Abstract

The beginning of negotiations in 1614 for a dynastic marriage between Prince Charles and the Infanta Maria of Spain caused great concern among English people who still held strong anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish prejudices. King James’s decision in 1618 to use the marriage negotiations in order to mediate in the confessional conflict in Europe added to this concern. England was then politically divided between those willing to help James’s son-in-law, Frederick, who had accepted the Bohemian crown following the rebellion of the Protestant estates against the Habsburg King Ferdinand, and those who supported the Stuart monarch’s decision to keep England safe from continental struggles. Despite the censorship of the state, a group of writers began a campaign against the Spanish Match which had a great influence on public opinion. Among the most prominent of these was Thomas Scott, whose first work, Vox Populi (1620), became one of the most controversial political tracts of the period. This article analyses Scott’s pamphlet and considers how he also made use of the discourse against Catholicism and Spain to introduce further commentaries on the monarchical system and the citizens’ right to participate in government.

Keywords

Spanish Match, anti-Catholicism, anti-Spanish discourse, pamphlet literature, civic government.