Transmitting and Translating the Excommunication of Elizabeth I

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In 1570 Pope Pius V issued the bull Regnans in Excelsis*, which excommunicated Queen Elizabeth I, deprived her of her right to rule, and released her subjects from obedience to her. This article attempts to trace the transmission of* Regnans in Excelsis *in the English realms during Elizabeth's reign, considering where possible the bull's publication and dispatch to different courts in Europe. It assesses efforts to distribute both publications of the excommunication, in 1570 and 1580, and what the continuity of these efforts suggests about the bull's reception amongst Elizabeth's subjects. By tracing literal translations of the bull and persistent attempts to smuggle it into the English realm, it also argues that Elizabeth's excommunication was of greater importance to her subjects than has previously been supposed.*

This article assesses physical and linguistic translations of the excommunication proclaimed against Queen Elizabeth by Pope Pius V in 1570. Although the papal bull, entitled *Regnans in Excelsis*, declared Elizabeth deposed and released her subjects from their obedience, it has received relatively little attention in histories of the English Reformation and post-Reformation English Catholicism. Until recently, many historians dismissed the bull as being of minor significance, pointing to its failure to inspire much resistance or reaction. Translations of Elizabeth's excommunication, whether physical or linguistic, have similarly received little attention.[1] Julian Lock's thesis on the origins of Queen Elizabeth's excommunication provides

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[1] No evidence appears in the works of Bossy and Haigh, for instance: Christopher Haigh, 'The Continuity of Catholicism in the English Reformation', in idem, ed., *The English Reformation Revised* (Cambridge, 1987); John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community 1570–1850* (London, 1979). Other works by Clancy, Morey and Holmes discuss the bull but similarly offer no evidence for its circulation and distribution: Thomas Clancy, *Papist Pamphleteers* (Chicago, IL, 1964); Adrian Morey, *The Catholic Subjects of Elizabeth I* (London, 1978); Peter Holmes, *Resistance and Compromise: The Political Thought of Elizabethan Catholics* (Cambridge, 1982).

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valuable insight into the bull's effects on Protestant thought and writing, but offers little information on the transmission of the bull itself.[2] Stefania Tutino has demonstrated the excommunication's centrality to Nicholas Sander's resistance theories, while Thomas McCoog acknowledged the potential for the bull's renewal in 1580 to have significant implications for religious resistance.[3] Michael Questier's studies of English Catholic politics have similarly reshaped understandings of the nature of resistance during Elizabeth's reign.[4] Recent scholarship on processes of translation in English Catholicism also provides useful models for this article. Alexandra Walsham's work on the translation of continental Catholic reforms into English contexts and the engagement of post-Reformation English Catholicism with print and the vernacular shows the extent to which English Catholics engaged in both physical and linguistic translations of their faith.[5] Walsham's assessment of the importance of printing for refutation in religious disputes also highlights the potential dangers of reprinting passages of Catholic texts, and provides a framework for considering how translations of the bull in anti-Catholic polemics may have increased awareness of the queen's excommunication in unforeseen ways.[6] Further studies by Arthur Marotti, Nancy Pollard Brown and Earle Havens explore the compilation and circulation of illicit devotional and polemical literature and thus illuminate the routes by which the bull may have been physically translated across Europe and

[2] Julian Lock, '"Strange Usurped Potentates": Elizabeth I, the Papacy, and the Indian Summer of the Medieval Deposing Power' (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, 1992).

[3] Stefania Tutino, *Law and Conscience: Catholicism in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, 2007); Thomas McCoog, *The Society of Jesus in Ireland, Scotland, and England, 1549–1588* (Leiden, 1996), 140–1.

[4] Michael Questier, 'Conformity, Catholicism, and the Law,' in Peter Lake and Michael Questier, eds, *Conformity and Orthodoxy in the English Church, 1560–1660* (Woodbridge, 2000), 237–61; idem, *Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England: Politics, Aristocratic Patronage and Religion* (Cambridge, 2006).

