer it was since the primatiue Church, yf then it weare equal to that it is nowe.<sup>49</sup>

Thus, the Spanish translation of this pamphlet, also published in 1592 as *Relacion de un sacerdote ingles*, was envisaged as part of the agenda for the dissemination of recusant print culture in Spain: the direct translation from English originals (including Pedro de Ribadeneira's rendering of Sander's history of the schism),<sup>50</sup> the Latin texts of controversy

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<sup>49</sup> *A relation of the King of Spaines receiving in Valliodolid*, pp. 57–58.

<sup>50</sup> Ribadeneira, *Historia eclesiastica del cisma de Inglaterra* (1588), translated from Nicholas Sanders' *De origine ac progressu schismatis Anglicani* (1585) (Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, nos. 993–1009). Ribadeneira's work reached an immediate

(Persons' 'Philopater'), and the adaptation of the *relaciones* format (Person's compilation of the *Relacion de algunos martyrios*). One might think that the description of the 'greedie acceptaunce' of these texts among Spanish readers could be slightly exaggerated in the interest of the propaganda campaign. However, there is no question that recusant texts published in Spain were not only intended for the domestic mission, but also addressed at a Spanish readership. Actually, the Spanish book market saw a striking increase in the number of publications of this type, part of the effort to make the English recusant cause widely known beyond the colleges, both as a religious and a political mission connected with the interests of the monarch.<sup>51</sup>

### *Making Their Own*

For English recusants in Spain, neither the development of the press at St Omer, nor the unusual openness of the Inquisition to the importation of some books by the colleges alone served to facilitate the mission. The year 1592 saw yet another event of great relevance both for the English mission and for the dissemination of recusant culture in Spain, as well as for the influence of both on subsequent Spanish literary culture. This was the foundation of St Gregory's college in Seville.<sup>52</sup> Although Persons had already started to put together a

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popularity, with ten editions in six years; its success would even resonate in literary texts like Calderón's *La Cisma de Inglaterra* (n. p., 1627). See above, footnote 18.

<sup>51</sup> Contemporary and later inventories of book collections confirm this popularity: book owners like Philip II, Philip IV, or Juan de Ribera, to name a few, had among their books texts on English religious persecution and works by recusants. Gregorio de Andrés, *Documentos para la historia del monasterio de San Lorenzo el Real de El Escorial*, 7 (Madrid: Imp. Sáez, 1964); Fernando Bouza, *El libro y el cetro: la biblioteca de Felipe IV en la Torre Alta del Alcázar de Madrid* (Salamanca: Instituto de Historia del Libro y de la Lectura, 2005); M. N. Sorní, 'La cultura del Patriarca Juan de Ribera a través de su biblioteca', *Studia philologica valentina*, 15 (2013), 221–43.

<sup>52</sup> On the foundation and the early years of the St Gregory's College, see T. M. McCoog, 'Fostering Harmony and Respect: English Jesuits in Seville, 1592–1605', in *And Touching Our Society': Fashioning Jesuit Identity in Elizabethan England* (Toronto: PIMS, 2013), pp. 261–81.



small community of priests there in 1591, it would not be until December 1592 that the Seville seminary was functioning, as reported in his *Nevves from Spayne and Holland*.<sup>53</sup> The first events staged at the Seville college included

certanie feastes and excercises of learning vvhich these yong men made [...] before, Don Rodrigo de Castro, the Cardinal & Archbishop of that citie [...] as also before the vvhole vniuersity and cleargie of Siuil, and before the Gouvernour and noble men of the same.<sup>54</sup>

As in St Albans, these were demonstrations of students' ability in disputation and were intended to elicit a positive reception of the seminary in the city as well as to secure funding. In these exercises, as in many other aspects, the Seville college followed the pattern already started in Valladolid, a good instance being the public celebration on St Thomas Beckett's Day (29 December), with sermons and poems in several languages.<sup>55</sup>

The seat for the second English college in Spain was chosen for a variety of reasons, ranging from its location and weather and its historical connections with the English community to its commercial strength (based on the American trade), and the large number of noble families that were identified as possible benefactors. From the point of view of assessing the impact of English recusant writing on the literary life of Spain, however, the crucial advantage offered by Seville was the fact that, at the end of the

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<sup>53</sup> Robert Persons, *Nevves from Spayne and Holland conteyning. An information of Inglish affayres in Spayne vvith a conference made thereuppon in Amsterdame of Holland* ([Antwerp: A. Conincx], 1593), fol. 3ff. See Murphy, *St Gregory's College*, pp. 5–7.

