NOT ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND WAR: DYNASTICISM AND COMPOSITE STATE LONGEVITY IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Hiroaki Abe

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

2017

ABSTRACT

NOT ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND WAR: DYNASTICISM AND COMPOSITE STATE
LONGEVITY IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Hiroaki Abe

Some composite states, notably Poland-Lithuania and the Holy Roman Empire, outlived the Peace of Westphalia by over one hundred years. This is puzzling for the study of international politics because good theoretical reasons expect the multiple countervailing pressures acting on these states to have brought about a rapid decline and dissolution.

In this dissertation, I propose a theoretical approach that satisfactorily accounts for why some composite states survived until the dawn of the Napoleonic Wars. The theory of dynasticism and dynastic deterrence argues that dynastic intermarriage and proximate kinship ties between dynastic rulers created deterrent effects that led to stability on the level of sovereign control. The most direct consequence of this theory is that hereditary monarchs with dynastic aims will tend to avoid waging wars of absolute conquest against each other, though wars of limited gains are not precluded. Given the inability of competing explanations—a reconstructed early modern realism and intergenerational leadership learning—to account for both the manner of survival and demise of composite states that lived till old age, it can be strongly inferred that dynastic deterrent effects ensured longevity by protecting such polities from facing conquest-attempts from other monarchs, the most serious existential threat these composite states could have faced.

The reason that dynastic deterrence holds is because dynastic wives and families of origin play the role of hostages. The parental house of the dynastic wife will tend to avoid wars of conquest against the kingdoms wherein reside their daughters, and similarly dynastic husbands will avoid conquering the birth-dynasty of their wives. In addition, wars of conquest damage the reputation of the dynastic house of a monarch, and this in turn harms the marriage chances of dynastic heirs. Wars of conquest, then, act at cross-purposes with the ubiquitous motive of dynastic aggrandizement, which aims to uplift the power and prestige of the dynastic house, and were largely disdained (with some exceptions) by the rulers of *ancien régime* Europe. It should be noted that this dynamic did not hold in the colonies, but I do not attempt in this dissertation to answer the question of why.

In the empirical case analyses, I use this theoretical framework to explain the early dissolution of two composite states (England-Scotland and the Iberian Union) when juxtaposed with other composite states that survived for longer in their same regions, and the longevity and eventual demise of two further composite states (Poland-Lithuania and the Holy Roman Empire) after weathering some near-death crises.

Oft mentioned but rarely studied directly, dynasticism and dynastic intermarriage have been largely ignored by the field of International Relations. This is unfortunate, as the ties of marriage and kinship between early modern dynastic rulers represent a fertile source of theoretical insights and empirical material for testing contemporary theories and deriving puzzles. I hope this study will stimulate further research into this fascinating area.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF MAPS

LIST OF TABLES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Jack Snyder gave me some extremely perspicacious comments and suggestions on some later chapters of this dissertation, and Alexander Cooley and Dipali Mukhopadhyay were very kind in providing me with excellent suggestions for revision into a book manuscript during the dissertation defense.

David Johnston, Andrew Nathan and Turkuler Isiksel gave me much needed encouragement and feedback at an early stage of the dissertation project, which was extremely helpful. Peter Bearman, Sudipta Kaviraj and Jean Cohen taught inspirational courses from which I gained profound insights into thinking constructively about political and social life.

Andrew Arato, who was my mentor at the New School for Social Research, gave me many incredible opportunities while there and shaped my intellectual outlook in countless ways. Thank you for discovering me. At the New School also, Jose Casanova was a great inspiration. Sang-Jin Han, my mentor at Seoul National University, has done so much to shape me. I could not have become who I am without you and the life altering time I spent in Seoul. Tim Marjoribanks, my first intellectual mentor for my honors thesis written at the University of Melbourne, gratefully provided me with much sagacious advice and sure support as I was setting off on my journey from down under. Also at the University of Melbourne, John Rundell and Graeme Marshall kindled my philosophical curiosity and started me out on the path of intellectual discovery.

I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Chunrye Kim for embarking on this American journey with me. You know how much you are responsible for my growth as a person. Thank you always.