[5] Alexandra Walsham, 'Translating Trent? English Catholicism and the Counter Reformation', *Historical Research* 78 (2005), 288–310; eadem, '"Domme Preachers?" Post-Reformation English Catholicism and the Culture of Print', *P&P* 168 (2000), 72–123; eadem, 'Unclasping the Book? Post-Reformation English Catholicism and the Vernacular Bible', *JBS* 42 (2003), 141–66.

[6] Alexandra Walsham, '"The Spider and the Bee": The Perils of Printing for Refutation in Tudor England', in John King, ed., *Tudor Books and Readers: Materiality and the Construction of Meaning* (Cambridge, 2010), 163–90.

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England, even though *Regnans in Excelsis* receives no direct attention in their analyses.[7]

This article considers endeavours to translate the excommunication physically into England and efforts to translate the bull from Latin into English. In particular, it explores the role of Jesuit and seminary priests in bringing the bull to England, especially after the renewal of Elizabeth's excommunication in 1580. Additionally, the article considers translations of the bull into English by both Catholics and Protestants. It assesses how translations appearing in anti-Catholic polemics may have opened these works to appropriation by those who were more interested in learning about the implications of the bull for Elizabeth and her subjects than they were in the refutations that accompanied it.

Pius V pronounced Elizabeth's excommunication in February 1570 after receiving word of the Northern Rebellion in England, which had begun in November 1569, hoping that the sentence would inspire more people to join the resistance.[8] Although the pope subsequently learned that the rebellion had been put down, the distribution of the bull of excommunication still proceeded.[9] Bringing copies of Elizabeth's excommunication into England required a network of cooperative rulers and agents on the continent. The pope sent printed copies of *Regnans in Excelsis* to the nuncios in the courts of Europe, who presented them to the resident rulers and governors for further propagation. Pius V took special care that coastal countries with commercial ties to England should receive some of the first copies, believing that this strategy would make it possible for news of the bull to reach England more quickly. Thus, copies were sent to the duke of Alba for distribution and reproduction in the Netherlands in

[7] Arthur Marotti, *Religious Ideology and Cultural Fantasy: Catholic and Anti-Catholic Discourses in Early Modern England* (Notre Dame, IN, 2005); Nancy Pollard Brown, 'Paper Chase: The Dissemination of Catholic Texts in Early Modern England', *English Manuscript Studies* 1 (1989), 120–43; Earle Havens, 'Notes from a Literary Underground: Recusant Catholics, Jesuit Priests, and Scribal Publication in England', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 99 (2005), 505–38.

[8] Krista Kesselring, *The Northern Rebellion of 1569: Faith, Politics, and Protest in Elizabethan England* (Basingstoke, 2007), 56–8.

[9] The rebellion in England had been subdued by crown forces by the end of December: Kesselring, *Northern Rebellion*, 88–90. News of the rebellion had been sent to Rome from early December; Pius V wrote to the duke of Alba about his concern for the rebels in early February: J. M. Hicks, ed., *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs Preserved Principally at Rome in the Vatican Archives and Library*, 1, *Elizabeth 1558–1571* [Hereafter: *CSP Rome*] (London, 1916), 315–16, 324–5.

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March 1569, with instructions to circulate them particularly in those ports 'most frequented by English traders, that the news may the more readily reach England'.[10] A month later the pope sent copies to Poland, commanding that the bulls be transported to Danzig and other coastal towns that traded with English merchants, and that permission from King Sigismund II be sought to print more.[11] Advertisements announcing the excommunication were also circulated in Rome outlining the important points in *Regnans in Excelsis*: that the pope had declared Elizabeth an illegitimate heretic, released her subjects from obedience to her and granted all Christian princes permission to invade England.[12]