<sup>54</sup> Persons, *Nevves from Spayne and Holland*, fol. 4r.

<sup>55</sup> For previous instances of similar celebrations, see Cano and Sáez-Hidalgo, 'Comfort without Offence', 31–67.

sixteenth century, it was one of the most flourishing printing centres in the country.<sup>56</sup> And it was precisely this particular combination of circumstances in the Andalusian city at the turn of the century that contributed to the expansion of two closely related news publishing genres, the already mentioned *relaciones* and a relative newcomer, the ‘avisos’.<sup>57</sup>

As Jean-Pierre Étienvre has cogently argued, the *avisos*, a type of news directly related to the Italian ‘avvisi’, were published in folio size, in most cases consisting of a pair of conjoint leaves (or bifolium), and more rarely four of them (or quadrifolium), specifying the dates of the events referred to in them, which were normally itemised, every one as an individual ‘aviso’. They usually mentioned the source of the published information in order to demonstrate their truthfulness.<sup>58</sup> In contrast to the *relaciones*, the *avisos* were mostly anonymous,<sup>59</sup> but both genres coincide in the tendency to use mostly prose, and also in their large-scale dissemination, which in the case of the *avisos* in particular was facilitated

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<sup>56</sup> The printing press in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Seville has been given a lot of very insightful scholarly attention; see, for instance, Carlos Alberto González Sánchez and Natalia Maillard Álvarez, *Orbe tipográfico: el mercado del libro en la Sevilla de la segunda mitad del siglo XVI* (Gijón: Trea, 2003); Aurora Domínguez Guzmán, *La imprenta en Sevilla en el siglo XVII: catálogo y análisis de su producción, 1601–1650* (Seville: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Sevilla, 1992); M. Carmen Álvarez Márquez, *La impresión y el comercio de libros en Sevilla s. XVI* (Seville: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Sevilla, 2007).

<sup>57</sup> Several catalogues and studies of the Seville *relaciones* offer a panorama of the complexities of this genre: William J. Cameron, *A Bibliography in Short-Title Catalog Form of Relaciones sueltas in Folio Format, Printed in Sevilla 1517–1620* (Ontario: University of Western Ontario Press, 1988). Aurora Domínguez Guzmán, *De libros, lecturas y fiestas en la Sevilla áurea* (Seville: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Sevilla, 2012).

<sup>58</sup> Jean-Pierre Étienvre, ‘Entre relación y carta: los avisos’, in *Las relaciones de sucesos en España: 1500–1750*, ed. by Henry Ettinghausen et al. (Alcalá: Servicio de Publicaciones, 1996), p. 116. Although Étienvre refers to the *avisos* published in Madrid in early seventeenth century, these features are common in the Seville *avisos* as well. On the mention of sources for verisimilitude, see F. Bouza, *Corre manuscrito: una historia cultural del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Marcial Pons, 2001), p. 143.

