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978-0-521-10953-6 - Resistance and Compromise: The Political Thought of the  
Elizabethan Catholics

Peter Holmes

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EDITORS

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E. Kedourie J. R. Pole

Walter Ullmann

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# RESISTANCE AND COMPROMISE

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PETER HOLMES



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## *Preface*

This book has grown out of research I undertook a number of years ago at Cambridge. I tried to bear in mind, as I wrote, the interpretation of Elizabethan Catholicism which has become current in recent years, especially as a result of the studies of Professor Bossy, whose work remains the outstanding contribution in the field. I have sought at various points in the story to see what light my research could throw on our wider knowledge of Elizabethan Catholicism, and hence perhaps on the history of the reign as a whole.

A number of excellent studies covering part of the same ground have already appeared (these are discussed below in the introduction). My only excuse for adding to this weight of commentary is that I have – as I hope I show – something new to say on a number of points. Parts One, Three and Four of the book concern the central theme of this study, the question of Catholic allegiance to the Queen: theories of resistance and non-resistance. I treat the subject in a chronological fashion, beginning with the writings of Catholics in the first half of the reign, who were generally in favour of non-resistance, dealing in Part Three with the ideas of resistance put forward in the critical decade after 1584, and concluding in Part Four with the works of the Appellants and their opponents at the end of the reign. In Part Two I discuss the reaction of Catholics to laws which proscribed the practice of their religion and enforced attendance at Protestant services. I felt compelled at one point (Chapter 16) to attempt a few comments on the political ideas of the Catholic laity, and this must of necessity be the least reliable part of this study since the evidence is so sparse.

It is a pleasure to be able to acknowledge here the help I

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*Preface*

received while working on this book. My principal debt is to my former Research Supervisor, Professor G. R. Elton, and what there is of value in this study is largely due to his instruction and encouragement. At every stage, from research, through doctoral thesis, to publication, his advice has been my unflinching guide. Professor John Bossy and Mr Christopher Morris made valuable comments on earlier drafts of the book, suggesting new avenues to explore. The staff of many libraries and archives made my research possible: the University Library, Cambridge (especially), the Bodleian Library at Oxford, the British Library, the Public Record Office, and the John Rylands Library, Manchester. I was warmly and often hospitably received by the custodians of various private collections: the Inner Temple Library, Lambeth Library, Oscott College Library, the Muniments Room of Westminster Abbey, Miss Elizabeth Poyser of Westminster Cathedral Archives, Fr Francis Edwards S.J. of the Archives of the English Province of the Society of Jesus at Mount Street, Fr Frederick Turner S.J. of Stonyhurst, and Dom Placid Spearitt O.S.B. of Ampleforth. Requests for microfilm and enquiries were answered most helpfully by the staff of the Vatican Archives, by Madame Y. Duhamel of the Bibliothèque Municipale of Douai, and by the Rev. C. P. F. Chavasse, Archivist of the Venerable English College at Rome. Finally my thanks are also due to the staff of the Cambridge University Press for the care with which they have prepared the book for publication. Expenses in completing research for this study were defrayed in part by a grant from the Twenty-Seven Foundation Award of the Institute of Historical Research.

All quotations have been modernised in spelling and punctuation. In the endnotes reference is made in rather abbreviated form to early printed books, but a key to these works is provided in the bibliography, where a fuller description is made.