Nevertheless, it took time for copies to reach England; the exact point at which the bull arrived is uncertain. Mary Queen of Scots admitted to having received a copy in March 1570, though she claimed that she burned the bull after reading it.[13] The excommunication first caught the attention of the English public on 25 May 1570, when John Felton affixed a copy obtained from the Spanish ambassador Guerau de Spes to the door of the bishop of London's palace.[14] The ambassador had apparently received the bull from Roberto Ridolfi, who had brought six copies into England. Ridolfi delivered three of these copies to de Spes, the French ambassador Bertrand de Salignac Fénelon, and to John Leslie, the Scottish bishop of Ross who was in England as a supporter of Mary Queen of Scots; the fates of the other three are unknown.[15] In Ireland, the earl of Ormond blamed James Fitzgerald for posting the bull at the gates of Limerick in June 1571.[16] The bull did not appear in Scotland, however, until June 1573, when the English ambassador noted its publication by a man he called 'Andros, of Aberdeen'.[17] Back in England, 'a coppie of a bull maide

[10] Ibid. 332.
[11] Ibid. 335.
[12] Ibid. 336.
[13] Kew, TNA, State Papers (SP) 53/8, fol. 112, 'Matters wherewith the Queen of Scots may be charged', 11 June 1572.
[14] TNA, Privy Council Registers (PC) 2/10, fol. 11, meeting at Oatlands, 25 June 1570. See also *ODNB*, *s.n.* 'Felton, John (d. 1570)', online at: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9272>, accessed 7 November 2014.
[15] Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Calendar of Manuscripts of the Most Honourable Marquis of Salisbury, preserved at Hatfield House*, part 2 (London, 1888), 555, examination of the bishop of Ross, 1571.
[16] TNA, SP 63/32, fol. 169, Thomas Butler, earl of Ormond to Sir Henry Sidney, 11 June 1571.
[17] TNA, SP 52/25, fol. 149, Sir Henry Killigrew to Sir Thomas Smith, 13 June 1573.

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against hir Maiestie and the state of this Realme' was discovered in Tonbridge in April 1577.[18] Another was sent by a Monsieur Berny to Sir Amias Paulet in February 1578 during his tenure as governor of Jersey. Berny had apparently obtained the bull from a bishop (whom he did not name) and an associate named Bernaldin, who had been travelling through Spain and *plusieurs autres pais* ('many other countries') promulgating its message.[19]

The physical translation of Elizabeth's excommunication involved the efforts of agents both on the continent and within the British Isles. While the papacy used papal bulls to transmit Elizabeth's sentence across Europe, news reports and advertisements also helped to disseminate this information. Indeed, these reports may have been a more efficient means of ensuring that news of the queen's sentence reached England, because they were less conspicuous than official papal bulls and briefs and therefore less susceptible to seizure in English ports. Yet Catholics continued to transport copies of *Regnans in Excelsis* into and within England throughout the 1570s, along with other papal bulls such as the bull of jubilee proclaimed in 1575 by Gregory XIII.[20] A copy of this latter bull was confiscated from the seminary priest Cuthbert Mayne when he was arrested in 1577.[21] These processes indicate a sustained effort to promulgate news of Elizabeth's excommunication and other papal decrees to the English people, and perhaps also reveal that a demand for information from the papacy persisted in England. Little other evidence survives to indicate the extent of interest in the excommunication amongst the English people, though this does not necessarily suggest a lack of concern. The bull was a particularly dangerous item to have in one's possession, and it would be understandable if most people who came across copies of the excommunication destroyed them to avoid prosecution. If Elizabeth's subjects desired to learn about her excommunication, it would have been unwise for them to retain evidence of such a wish.

In 1580 Gregory XIII renewed the excommunication against Elizabeth and efforts to translate copies from Rome into England began

[18] Lewes, The Keep, Rye 7/47/15/15, Mayor of Rye to Lord Cobham, 23 April 1577.
[19] TNA, SP 78/2, fol. 12, letter from 'Monsieur Berny', 10 February 1578.
[20] Anthony Wright, *The Early Modern Papacy: From the Council of Trent to the French Revolution* (London, 2013), 44.
[21] See Anne Dillon, *The Construction of Martyrdom in Early Modern England, 1558–1603* (Farnham, 2002), 1–3; Richard Challoner, *Memoirs of Missionary Priests, and other Catholics of Both Sexes that have suffered Death in England on Religious Accounts from the Year 1577 to 1684*, 2 vols in 1 (Philadelphia, PA, 1839), 1: 23–7.