FOR TARA

INTRODUCTION

THE PUZZLE OF COMPOSITE STATE LONGEVITY

In this introduction, we outline the puzzle of composite state longevity in *ancien régime* European politics in the period between the Peace of Westphalia and the French Revolution. The puzzle consists of why, after the supposed entrance of the sovereign unitary territorial state with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, significant cases of cross-territorial (or 'composite') states continued to exist and thrive well after the relatively centralized 'absolutist' state emerged to become a powerful form of government. The main approaches to understanding this puzzle are elaborated in the following chapter. The specific mechanism that accounts for the longevity of some *ancien régime* composite states is as follows.

In brief, the theory of dynasticism and dynastic deterrence asserts that dynastic intermarriage and proximate kinship ties between dynastic rulers create deterrent effects that lead to stability on the level of sovereign control. The most direct consequence of this theory is that hereditary monarchs with dynastic aims will tend to avoid waging wars of absolute conquest against each other, though wars of limited gains are not precluded. These dynastic deterrent effects protected composite states at key moments from the conquest-attempts of other monarchs, the most serious existential threat that these composite states could have faced.

The reason that dynastic deterrence holds is because dynastic wives and their families of origin play the role of hostages. The parental house of the dynastic wife will tend to avoid wars of conquest against the resident kingdom of their daughters, and

similarly the husbands of dynastic wives will avoid such wars of conquest against the birth-dynasty of their wives. In addition, wars of conquest damage the reputation of the dynastic house of a monarch, and this in turn harms the marriage chances of dynastic heirs. Wars of conquest, then, act at cross-purposes with the ubiquitous motive of dynastic aggrandizement, which aims at uplifting the power and prestige of the dynastic house, and were largely disdained (with a few exceptions) by the rulers of *ancien régime* Europe. It should be noted that this dynamic did not hold in the colonies, but I do not attempt in this dissertation to answer the question of why.

In this introduction, we limit ourselves to the task of clearing the ground: describing the early modern composite state, as well as elaborating the concept of composite state death and laying out the puzzle of composite state longevity that calls for explanation, before we move in the next chapter to an in-depth examination of the main competing explanations.

The surviving cross-territorial political units of the post-1648 European system—such as elective monarchies and composite monarchies—have been largely taken by international relations scholarship to be an endangered species soon to die an inevitable death. The reason for this view is that the Peace of Westphalia granted to the princes of the Holy Roman Empire the power to make treaties with other monarchs, thus eviscerating the sovereign authority of the Holy Roman Emperor and raising the princes to the status of sovereign ruler. According to the conventional view, the constant exertion of self-help pressures on the units of the European system meant the dissolution of the feudal order (as signified by the Westphalian Peace) sharply increased systemic pressures

on states to undergo structural changes and simplify their territorial complexity in order to survive the fierce competitive pressures of early modern warfare.

Many historical sociologists similarly believe that even without the Peace of Westphalia, the gradual intensification of military competition, as evidenced by signs of a 'military revolution' which took place during the early seventeenth century and driven by the innovations of Gustavus Adolphus during the Thirty Years War,[1] led to similar outcomes, with a pressure on smaller states to strengthen themselves militarily, amalgamate, or face certain conquest. This view is well captured by Tilly, when he writes that the question of how European states converged on different variations of the national state can be answered as follows:

> Only those states survived that held their own in war with other states; and…over the long run the changing character of war gave the military advantage to states that could draw large, durable military forces from their own populations, which were increasingly national states.[2]

The state formation paradigm in sociology shaped by Tilly[3] has migrated into the field of political economy, and in recent work the variable of capital accumulation and economic capacity has been argued to have played a greater role in state formation and survival than previously acknowledged.[4] According to this argument, wealth (and the economic capacity that underlay it) was the critical factor that gave units a decisive

---

[1] Michael Roberts, "The Military Revolution, 1560-1660," in *Essays in Swedish History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1967).
[2] Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1990* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p. 63.
[3] The urtext in the state formation paradigm is Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975). The essays of Hintze constitute an early and influential forerunner of this approach. See Otto Hintze, *The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze,* ed Felix Gilbert (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975). The hitherto understudied aspect of court development, was developed in Norbert Elias, *The Court Society* (New York: Pantheon, 1983). An important recent work in the field emphasizing the role of representative assemblies on the state formation process, is Thomas Ertman, *Birth of the Leviathan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
[4] Scott Abramson, "The Economic Origins of the Territorial State," *International Organization* 71 (2017): pp. 97-130.

