

The Diplomatic Negotiations of Spain with England in the First Half of the 16th Century

— focusing on Ambassador Eustache Chapuys —

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abstract

This thesis sheds light on the situation of England in the first half of the 16th century viewed by Eustache Chapuys (1489?-1556), a resident ambassador in England, through the diplomatic despatches between him and Charles V (Emperor 1519-1556, Habsburg), the Holy Roman Emperor, thereby prompting rethinking of English history in this era. The diplomacy through resident ambassadors spread in 16th century battle-ridden Western Europe, which originated in 15th century Italy. After Charles V inherited the vast lands (Spain, Austria, Netherlands, Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, the American Continent and others) and won the election of the Emperor, this chain of events offended Francis I (King of France 1515-1547, Valois) and the Pope, as a result of which Charles V fought with Francis four times. Charles V actively utilized the network of resident embassies he took over from his predecessor, Ferdinand II of Aragon (King of Aragon 1479-1516), which was an effective system in information gathering and communicating with monarchs. In 1529 Charles V sent Chapuys, a lawyer and cleric from Savoy, to England where King Henry VIII (King of England 1509-1547) had filed a divorce suit against his wife, Catherine of Aragon (1485-1536), an aunt of Charles V. Charles V commanded Chapuys to keep friendly relations with England and at the same time to protect the right of Catherine of Aragon as queen. Since his appointment to the ambassador, Chapuys stayed in England for 16 years and continued to send despatches about England to Charles V. He stayed in England during the Reformation under Henry VIII, an epoch in English history, and was able to watch the whole process from the declaration and execution of the alienation of England from the Roman Catholic Church to her alliance with Charles V and the war against France.

This paper focuses on the three points : ① Act in Restraint of Appeals which forbade all English nationals including Queen Catherine to appeal to any other foreign court (Rome) ② the English foreign policy after the Reformation and ③ the Alliance against France between Charles V and Henry VIII in February 1543. It examines Chapuys' view and the diplomacy of Charles V on these points. The despatches between Chapuys and Charles V revealed that Act in Restraint of Appeals, which was often cited as the first

declaration of the national sovereignty of England, was not understood by Chapuys, a foreigner, as an epoch that changed the structure of state but rather seen in relation to the right of Catherine of Aragon as queen. As for the foreign policy of England after the break with Rome, historians in England often claim the defensive stance of England vis-à-vis the Catholic powers at that time. Chapuys' despatches show, however, that England, while maintaining the stance of rejecting Rome, did not simply take a defensive attitude but extended the diplomacy asserting her sovereignty. The despatches describe that Henry VIII persisted with the neutral policy and showed the high-handed approach of repeatedly demanding Full Powers to conclude a treaty and Charles' hand-written letter as he pointed out that Charles V aimed at "Universal Monarchy". Moreover, while G.R. Elton et al. state that the independence of the Church of England from the Roman Catholic Church was completed with the Act of Royal Supremacy in 1534, the correspondence between Chapuys and Charles V revealed the fact that even in 1536 Europe had not yet fully recognized England as an anti-Catholic power. Regarding the negotiations for the Alliance against France between Charles V and Henry VIII in 1543, Chapuys noticed the following points : England did not exclude the Pope from the object of the offensive and was willing to banish those who would not obey to the religious policy of England. England placed great importance on the trade. England tried to use the expression "the Sovereign Chief of the Anglican Church" as the King's style in the treaty. Chapuys realized that ultimately England preferred the early conclusion of the alliance against France to the terminology of King's style. Chapuys thought England whole-heartedly endeavored to solve the King's divorce problem and after that she never lived up to the recommendation of the Catholic powers for England to return to the Roman Catholic faith. England moved ahead with her own religious policy thereby strengthening her sovereignty and decided to wage war against France. English historians often consider England started as a sovereign state with the Act in Restraint of Appeals. Chapuys' view is different. He thought England began to assert her sovereignty gradually after Henry's divorce, joining hands with one of the two great powers of Europe, either Habsburg or Valois, maintaining a balance between the two.

As for the diplomacy of Charles V toward England, he always wanted to keep good relations with England, and if possible to conclude an alliance against France. During the time when England remained Catholic, Charles V put priority on his family's (Catherine and her daughter Princess Mary) treatment and the protection of their rights in England. However, after the alienation of England from the Roman Catholic Church, especially after the war against France, Charles V shifted priority to keeping

his relationship with Pope Paul III and defending the Catholic faith of his subjects in England. It seems that Charles V viewed England before everything else from the point of his relationship with France.

As mentioned above, this paper intends to clarify historical facts by studying the despatches of the resident ambassador in England and further to indicate a revision of common understanding of English history by introducing the contemporary view from outside. Looked from a foreign perspective, England practiced diplomacy to survive in the age of two competing European powers. Chapuy's despatches describe England as a small country of medium power striving in the first half of the 16th century in a rapidly changing international situation. England tried to establish herself as a "Sovereign State" first by defining the royal supremacy as the national polity domestically through the debate of Act in Restraint of Appeals in Parliament. Furthermore by using the expression "the Sovereign Chief of the Anglican Church" as King's style in the 1536 Treaty negotiation and the 1543 Treaty with France as well, England publicly expressed her claim internationally.