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anew. The pope also clarified to whom the excommunication applied, explaining that the sentence of Pius V bound Elizabeth and her Protestant subjects, but that for the time being it exempted professed English Catholics.[22] The renewal also coincided with the beginning of the Jesuit mission in England. Gregory employed members of the mission to explain his amendment of the bull, instructing them that the excommunication and anathema proclaimed in the bull did not apply to English Catholics while circumstances in England made it impossible to depose Elizabeth and restore Catholicism. However, if circumstances changed to favour this enterprise, any Catholics who did not participate would also find themselves excommunicated.[23] In February 1580, Cardinal Alexander Farnese commissioned a set of copies to distribute to the ambassadors in Rome.[24] The revival of the Holy League between Spain and the papacy in 1580 reiterated 'That Queen Elizabeth be declared an usurper and incapable to reign' and required 'That the Bull of excommunication which Pius V of happy memory issued against the said Queen be published in the courts of all Christian princes'.[25] Gregory's renewal of the excommunication also coincided with the rekindling of the second Desmond Rebellion in Ireland, led by James Fitzgerald, the earl of Desmond's cousin. This rebellion assisted in the transmission of the renewed excommunication to Ireland and England: an informant in the earl of Desmond's camp in 1579 noted that John Fitzgerald, the earl's brother, 'hathe a Bull from the Pope to maintaine … excommunicacion for all that depend vpon the Queen'.[26] Desmond's declaration to the people of Ireland used the excommunication to justify his insurrection, announcing that Gregory XIII had renewed the sentence against Elizabeth, that he had sanctioned holy war in Ireland, and that he had provided the Fitzgeralds with military and financial assistance to instigate her deposition.[27] In March 1581, Elizabeth summoned the Spanish and French ambassadors to complain that copies of the excommunication had been sent into Ireland and to protest at

[22] McCoog, *Society of Jesus*, 140–5.
[23] Ibid. 140–1.
[24] TNA, SP 78/4A, Lord Cobham to Sir Francis Walsingham, 29 February 1580.
[25] Rawdon Brown and G. Cavendish Bentinck, *Calendar of State Papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, and in other Libraries of Northern Italy*, 7: *1558–1580* (London, 1890), 651.
[26] TNA, SP 63/68, fol. 8, Mr Herbert's notes on the earl of Desmond's camp, 1579.
[27] London, LPL, Carew MS 607, fol. 35, declaration of James Fitzgerald to the people of Ireland. George Carew served as an army captain in Ireland from 1579–80.

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their sovereigns' possible involvement.[28] The rebellion was eventually defeated by crown forces sent into Ireland by the queen under the command of Lord Arthur Grey; however, the use of Elizabeth's excommunication by the rebellion's leaders to justify their resistance has been called an 'unprecedented ideological pitch' by Hiram Morgan in his studies of sixteenth-century Ireland.[29]

The renewal of Elizabeth's excommunication also inspired attempts to translate the decree from Latin into English.[30] James Fitzgerald brought copies of the renewed excommunication to Ireland from Rome, one of which survives at Lambeth Palace Library, the only remaining English translation of *Regnans in Excelsis* in manuscript form.[31] Its target audience is unclear: possibly Fitzgerald hoped to recruit more of the Old English in Ireland to his cause using a translation of the bull, or perhaps he hoped a few copies might be conveyed into England through Wales. Complaints about a lack of security in the western English and Welsh coastal towns occur frequently in government correspondence.[32] Smugglers ferried timber and corn between England and Ireland with impunity despite the Privy Council's efforts to enforce customs regulations, and it is plausible that copies of the excommunication could have arrived via these routes.[33] The translation of the bull into English certainly indicates a desire to inform as many people as possible about the renewed decree, and suggests that the Irish leaders hoped that there might be a demand amongst the laity for papal bulls in the vernacular, which could be more easily understood. The production of a vernacular translation after the excommunication's renewal would have ensured both wider accessibility to the bull and more effective communication of its contents.

