The marriage of Philip of Habsburg and Mary Tudor and anti-Spanish sentiment in England: political economies and culture, 1553-1557

Abstract

This thesis examines the early part of Mary I's reign, focusing on her marriage to Philip of Habsburg and the marginalisation of their co-monarchy in Tudor historiography. By looking at the diplomatic background and political opposition in England, I interrogate the notion that anti-Spanish sentiment was a central cause of the Wyatt rebellion, arguing that instead its aetiology lay in female sovereignty and the constitutional uncertainties produced by it. Dynasticism tended to alienate power from familiar, local and territorial sources of political authority. Infant mortality and the vicissitudes of the marriage market in this context threatened discrete 'national' identities with an incipient imperialist internationalism. I analyse in detail the marriage contract and 'Act declaring that the regal power of this realm is in the Queen's Majesty', using them as evidence to show that anxieties about property rights were not related to the repudiation of the Supremacy, repeal of Henrician legislation and return of papal jurisdiction. The staging of the wedding harped on Philip's inferior status, inverting that which the marriage ceremony rehearsed. The Castilian writing of England as a romance of chivalry sublimated a sexual licence which repeated the fears played upon by exiled polemicists that the kingdom had been transformed into the feminised subject of Spanish male authority. Anti-Spanish propaganda did not reflect popular xenophobia. It was literate and sophisticated, related to sectarian struggle and engaged with theories of justifiable disobedience. Finally, I treat the joint royal London Entry and representations of Philip and Mary welcoming his assumption of authority in relation to both England and his new queen.

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Mary’s marriage to Philip II of Spain contributed to the complex relations between England and Spain that after Mary’s death dominated Elizabeth’s reign in the realm of international relations. Elizabeth’s efforts led to the Religious Settlement, a legal process by which the Protestant Church of England was restored and the queen took the title of Supreme Governor of the Church of England. Elizabeth’s foreign policy was largely defensive. While she managed to establish diplomatic relations with some of the most powerful contemporary empires and supported Protestant struggles across Europe, her The marriage of Philip of Habsburg and Mary Tudor and anti-Spanish sentiment in England: political economies and culture, 1553-1557. By Alexander Winton Seton Samson. PhD Dissertation, Queen Mary, University of London, 1999. Abstract: This thesis examines the early part of Mary I’s reign, focusing on her marriage to Philip of Habsburg and the marginalisation of their co-monarchy in Tudor historiography. By looking at the diplomatic background and political opposition in England, I interrogate the notion that anti-Spanish sentiment was a central cause of the Wyatt rebellion, arguing that instea