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Turks, Northerners, and the Barbarous Heretic

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in Catholics Writing the Nation in Early Modern Britain and Ireland

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Turks, Northerners, and the Barbarous Heretic focuses on the connections forged in Catholic texts between Protestant heretics and Turkish infidels — an analogy that reversed Protestant accusations and that demonstrated how so-called reformers were not just un-English but the quintessential enemies of the Church. Catholic polemic about Protestants-as-Turks was complexly related to other tropes of heresy and barbarism, particularly to geohumoral discourses that identified the north as the seat of heresy. Through the polemical linkages of Turk, northerner, and heretic, Catholic writers were able to explore fundamental questions about religious persecution and toleration, as well as about what it meant to be civilized and English.