[28] Martin A. S. Hume, ed., *Calendar of Letters and State Papers Relating to English Affairs in the Archives of Simancas, 1580–1586*, vol. 3 (London, 1896), 20.

[29] Hiram Morgan, 'Faith and Fatherland in Sixteenth-Century Ireland', *History Ireland* 3/2 (1995), 13–20, at 16. On the second Desmond Rebellion and the English response, see Anthony McCormack, 'The Social and Economic Consequences of the Desmond Rebellion of 1579–83', *Irish Historical Studies* 34 (2004), 1–15.

[30] The first publication of *Regnans in Excelsis* was not translated fully into English, although parts of it appeared in Protestant polemics.

[31] LPL, Carew MS 607, fol. 37b.

[32] TNA, PC 2/9, fol. 74, meeting at St James, 16 September 1564; TNA, SP 12/103, fol. 124, John Vaughan to Lord Burghley 6 June 1575; SP 63/112, fol. 13, Sir Richard Bingham to Sir Francis Walsingham, 14 October 1584.

[33] London, BL, Lansdowne MS 40/20, fol. 47, report of Thomas Egerton and Thomas Fenshaw on customs abuse in Chester, 1583.

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Jesuits and seminary priests also participated in transporting and promulgating the excommunication in England after 1580. In January Lord Cobham, the ambassador in France, reported to Sir Francis Walsingham that:

> ther was newlie confirmed and secretlie prynted the Bull and iudgement which Pope Pius Quintus gave and pronounced against the Queenes Majestie … one Father Thomas Darbysher a Iesuite, who whas procured to seke this … came hither xx dayes paste and is presentlie hear in towne pretendinge by way of Flanders to go secretly into England.[34]

Christopher Byers, a seminary priest who arrived in England in 1580, later recalled a colleague who was at that time 'an earnest perswader' of the queen's murder, and had brought a copy of the bull into England 'to that ende'.[35] There is certainly evidence to suggest that English Catholic priests believed the excommunication to be legitimate and that resisting the queen was therefore lawful. In 1581 a priest named John Paine claimed that it would be lawful to kill the queen because 'there were divers matters from the Pope published agaynst her'.[36] In 1582 William Allen expressed relief to the rector of the English College at Rome when Henry Orton and the Jesuit James Bosgrave publicly rejected accusations that they had 'treated the bull lightly, or sought to nullify it' when they were interrogated by the Elizabethan authorities. When Robert Persons wrote to Gregory XIII and King Philip II in May 1582 about the feasibility of invading England, he emphasized that the army should bring a press to print and distribute copies of the excommunication against the queen. Persons further advised that Gregory should issue a bull of excommunication in his own name, declaring that Elizabeth was no longer fit to be queen or to be obeyed in any capacity.[37] The interrogations and martyrdom accounts of numerous priests indicate how the excommunication influenced their interactions with Elizabethan officials. When questioned about the papal bull they often refused to answer,

[34] TNA, SP 78/4A, fol. 17, Lord Cobham to Sir Francis Walsingham, 20 February 1580.
[35] TNA, SP 53/19, fol. 109, confession of Christopher Byers, 21 September 1586.
[36] BL, Lansdowne MS 33, fols 147–147a, 143a–144 respectively, letters to the earl of Leicester, 1581.
[37] Leo Hicks, ed., *Letters and Memorials of Father Robert Persons* (London, 1942), 164–5.