advantage in waging war, as it allowed these units to hire large mercenary armies as a means of self-help. This approach has a number of problems that render it of limited utility for our research. Firstly, the increasing role of colonial resource extraction in supporting the war-making efforts of European states from the sixteenth century onward is ignored by the overemphasis on city-states, and this omission weakens the conclusions drawn.[5] Secondly, not all early modern states utilized mercenary armies, as "by the eighteenth century European wars were being conducted by professional armed forces"[6] rendering the emphasis on mercenaries somewhat anachronistic. However, despite these limits, it is significant that important cases of late survival composite states (such as Poland-Lithuania and the Holy Roman Empire), were laggards in terms of capital accumulation and colonial expansion, and nonetheless managed to survive until the late eighteenth century. Though the factor of capital accumulation is of limited utility in solving the puzzle of composite state survival, it nonetheless points to the confounding nature of the case.

From the classical state formation perspective, then, as well as the more recent political economy framing, the survival of heterogeneous and decentralized states seems anomalous, and Tilly writes (without giving a sufficient explanation) that the survival of the Holy Roman Empire is puzzling.[7] Alongside the survival of the Holy Roman Empire until the time of the Napoleonic Wars, we have a number of other puzzling phenomena according to this viewpoint, including: the persistence of the personal union between

---

[5] As Howard notes, "the capacity to sustain war and so maintain political power in Europe became, during the seventeenth century, increasingly dependent on access to wealth either extracted from the extra-European world or created by the commerce ultimately derived from that wealth." Michael Howard, *in European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 38.
[6] Ibid., p. 54
[7] Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States*, p. 65.

Great Britain and the Electorate of Hanover into the nineteenth century; and the survival of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in some form until the relatively late date of 1795. Though not all of these cases can be examined in this dissertation, we tackle in general terms the counter-intuitive phenomenon of composite state persistence, and its explanation.

The Early Modern Composite State and its Origins

Political units can productively be differentiated into a number of distinct ideal-typical categories, according to the nature of the relationship between a ruler and subject within the spatial institution of territoriality. Not only does this approach foreground the complexity of some early modern units when compared with the simple structure of the unitary sovereign state that would soon become dominant, but the international aspect of rulership in the composite state can also be seen with clarity. However, the schema is not limited in its usefulness to the early modern period, and can be applied also to the modern era of international relations.

In early modern politics, complex inter-territorial rule constituted an important modality of politics in addition to the simple intra-territorial rule that would gradually become the dominant form on the European continent in the nineteenth century. The distinction between these forms of rule, when placed in the context of the type of political unit in which it applied, can be captured by the following analytical categories:

A) Simple States: Intra-territorial rule where ruler-subject ties are contained

entirely within the boundaries of a single territorial state.

B) Composite States: Inter-territorial rule where ruler-subject ties cross the

boundaries of two or more states.

Composite states, as the subject matter of this dissertation, encompass both composite states where the tie between a ruler and subject is direct, (for instance composite kingdoms such as England-Scotland), and those where the tie was indirect, (such as the Holy Roman Empire, where the relationship between ruler and subject was mediated by an intermediate level of rulers). I call the former primary composite states, and the latter secondary composite states. Composite states antedated most simple states in European history for the simple reason that the European feudal system came about as a result of the incomplete fragmentation of the Carolingian Empire, itself a cross-territorial political entity. As is widely known, medieval international relations were characterized by "a tangle of overlapping feudal jurisdictions, plural allegiances and asymmetrical suzerainties."[8]

In the medieval context, as sovereign territoriality had not yet emerged, rulership was characterized by a complex division of loyalty and authority shared between a multitude of different rulers on multiple levels, for instance kings, archbishops, dukes, bishops, and barons. At the apex of this complex structure was the diarchy of Pope and Emperor. The crux of medieval politics was the political tie between the lord and vassal, whereby a vassal rendered homage and fealty to a lord in a formal ceremony, pledging in the process to render armed assistance to the lord in case of need.[9] Though the lord did not pledge fealty to a vassal, this feudal tie was reciprocal and thus a true political

[8] J. L. Holzgrefe, "The Origins of Modern International Relations Theory," *Review of International Studies* 15, no. 1 (1989): p. 11.
[9] Carl Stephenson, *Mediaeval Feudalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1942).