<sup>59</sup> Jaime Pereda Martín has pointed out that this anonymity distinguishes this genre from letters often used as source material for *avisos*: ‘Noticia atrasada, pan duro: avisos manuscritos en tiempo de Felipe II’, in *Testigo del tiempo, memoria del universo: cultura escrita y sociedad en el mundo ibérico (siglos XV–XVIII)*, ed. by M. F. Fernández, C. A. González, N. Maillard (Barcelona: Rubeo, 2009), pp. 603–21.

by their relatively low cost.<sup>60</sup> In combination, these characteristics made the *avisos* one of the most popular printed genres of the period. As with the *relaciones*, the *avisos* overlapped with a variety of genres.<sup>61</sup>

Very soon after the establishment of the college of St. Gregory in Seville in 1592, the English recusants, who, as shown above, had from 1589 used *relaciones* to promote their mission among Spanish readers, took advantage of the local printing infrastructure. They also resorted to a variety of popular editorial genres in order to continue informing Spaniards and other foreigners about the persecutions in England, the purpose of their mission, and the importance of the colleges in Spain. Martin Murphy has listed about fifty Andalusian printed texts related to English Catholic affairs between 1590 and 1670, some of them *avisos*, others *relaciones*, and also a number of letters.<sup>62</sup> Even though not all these Seville prints were commissioned by St Gregory's college, their sources were frequently the same manuscript texts used to transmit information through recusant networks. This is the case of the first *aviso* printed in Seville: *Nuevos avisos de Inglaterra, de diez y seys del mes de enero, de este año de mil, y quinientos y nouenta y nueue, en los quales se da quenta de muchas particularidades de cosas de guerra, y de sucessos, y persecuciones de los Catholicos, que ay presos, y de otras muchas cosas dignas de saberse* (1599), which, as Allison and Rogers have pointed out, is based on reports sent from England to the college.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> *Avisos* are a good instance of low-cost printing, perceptible in the poor quality of paper and the sparse proofreading resulting from a hasty process.

<sup>61</sup> Soon 'relaciones de avisos' (summaries of news from all over Europe) started to be published, as well as *relaciones* printed in *aviso* format (bifolia or quadrifolia). Étienvre, 'Entre relación y carta', p. 120.

<sup>62</sup> Murphy, *St Gregory's College*, pp. 115–122. From this list of Seville publications, twenty-one were issued before 1623.

<sup>63</sup> Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, no. 1063. Some of these sources are still identifiable, as the manuscript originals are extant in the archives of the English Colleges.

The importance of these *Nuevos avisos de Inglaterra* lies not only in their Seville origin and their usage of first-hand recusant sources, but also in the printer himself, Rodrigo de Cabrera. He is considered the first professional editor of the genre, due to his specialisation in commercially-produced news, often considered a form of ‘pre-journalism’.<sup>64</sup> On the one hand, Cabrera managed to secure his sources of information for the regular publication of news. On the other hand, he created ‘marketing techniques’ for selling the *avisos*. For instance he announced news that would appear in subsequent instalments, thus ensuring future readers, and he also created a wide readership through cheap, quasi-ephemeral news reports. Cabrera’s publication of the *Nuevos avisos de Inglaterra* clearly shows the professional’s selection of a topic of broad Spanish interest, namely the situation of English recusants residing in seminaries established on Spanish soil. In fact, although Cabrera printed only this piece on recusants, the popular format of the *avisos* would become a common way of bringing news on martyrdom and persecution in England, both to Seville and elsewhere. It is precisely in the popular character of the *avisos* that one sees their importance for the dissemination of recusant literature.

In parallel to this process, in the last decades of the century, two developments of a different kind are noticeable in these typographic genres of wide-dissemination. First, although initially the *relaciones* were popular because they purported to report actual events and official pronouncements, at the turn of the century non-realistic elements,

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<sup>64</sup> Aurora Domínguez Guzmán, ‘El pre-periodismo en España a finales del Quinientos: las relaciones de sucesos impresas por Rodrigo de Cabrera’, in *Homenaje al profesor Klaus Wagner: geh hin und lerne*, ed. by P. Bolaños Donoso, Aurora Domínguez Guzmán, M. de los Reyes Peña, 2 vols (Seville: Secretariado de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Sevilla, 2007), I, 165–92.