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as was the case with Edward Shelley and Ralph Emerson in 1585.[38] Some, however, were bolder and affirmed that the queen's excommunication remained in force; this was the approach taken by the Jesuits John Hart and John Gerrard.[39] While some of this evidence indicates the missionary priests' role in physically translating *Regnans in Excelsis* into England, it also shows how Gregory XIII's instructions enabled them to translate the excommunication into the English context and explain it to Elizabeth's subjects. Thus the priests became a force for both physical and linguistic translation of the excommunication, transporting it into the kingdom and promulgating the amended sentence once there.

Efforts to translate the renewed excommunication, both physically into England and into the English language, intensified before the Spanish Armada sailed. In June 1588 William Cecil, Lord Burghley, received 'a copy of a roryng hellish Bull … prynted in Antwerp to the nombre of xiiand [12,000] the contentes wherof I do note to be … the deprivation of hir Maiesty'.[40] Cecil was referring to the *Declaration of the Sentence and Deposition of Elizabeth*, a proclamation printed in English before the armada sailed and attributed to William Allen.[41] The *Declaration* not only affirmed the excommunications pronounced by Pius V and Gregory XIII, but also announced that Sixtus V 'doth *Excommunicate, and depriue* her of all auctority and Princely dignity'.[42] As Cecil observed, thousands of these proclamations were printed in English at Antwerp, one of the main centres of printing in the Spanish Netherlands. This indicates a substantial effort to make vernacular translations of the sentence available to the English people, and suggests that translating the excommunication into and across England was considered an important part of the invasion strategy.[43]

[38] J. H. Pollen, *Unpublished Documents Relating to the English Martyrs* (London, 1908), 26–106. At least ten priests captured in the 1580s used this strategy.
[39] John Gerrard, *Autobiography of an Elizabethan*, transl. Philip Caraman (London, 1951), 98; TNA, SP 12/144, fol. 130, examination of John Hart, 1580.
[40] TNA, SP 12/211, fol. 93, Lord Burghley to Sir Francis Walsingham, 24 June 1588.
[41] A. F. Allison and D. M. Rogers, eds, *The Contemporary Printed Literature of the English Counter-Reformation Between 1558 and 1640*, 2 vols (Aldershot, 1989–94), 2: 10.
[42] *A declaration of the sentence and deposition of Elizabeth, the vsurper and pretensed quene of Englande* (Antwerp, 1588).
[43] Lock posited that many of these proclamations were destroyed after the invasion failed, but quotes no evidence for this suggestion: '"Strange Usurped Potentates"', 351–471.

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While copies and translations of *Regnans in Excelsis* probably played a greater role in increasing knowledge of Elizabeth's excommunication than has previously been recognized, people also learned about this in other ways. Indeed, it could be argued that Protestant responses to the bull contributed as much, if not more, to making translations of it available to the queen's subjects. Following the bull's publication in 1570 and 1580, a number of writers produced responses to the excommunication, challenging its validity and questioning the papacy's authority. In some cases, authors included English translations of entire passages of *Regnans in Excelsis*. Alexandra Walsham has suggested that the practice of citing the text against which an author was writing, though common, could prove problematic in religious disputes, because it enabled the reader to evaluate both positions in a debate and potentially to find the author's opponent more convincing.[44] This risk became acute with formal challenges to *Regnans in Excelsis*, which circulated in a kingdom in which many remained uncertain about their religious beliefs.[45] Nonetheless, the authors of these Protestant texts seem to have believed that readers would recognize the superiority of their arguments, grounded in Scripture, when set alongside the audacious claims of the bull, and thus saw little danger in reprinting it in their works. The remainder of this article considers the extent to which translations of *Regnans in Excelsis* in Protestant polemics may have raised awareness of Elizabeth's excommunication.

Shortly after news of her excommunication reached England, leaders of the English Church sought a theologian to compose a response. At the behest of several English bishops, Heinrich Bullinger wrote the *Bullae Papisticae Refutatio*, in which he challenged the legitimacy of the excommunication and the papal deposing power.[46] His treatise was published in Latin in 1571 and translated into English by Arthur Golding in 1572 as *The Confutation of the Popes Bull*. Bullinger opened his *Confutation* with a summary of *Regnans in Excelsis*, for which he borrowed heavily from the decree's original phrasing. Golding retained this summary in his translation, describing how the bull called

[44] Walsham, 'The Spider and the Bee'.