relation, as the lord was also bound by obligations, and vassals were justified in deserting a lord where these obligations were contravened. With the emergence of the sovereign territorial state, it finally became possible to conceive of the distinction between domestic and international domains of political activity, but before this, vassals could pledge fealty, or allegiance, to multiple lords, even though homage—or total submission—could only be pledged to one.[10]

The transition from medieval to early modern, and modern politics, entailed first and foremost what Wight has called "a revolution in loyalties" as the King came to exert an increasing dominance over his rivals to men's loyalty: the feudal barons and the Pope.[11] By suppressing the feudal barons and challenging the authority of the Pope, the King and his domain—the kingdom—gradually came to monopolize the ties of loyalty of the people within its zone of authority, whereas the ability of fiefdoms and the overarching unifying body of Christendom gradually lost their ability to command part of the obedience and loyalty of these same people. Loyalty itself became less multivocal and more univocal, and the right claimed by Kings—according to the theory of the 'divine right of kings' which came to prominence in the late Middle Ages—to act as intermediary between God and man, gave further succor to monarchical authority. Though the power actually exercised by early modern monarchs was significantly weaker than the absolute power held by republican leaders such as Oliver Cromwell and Napoleon, nonetheless the kingdom as dominant unit had made possible its later

---

[10] The interlocking ties of feudal obligations, though they did not take place in the context of exclusivist territoriality, are nonetheless an important context for the development of sovereign forms of allegiance, as it was just such multiple forms of allegiance that sovereign territoriality sought to contain through the development of the institution of permanent allegiance owed by a subject to first a sovereign, and later to abstract laws. Ashwini Vasanthakumar, "Treason, Expatriation and 'So-Called' Americans," *Georgetown Journal of Law and Public Policy* 12 (2014): pp. 187-224.
[11] Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (New York: Continuum, 1978), p. 25.

transformation into the modern state by gaining a decisive advantage over its competitors.

Though the early modern period appears as a mere transitional phase due to the distortions of hindsight, where an ill-matched constellation of dissimilar units—such as the more unitary kingdom of France and other more composite units such as Poland-Lithuania and the Holy Roman Empire—existed alongside each other, from the viewpoint of the historical present this assemblage was more a simple outcome of differences in the dynastic strategies of houses such as the Habsburgs and the Bourbons than it was the death struggle of pre-modern and modern state forms. Nonetheless, even if we accept that the coexistence of simple and composite polities was a natural state of affairs and the early modern more than a transitional moment, the dominance of the kingdom did clear the ground for imagining the domestic sphere by establishing a continent-wide system of interacting monarchies. The Holy Roman Empire was one of the few composite states where the boundary between internal and external was weak due to the indirect nature of the ties between ruler and subject, and some aspects of the multivocal loyalties of feudalism could survive.

The concept of the 'composite state' was first articulated by H. G. Koenigsberger in 1975, and he understood the term to mean a state where there existed "more than one country under the sovereignty of one ruler."[12] He goes on as follows about the characteristics of such composite states:

> [C]omposite states or monarchies could consist of completely separate countries, divided by sea or by other states, such as the dominions of the Habsburg monarchy in Spain, Italy and the Netherlands…or they might be contiguous, such as England and Wales, Piedmont

---

[12] H. G. Koenigsberger, "Dominium Regale or Dominium Politicum et Regale: Monarchies and Parliaments in Early Modern Europe," in *Politicians and Virtuosi* (London: Hambledon Press, 1986), p. 12.

and Savoy, or Poland and Lithuania. With the exception of England and Wales, they would always have kept their separate representative assemblies, as England and Scotland did in the seventeenth century.[13]

Historians such as Koenigsberger and Elliott argue that such composite states, where more than one country is under the sovereignty of one ruler (and where ruler-subject ties straddle state boundaries), were an important form of political organization in early modern Europe.[14] Although composite monarchies have been differentiated into non-contiguous and contiguous types, I believe that the division of composite states into primary and secondary composite states (with direct and indirect ruler-subject ties, respectively) is more productive in differentiating composite states with distinct dynastic dynamics. We see this in later chapters, where secondary composite states are seen to possess the advantageous property of maintaining kinship ties between the first and second level of dynastic rulers (a property facilitating longevity).