Ana Sáez Hidalgo. “English recusant controversy in Spanish print culture: dissemination, popularization, fictionalization.” In *Forming Catholic Communities: Irish, Scots and English College Networks in Europe, 1564-1918*, edited by Liam Chambers and Thomas O’Connor. Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2018: 201-31.

ranging from the supernatural to the monstrous, began to be featured.<sup>65</sup> Second, the *avisos* started to incorporate features of chapbooks, notably ‘pliegos sueltos poéticos’ or ‘poetic compilations in loose quires’.<sup>66</sup> The two genres, *avisos* and *pliegos sueltos poéticos*, shared not only their format, but also their popularity and wide dissemination, as well as their cheap cost of production.<sup>67</sup> Thus, the frontiers between some of these genres, already overlapping, became more and more permeable with a blending of narrative news accounts with fictionalised, non-realistic popular poetry.

This permeability would also have an impact on texts related to English recusants. The burgeoning public interest in the supernatural, including the monstrous, clearly served to draw Spanish readers to tales of martyrdom and miraculous goings-on in England, elements in ready supply from the English mission, which were only enhanced by the inclusion of poetry in the newly evolving genre. On the other hand, as noted above, alongside the formal disputations staged for visiting dignitaries to the colleges, students also composed and delivered academic poems. This was another way of proving their learning and hence their worthiness, in a discourse addressed both homeward and outward. The popular versification of recusant materials, however, goes beyond the financial and professional interests of the colleges; it is undeniably indicative of the Spanish readers’ interest in and the large-scale familiarity with the situation of English recusants.

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<sup>65</sup> Domínguez Guzmán has pointed out the newly-developed taste for wonders, spectacle, and any other phenomena that would awe the audience. ‘Algunas lecturas curiosas en la Sevilla del siglo XVII’, in *De libros, lecturas*, p. 267.

<sup>66</sup> These genres do not correspond exactly in both languages. For a definition of early modern English popular publications, see Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp 4-26.

<sup>67</sup> On the development of *pliegos sueltos poéticos*, see María Sánchez Pérez, ‘Panorámica sobre las Relaciones de sucesos en pliegos sueltos poéticos (siglo XVI)’, *eHumanista*, 21 (2012), 336–68 [http://www.ehumanista.ucsb.edu/sites/secure.lsit.ucsb.edu.span.d7\\_eh/files/sitefiles/ehumanista/volume21/11%20ehumanista21.sanchez.pdf](http://www.ehumanista.ucsb.edu/sites/secure.lsit.ucsb.edu.span.d7_eh/files/sitefiles/ehumanista/volume21/11%20ehumanista21.sanchez.pdf) [accessed August 2017].

This is certainly the case of a *Relacion verdadera, embiada al Seminario de Seuilla, por vn padre de la Compañia de Jesus que està preso en Ingalaterra*,<sup>68</sup> a brief text which versifies in ‘romance’ poetic form<sup>69</sup> what shortly before had been published in prose as *Algunos auisos de Ingalaterra de la persecucion grande que aora de nueuo ay en aquel Reyno contra los Catholicos*.<sup>70</sup> The latter relates, in typical *aviso* fashion, the situation of recusants giving instances of particular cases of persecution, conversion, and imprisonment, providing information on fresh penal laws against the Catholics and the new ‘bloody questions’, as well as commenting on a royal visit to Cambridge. Even if the *Relacion verdadera* supplies the gist of the *avisos*, it does so with certain poetic licence, as Allison and Rogers point out.<sup>71</sup> Thus, the metrical form entails a new manner of transmitting recusant written culture close to the poetic form of the *pliegos sueltos poéticos*, which results from the popular acquaintance with the plight of the recusants, and approaches the sort of fictionalisation typically associated with these texts.

### *What’s in a Poem? (II)*

Having analysed the dissemination of recusant texts through Spanish print culture, it is time to return to the poem with which we started this essay, Sánchez Mazo’s *Verissima relacion*

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<sup>68</sup> *Relacion verdadera, embiada al Seminario de Seuilla, por vn padre de la Compañia de Jesus que està preso en Ingalaterra* (Cuenca, 1615). These Seville *avisos* are ‘extracts from three letters, two from England and one from Brussels, sent to the English College, Seville’ (Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, no. 1067).