[45] Michael Questier, *Conversion, Politics, and Religion in England, 1580–1625* (Cambridge, 1996), 1–11.

[46] Notably John Jewel, bishop of Salisbury, Richard Cox, bishop of Ely, and John Parkhurst, bishop of Norwich: Hastings Robinson, ed., *Zurich Letters; comprising the Correspondence of several English Bishops and others, with some of the Helvetian Reformers, during the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1846), 1: 221–66.

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Elizabeth 'an hereticke, and a fauourer of heretickes' and how 'all and singular the Queenes Nobilitie' were commanded not to obey her laws 'vnder paine of the sayd curse'.[47] The *Confutation* appears to have attracted a wide readership in England, especially in English translation. John Parkhurst, bishop of Norwich, wrote to Bullinger after the English version was published to inform him: 'Your most learned refutation of the pope's bull is in the hands of every one; for it is translated into English, and is printed at London.'[48] One can imagine how Bullinger's text might have been appropriated by those who considered the excommunication and the pope more authoritative than the author who denounced them.[49] However, concrete evidence for the acquisition of Protestant texts by English Catholics in this manner is difficult to find. This may be in part because preserving the passages of Catholic texts from Protestant polemics, either on their own or with annotations expressing disagreement with the Protestant author, might have been incriminating. The suggestion of the English bishops that the Privy Council might not want the *Confutation* published, because 'they would not have the multitude know that any such vile, railing bull had passed from that see' indicates that such appropriation was at least considered a possibility.[50] The fact that the council allowed the publication of the *Confutation* speaks of the esteem with which Bullinger was regarded in England, but it also suggests how threatened the Elizabethan regime felt by the excommunication's potential consequences.[51] For Elizabeth's

[47] Heinrich Bullinger, *A Confutation of the Popes Bull*, transl. Arthur Golding (London, 1572), 1–2.

[48] Robinson, ed., *Zurich Letters*, 1: 266.

[49] While little work has been done on such appropriation of polemical works, literature on the appropriation of devotional works provides a useful model, particularly with respect to the Jesuit Robert Southwell: Arthur Marotti, 'Southwell's Remains: Catholicism and Anti-Catholicism in Early Modern England', in Cedric Brown and Arthur Marotti, eds, *Texts and Cultural Change in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 1997), 37–65; Susannah Monta, 'Uncommon Prayer? Robert Southwell's *Short Rule for a Good Life* and Catholic Domestic Devotion in Post-Reformation England', in Lowell Gallagher, ed., *Redrawing the Map of Early Modern English Catholicism* (Toronto, ON, 2012), 245–71.

[50] John Strype, *Annals of the Reformation and Establishment of Religion and various other Occurrences in the Church of England during Queen Elizabeth's Reign*, 4 vols in 7 (Oxford, 1824), 1/ii: 355.

[51] A number of letters and memoranda written by and to members of the Privy Council in the 1570s and 1580s point to this: TNA, SP 12/153, fol. 147, Notes by Lord Burghley on the Bull of Pius V, 1582; SP 15/19, fol. 39, the bishop of Carlisle to the earl of Sussex, 16 October 1570; SP 52/29, fol. 36, 'Offers of Queen Elizabeth to James VI', 17 February 1581; SP 78/7, fols 38, 43, Lord Cobham to Sir Francis Walsingham 12 and 28 March

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supporters, the bull was too significant a challenge to be ignored, and it was paramount that it be thoroughly refuted by a leading Reformed theologian.