The rulers of composite states largely went about acquiring territory through dynastic marriage and inheritance rather than via force, and it was in large part the un-coerced nature of the amalgamations that brought about the composite nature of these states. For this reason, composite states generally were, at least at time of origin, dynastic states. And it was the desire for dynastic aggrandizement on the part of the houses that ruled these composite states that led them to employ dynastic strategies to continue to acquire territories even after the first appendage was incorporated. For this reason, many early modern composite states were composed of more than two component polities. As Wight has noted of the Habsburgs, their dynastic house resembled "a kind of

---

[13] Ibid.
[14] J. H. Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," *Past and Present* 137 (November, 1992): pp. 48-71. See also Harald Gustafsson, "The Conglomerate State: A Perspective on State Formation in Early Modern Europe," *Scandinavian Journal of History* 23 (1998): pp. 189-213.

international organization, a dynastic confederation of many states (Austria, the

Netherlands, Spain, Naples, Milan, Bohemia, Hungary, Portugal), asserting the principles

of international Catholicism."[15]

Composite states also came about when the dynastic line died out and a kingdom

needed to adopt the ruler of another (often weaker) realm as their own. This characterized

the personal union between England and Scotland under James I as well as England and

Hanover under George I. The task of consolidating a legitimate and authoritative line of

monarchs over a domain was not easy in early modern Europe. The vicissitudes of

heredity meant that even with a male heir, there was no guarantee the heirs would have

an aptitude for the exercise of political power, and the task of building legitimacy for a

ruling dynasty often took multiple generations before robust loyalty of the local nobility

could be obtained.[16]

For this reason, outsourcing or delegating the function of rule to another already

established dynastic ruler could offer significant advantages to a ruling aristocratic elite,

especially as there still did not exist strong nationalistic prejudices against rule by

foreigners. Not least of the benefits was that a relatively seamless succession would

preserve the traditional rights and privileges of the nobility whereas discontinuity and

breakdown of order could endanger them. However, adopting the ruler of a stronger

polity for one's kingdom could considerably weaken the power of the local nobility. It is

telling in this regard that the three dynasties adopted by the English during succession

---

[15] Martin Wight, *Power Politics*, p. 36.
[16] Ronald Asch discusses the difficulty of establishing a robust leadership lineage in his "Monarchy in Western and Central Europe," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History, 1350-1750,* ed. Hamish Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). Orr discusses the vagaries of heredity and its destabilizing influence on the consolidation of a dynasty's rule in Clarissa Campbell Orr, "Dynasticism and the World of the Court," in *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Europe,* ed. Peter Wilson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008).

crises of the early modern period—the Stuarts from Scotland, William of Orange from the Netherlands, and the Hanoverians from Hanover—were all from significantly weaker polities than England.

But the dynastic marriage was nonetheless the most common pathway through which a composite state came into being. One of the most stable composite states in Europe, the Castile-Aragon personal union, was brought about in 1469 by the marriage of Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile, and the territories of Burgundy and Spain were united in a personal union when the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V inherited these countries from his father and mother, respectively.

Another reason for the formation of composite states was not strategy but necessity. The European feudal system of the late Middle Ages was one where kings had not yet been able to monopolize the use of violence, and were faced with fierce competition from powerful barons. As Mann has termed it, the despotic and infrastructural power of feudal authority was low, and thus such authority could not penetrate and coordinate society without the support of other power groups.

The politics of the latter Middle Ages consisted of lineages of rulers and dynasties with well developed courts but with little of the bureaucratic apparatus we now consider to be essential to statehood. The absence of a permanent administrative structure meant that leaders depended heavily on maintaining personalistic ties of mutual obligation, loyalty, and acquiescence with members of the nobility scattered across non-contiguous territorial areas.[17] Leadership limited to a unitary territorial area was partly an outcome of

---

[17] The historiographical debate on absolutism has become more skeptical of the usefulness of 'absolutism' as a historical category, as Ludovician France under Louis XIV is now seen as less absolute in its ability to exercise central authority than its own ideology would suggest. Mettam, in one of the opening salvos of this

11

the increasing military capacity of modern rulers, which allowed them to unify former patchworks of domains into sovereign territories. This increased military capacity was not possible until around the time of the military revolution that was said to have taken place during the Thirty Years War.