<sup>69</sup> Spanish ‘romances’ are poems of a non-fixed number of eight-syllable lines, written in the traditional ballad form; their rhyme, an assonant rhyme, only happens in even-numbered lines. See José Domínguez Caparrós, *Diccionario de métrica española* (Madrid: Alianza, 1999), s.v.

<sup>70</sup> *Algunos auisos de Ingalaterra de la persecucion grande que aora de nueuo ay en aquel Reyno contra los Catholicos* (Seville: n. p., 1615). These Seville *avisos* are ‘extracts from three letters, two from England and one from Brussels, sent to the English College, Seville’ (Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, no. 1067).

<sup>71</sup> Allison and Rogers, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation*, vol. 1, no. 1068.

*del riguroso y aceruo martirio que la Reyna Inglesa dio a dos soldados de nuestra nacion española del exercito del Principe Cardenal*, in order to decipher the complexity of the apparently heterogeneous and unrelated elements it contains.

From a formal perspective, its designation as *Verissima relacion* raises some questions not only regarding its historical veracity, but also its usage of the verse form. Thus, the poem evinces a good deal of laxity in its understanding of the genre, undoubtedly connected with the metamorphoses of *relaciones* and their overlapping with accounts of a religious nature, ranging from actual military-religious confrontations to executions-martyrdoms, including miraculous episodes. In fact, while its historical background, the siege of Calais, brings us again to the domain of *relaciones* and *avisos*,<sup>72</sup> some confusion, however, arises from the fact that the action is located in France, but, according to the title, it is the English queen who captures the Spanish soldiers. These ‘facts’ are instances of the sort of poetic licence that is more in line with *pliegos poéticos* than with news accounts.

From a material and metrical point of view, Mazo’s work is perhaps closer to the popular *pliegos poéticos* than to the often more prosaic *relaciones*. It is in a quarto bifolium, clearly a low-cost printing form if one is to judge from the large number of typographical errors and the absence of punctuation, except for the paragraphs. Its usage of the full rhyme is also indicative of popular poetry, particularly in its irregular pattern.

The content of the poem is anticipated by the inclusion of the term ‘martyrdom’ in the title, which contextualises the events in a religious conflict setting, the wars of religion, as opposed to the military campaign of Calais. Correspondingly, the Spanish soldiers have a

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<sup>72</sup> Interestingly enough, one of the *relaciones* on the Siege of Calais edited by Rodrigo de Cabrera indicates that its source of information is an English Catholic witness. *Relacion nueva y muy verdadera de los sucessos del Archiduque Cardenal Alberto de Austria, en los estados de flandes, en este año de 1596* (Seville: n. p., 1596).

religious rather than a warlike profile, with a devotion to God close to that associated with the priesthood. They demonstrate this by refusing to recant their faith, by resisting temptation, and finally by dying as martyrs. These soldier-priests go through the same suffering and fate as many English seminarians on their return home after their training in the seminaries of Valladolid or Seville, a training not unlike that imparted to military leaders, as already seen. The poem thus reads as a recusant narrative of martyrdom in its structure as well as in the elements stressing suffering, including the symbolism of the reward for their suffering: 'divine glory | of laurel, lilies and palms | and two crowns of victory' (ll. 71–73), the apparition of the Virgin Mary (ll. 262–63, 270–79) and the scenes reminiscent of Christ's crucifixion.<sup>73</sup>

Another important focus of attention in the poem is the religious antagonists of these martyrs, identified in the typical Spanish manner as 'Lutherans' rather than as 'Protestants' or 'Anglicans' throughout the poem.<sup>74</sup> Such a religious designation usually comes together with pejorative adjectives like 'perverse' and 'false' as well as other epithets traditionally associated with religious heterodoxy: 'people of malediction', 'members of hell', 'infidels', 'iniquitous people', 'dogs', 'people of Barraba', 'dragon', 'ungrateful and wretched people', 'Lucifer's faction', 'perfidious people', 'wretched people'<sup>75</sup> and, further to emphasise their heterodoxy, they are called 'judios indygnados' [enraged Jews], a clear sign of their

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<sup>73</sup> Cano and Sáez-Hidalgo, 'Educating for martyrdom'. For the features of these narratives, see Arthur Marotti, *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy: Catholic and Anti-Catholic Discourses in Early Modern England* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), pp 66-94.