English Protestants continued to translate parts of the bull in their responses to its renewal and the Jesuit mission. John Field's *Caueat for Parsons Howlet*, a response to Robert Persons's *Reasons Why Catholiques Refuse to Goe to Church*, claimed that Persons 'calleth her maiesty the pretended Queene, and sheweth howe … Elizabeth that then gouerned was an heretike, and that for that cause she was by very right fallen from all gouernment and power'.[52] In spite of Field's claims, Persons never explicitly commented on – or even mentioned – Elizabeth's excommunication. The passage quoted by Field actually came from Nicholas Sander's *De Visibili Monarchia*, a polemical treatise defending the papal supremacy, published after the first pronouncement of the excommunication.[53] Ironically, Field did more rehearsing of *Regnans in Excelsis* than the opponent he vilified, and by summarizing it succinctly in English enabled his audience to understand it clearly.

The execution of Edmund Campion and twelve other Catholic priests in 1581 prompted two further translations of *Regnans in Excelsis* into English. In 1582 the Privy Council ordered the publication of *A Particular Declaration or Testimony, of the Vndutifull and Traiterous Affection Borne Against Her Maiestie by Edmond Campion Iesuite, and Other Condemned Priestes*, which included reprinted passages of *De Visibili Monarchia* and *Regnans in Excelsis* alongside English translations of the Latin texts.[54] The Privy Council intended the *Declaration* to be seen or heard by 'all her Maiesties good and faithfull subiects', so that 'the malice of the writers may bee made knowen to the worlde'. In the same year John Garbrand published *A Viewe of a Seditious Bul sent into England, from Pius Quintus*, a transcript of a sermon preached by John Jewel at Salisbury Cathedral in 1570. Those who gathered to hear Jewel's sermon and those who read it after 1582 were treated to a full reading of *Regnans in Excelsis* and translation of the Latin text into

1582; BL, Cotton/Caligula MS C/II, fol. 125, the bishop of Ross's audience with Queen Elizabeth, 28 June 1570.

[52] John Field, *A caueat for Parsons Howlet, concerning his vntimelye flighte, and schriching in the cleare daylighte of the Gospell* (London, 1581), 87–8.

[53] Nicholas Sander, *De Visibili Monarchia* (Louvain, 1571), 730.

[54] *A Particular Declaration or Testimony, of the Vndutifull and Traiterous Affection Borne Against Her Maiestie by Edmond Campion Iesuite, and Other Condemned Priestes* (London, 1582), bii.

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English. Although Jewel framed each sentence of *Regnans in Excelsis* with lengthy and vicious invective against the papacy, it is striking that he read the bull aloud and translated it in such detail for his audience.[55] However much Jewel attempted rhetorically to eviscerate the excommunication and the papacy, his sermon made the bull intelligible to everyone who listened to him, with the chance that some would be more convinced by the translated fragments of *Regnans in Excelsis* than by his criticism.[56]

In conclusion, it is apparent that the translation of Queen Elizabeth's excommunication involved both the physical movement of papal bulls across Europe into England as well as efforts to render their contents into the English language. The role of Jesuit and seminary priests in distributing copies of the excommunication after its renewal in 1580 suggests its potential importance to the English mission, and may also indicate that the renewed bull had more significant political and spiritual importance than its predecessor. Increased efforts to translate the excommunication into English after 1580, particularly before the attempted invasion of England in 1588, likewise demonstrate the significance of its renewal. This calls into question earlier historical assessments of the excommunication which have neglected the reissuing of the bull. Furthermore, Protestant publications that included translated excerpts of *Regnans in Excelsis* also played an important role in increasing awareness of the bull in England. Published polemics and sermons that included translations of the sentence provided a legitimate means of accessing information about the queen's excommunication, and these may not always have been interpreted as their authors intended them to be. The role of translation in the transmission of Elizabeth's excommunication illuminates the significance her condemnation held for her kingdom, and illustrates the continued power of excommunication by the papacy in the late sixteenth century as a political and spiritual weapon that could still provoke action.

[55] John Jewel, *Viewe of a Seditious Bul Sent into Englande, from Pius Quintus Bishop of Rome, anno. 1569*, ed. John Garbrand (London, 1582).
[56] Walsham, 'The Spider and the Bee'.

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