Defining Composite State Death

As it is not self-evident what 'death' might mean when we examine the death of a composite state, we must define what we mean by the death of a composite state. All the while we should keep in mind that in early modern Europe the state as an administrative entity was rudimentary when compared to the personal rule of a leader or monarch. Thus, when I use the word 'state' in the following, I use it as shorthand for a political entity existing during the early modern period, and it must be kept in mind that some of these entities were very far from the typical Weberian state with a monopoly of legitimate violence in a defined territory. It should be noted that a composite state does not die in the same way that a 'simple' or non-composite unit dies.

If, in early modern Europe, the end of a line of political rulers (dynastic or non-dynastic) over a territorial entity[18] is taken to be equivalent to its 'death,' then a simple

revisionist perspective, notes that "whole aspects of the internal administration of the kingdom were never, and never could be, under the crown's sole and direct control. Much of government within the realm was always a dialogue between the crown and a series of local elites, institutions and social groups, each one jealously guarding its traditional and undeniably legal privileges. The king sought their co-operation but could never hope totally to dominate them." Roger Mettam, "Louis XIV and the Illusion of 'Absolutism'," *Seventeenth-century French studies* 5 (1983): p. 29.

[18] The territorial entity of the early modern period was a much less sharply defined one than the modern territorial state, with geological frontiers and zones of overlapping juridical rights rather than pure geographical and cartographic lines being the basis of territorial distinction. It was only in 1697, with the Treaty of Riswijck, that the geographical line came to be accepted as a legitimate basis of demarcating territory. For more clarification on these and related issues, see Peter Barber, "Maps and Monarchs in

political entity ceases to be either when the state as a whole ceases to exist, or when a simple entity ceases to be 'simple' in form. The abolition of a dynastic lineage and its replacement with another ruling regime (such as the overthrow of *ancien régime* France and its replacement by a republican form of government), also constitutes a form of 'death,' although this type is only of interest to the main focus of our study—composite state death—through the spillover effect of the death of absolutist states on the death of composite states. The end of a 'simple' state can also take place when it is incorporated into, or amalgamated with, another juridically separate territorial entity (simple or composite) in such way becoming part of a composite state. Such incorporation or amalgamation may take place voluntarily or via coercion: voluntary means include the legal inheritance of multiple domains by one ruler, (i.e. the amalgamation of the territories of Castile and Aragon through the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, and the fusion of the Burgundian territories with the Spanish monarchy via inheritance by Charles V), whereas pure coercive means includes conquest, though there were few true annexations of simple political units during the early modern era.

On the other hand, a composite political entity can die through a greater number of separate pathways. These dissolutive pathways are death by amalgamation, secession, conquest and disestablishment. Firstly, as in the case of simple entities we have amalgamation or union, but here amalgamation means losing the property of 'compositeness,' namely becoming simple. This entails becoming a single juridical entity

Europe 1550-1800," in *Royal and Republican Sovereignty in Early Modern Europe,* ed. Robert Oresko, G.C. Gibbs, and H. M. Scott (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Peter Sahlins, "Natural Frontiers Revisited: France's Boundaries since the Seventeenth Century," *The American Historical Review* 95, no. 5 (1990): pp. 1423-1451; David Buisseret, ed, *Monarchs, Ministers and Maps: The Emergence of Cartography as a Tool of Government in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).

when multiple juridically independent realms are merged to become one realm, with only a single ruler, parliament or assembly remaining to represent the different realms. An example of such a union is the 'incorporating union' of the kingdoms of England and Scotland in 1707, with two previously independent realms becoming one juridically unified realm. Secondly, we have secession, which in the case of a composite state means death through the breaking apart of its constituent parts and decomposition into 'simple' components to be ruled by different rulers. An example of this is the end of the political union of the kingdoms of Spain and Portugal under a single monarch (1580-1640), which came to an end with the Portuguese Restoration War and the final recognition of the legitimacy of the Portuguese monarch by the Spanish regent, Mariana of Austria, in the Treaty of Lisbon of 1668.