<sup>74</sup> Juan Carlos Izquierdo has pointed out that after 1570–80 the 'Lutheran' became a stock character representing mostly French and English heretics in Spanish chapbooks, 'El Luteranismo en las relaciones de sucesos del siglo XVI', in *Las relaciones de sucesos en España: 1500–1750*, ed. by Henry Ettinghausen et al. (Alcalá: Servicio de Publicaciones, 1996), p. 222. Thomas O'Connor has also confirmed to me that 'Luterano' is normal Spanish bureaucratic term to describe any sort of Protestant.

<sup>75</sup> See footnote 32, on the 'savage people' that seminarians are intended to 'restrain', according to the poems in the above mentioned *relaciones*.



classification as religious ‘others’,<sup>76</sup> giving precedence to the Manichean oppositions of good and bad characters typical of popular and folk literature, rather than a precise identification of their creeds. Such a blending of different types of heterodoxy to designate the religious ‘other’ from a Catholic perspective somehow goes in hand with the generic hybridity of the piece, which brings together news accounts typical of *relaciones* and *avisos*, with narratives of martyrdom, persecution, and conversion, and fictionalisation of characters typical of *pliegos sueltos poéticos*.

The poem concludes with an episode of conversion, though one that has made some scholars consider the text ‘as unlikely as [it is] confused’,<sup>77</sup> as those who convert are not the (English) Lutherans, but a group of Jews who take pity on the abandoned corpses of the martyred Catholics and decide to bury them. Their good action is discovered, and they are executed as well, only after having converted to Catholicism. The alleged ‘confusion’ of this episode can, however, be unravelled in the context of Spanish recusant print culture originated in English colleges. On the one hand, this type of conversion, inspired by traditional anti-Semitic miracle narratives, resembles the outcome of a large number of martyrdom accounts, in which as a result of the sacrifice of the faithful, many heretics convert.<sup>78</sup> In this case the conversion of the good Jews is clearly presented as the consequence of the execution of the soldier-priests. On the other hand, the redemption of the good Jews (and not the Lutheran ‘judios indygnados’) is no doubt a way of

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<sup>76</sup> On the negative representation of Jews, and Moriscos, in popular Spanish literature, see M. Cruz García de Enterría, *Sociedad y poesía de cordel en el Barroco* (Madrid: Taurus, 1973), and, from a historiographical point of view, James S. Amelang, *Historias paralelas: judeoconversos y moriscos en la España moderna*, trans. by Jaime Blasco Castiñeyra (Madrid: Akal, 2011). The marginalization of both social groups also has a resonance in the *Verissima relacion*, whose last section includes a thematically unconnected ‘romance morisco’.

<sup>77</sup> Izquierdo, ‘El Luteranismo en las relaciones de sucesos’, p. 224.

<sup>78</sup> Conversion is a stock outcome of the most popular martyrdom accounts in the period, Marotti, *Religious Ideology*, pp 66-94.

differentiating them from those who choose to persist in their heresy and execute Catholics instead of following the true faith, a common argument used by English Catholics in their disputations. Certainly, Sánchez Mazo does not dwell on the controversial debate, which only makes perfect sense, in this hybrid *relación-aviso-pliego suelto poético*, no longer the homeward exercise of controversy, or the outward propaganda discourse published by English exiles in need of support. His *Verissima relacion* represents the culmination of the process of popularisation and fictionalisation of the English recusant controversy in Spanish print culture beyond the sphere of production of the English Colleges, which started it.

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