Thirdly, we have the conquest pathway of composite state death involving the military annexation of the whole of a composite polity. In the early modern period, such wholesale conquest almost never took place as most annexations were generally piecemeal, for instance in cases such as the annexation of Luxembourg (then a part of the composite Spanish domain) by Louis XIV in 1684. Partition, a subcategory of death by conquest, entails the destruction of a composite state via annexation of its whole territory and division by more than one ruler. Though there were a number of partition schemes in existence since the late seventeenth century—for instance the Treaty of the Hague (1698) which was signed by France, England, and the United Provinces and called for the partition of Spain upon the death of the childless Habsburg ruler, Charles II—the only *ancien régime* example of partition was the successive partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1772-1793) by Prussia, the Habsburg monarchy, and Russia. Finally, we

14

have the pathway of composite state death by disestablishment. This is in some ways similar to composite state death via conquest, as the only case conforming to this pathway—the Holy Roman Empire—was subject to dissolution by Emperor Francis II in 1806 as a means to avoid the dreaded outcome of domination of the Reich by Napoleon's France. Nonetheless, just as suicide in the face of imminent death by homicide must justifiably be considered a separate category from mere death by homicide, composite state death by disestablishment is analytically a separate pathway to composite state death from death by conquest.

Needless to say, these are ideal-typical distinctions, and in actuality a combination of voluntary and involuntary means are invariably involved in the dissolution of a composite polity.[19] Though the multiple pathways away from compositeness are worthy of investigation in their own right, we are interested in examining cases of these distinct pathways to composite state death mainly for the light that such an examination will shed on the protective factors underpinning the late-survival of some of these composite polities. However, we have chosen our empirical cases based on their status as representative cases of each of these distinct pathways.

The Puzzle of Composite State Longevity in *Ancien Régime* Europe

---

[19] The complications and blurring of these ideal-typical distinctions can arise in particular empirical cases, as exemplified by England during the mid seventeenth century. In a composite political realm, an internal revolt could lead to the abolition of a separate polity in one or more of the dynastically linked territories, as took place during the English Civil Wars when a short lived republic was founded after the monarchy was abolished. Here, the Kingdom of Scotland was not immediately absorbed into the newly formed Commonwealth, leading to a separation of the two formerly united entities—a situation that was soon changed with Cromwell's invasion and subjugation of Ireland and Scotland and the formation of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland in 1653. This move away from compositeness was to be short-lived, however, as the unified republic would be unable to sustain itself after the death of Cromwell in 1658. The pre-civil war status quo of personal union of the Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland under the Stuart dynasty would be restored with the coronation of Charles II in 1661.

The emergence of composite states is not a counter-intuitive phenomenon. However, the longevity of composite states in Europe well into the early modern period is a fact requiring explanation. In this section, we answer the question of why composite state longevity in *ancien régime* Europe is puzzling. Though the traditional approach, which posits a radical rupture with the Peace of Westphalia, is not without its problems, more sophisticated approaches to institutional development in the early modern period also lead us to expect composite polities to have become moribund not long after the Peace of Westphalia. That this expectation is contradicted by historical evidence leads to the conclusion that the late survival of some composite states is counter-intuitive.

The Standard View of Westphalia and its Critics

The Peace of Westphalia, which ended the ruinous Thirty Years' War, has been interpreted as the moment when sovereignty was granted to the principalities of the Holy Roman Empire, fatally weakening the Emperor in his claim to suzerainty over the electors of the Empire and dealing a death blow to the Holy Roman Empire as a cross-territorial polity.[20] This perspective, which constituted the standard interpretation of the meaning of the Westphalian settlement, saw the Peace of Westphalia as the end of feudal hierarchy and cross-territorial rule and the beginning of a sovereign system where princes brooked the right of no superior to intervene in their territory.

As Leo Gross has written:

---

[20] Daniel Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 276.

16

> [I]n the political field it [the Peace of Westphalia] marked man's abandonment of the idea of a hierarchical structure of society and his option for a new system characterized by the coexistence of a multiplicity of states, each sovereign within its territory, equal to one another, and free from any external earthly authority…the idea of an authority or organization above the sovereign states is no longer.[21]

The confessional autonomy (and nominal religious equality) given to the electors and princes of the Holy Roman Empire through the preceding Peace of Augsburg of 1555 and the principle of *Cuius regio, eius religio* (translated as 'Whose realm, his religion,'),[22] as well as the mutual agreement not to interfere in the territory of the signators to the treaty, leads to the inference that the environment of Europe became strongly antagonistic to the survival of hierarchical structures after 1648.[23]

When combined with the Waltzian motif of systemic socialization and the neorealist argument that if units in a system do not adequately emulate the structural and military innovations of the leading states, they tend to 'fall by the wayside,' we arrive at the prediction that international systems will generally tend toward structural 'sameness' of units, especially in the case of units at the core of systemic competition.[24] In the early modern system following the Westphalian Peace, neorealist theory leads to the expectation that core states most implicated in military competition, including Poland-

---

[21] Leo Gross, "The Peace of Westphalia, 1648-1948," *American Journal of International Law* 42 (January 1948): pp. 28-29.

[22] This phrase was not coined until a later critique of the peace published in 1586. Peter H. Wilson, *The Holy Roman Empire, Second Edition* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011), p. 42.

[23] It has been perceptively noted by Osiander that the principle of *Cuius regio, eius religio* was in fact amended by the Peace of Westphalia such that it reverted to the religious status quo as it was in 1624. Andreas Osiander, "Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Westphalian Myth," *International Organization* 55 (Spring, 2001): p. 272.

[24] The key passages of the neorealist argument about systemic socialization are found on pages 118, and 127-8 of Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979). A key passage states that: "the close juxtaposition of states promotes their sameness through the disadvantages that arise from a failure to conform to successful practices. It is this 'sameness,' an effect of the system, that is so often attributed to the acceptance of so-called rules of state behavior. Chiliastic rulers occasionally come to power. In power, most of them quickly change their ways. They can refuse to do so, and yet hope to survive, only if they rule countries little affected by the competition of states. The socialization of nonconformist states proceeds at a pace that is set by the extent of their involvement in the system." (p. 128)

Lithuania (the victim of a number of destructive invasions) and the Holy Roman Empire (engaged in a fierce rivalry during the eighteenth century), would have quickly adjusted structurally to the emerging standard set by the territorially simple state, or otherwise disappeared.[25]

This traditional view has become subject to criticism from those who view the Peace of Westphalia not as signaling the end of feudal hierarchy in the way that Gross and mainstream scholarship would suggest. In general terms, Krasner has shown that components of cross-territorial authority postdate the Westphalian Peace, and the hermetically sealed and autonomously acting unitary state is as much an ideal as it was a reality.[26] Osiander, more specifically, has made some persuasive arguments for why Westphalia did not in fact mandate a system of sovereign equality. His view is that, upon detailed analysis, the Peace of Westphalia did not treat either the question of sovereignty, the prerogatives of the emperor and the Pope, or the independence of European actors, and so could not have mandated an entirely new regime of sovereign equality. Rather, he views the two treaties comprising the Peace of Westphalia—the Treaty of Münster and the Treaty of Osnabrück—as specifically concerned with the internal affairs of the Reich.

Moreover, only a very limited internationalization of the internal affairs of the Empire took place through France and Sweden being made guarantors of the settlement with authority to intervene in the Reich, though this provision was limited by the fact that

---

[25] Recently, Alastair Iain Johnston has made the argument that the neorealist approach does not allow for the possibility of ecological 'niches' where different traits can survive in micro-habitats despite overarching pressures toward homogenization. This is an argument that overlaps with my own, though we do not explicitly use the framework of evolutionary biology here. See Alastair Iain Johnston, *Social States,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), Chapter 1.

[26] Stephen Krasner, "Westphalia and All That," in *Ideas and Foreign Policy,* ed. Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993). He also, correctly, argues that Westphalia like sovereignty (exclusive control over a given territory) predates the Westphalian Peace.

intervention was allowed only if the Imperial Estates could not resolve their dispute satisfactorily within a certain period of time.[27] In fact, far from increasing, French influence in the Empire declined significantly after 1648, though this was related to the animus engendered by Louis XIV and his aggressive scorched earth policies in the Palatinate preceding the Nine Years' War (1688-1697), which contrary to his aim of sowing division, succeeded only in uniting the princes of the Empire against him.[28]

       This argument has much to commend it. It is more in line with contemporary historical research both in correctly pointing to the main subject of the Westphalian settlement (the relations between the imperial princes and emperor), and in noting the absence of a firm rupture between feudal hierarchy and modern anarchy. Whaley argues that the Westphalian peace did not grant full sovereignty to the princes, only giving them a lesser form of territorial sovereignty (*Landeshoheit)* consisting of political and ecclesiastical rights over their territories—already established before the treaties—as well as granting them the right to enter into alliances with foreign powers (as long as these alliances were not directed against the Emperor or the Reich).[29] In other words, the princes still "feared a strong France or Sweden more than they feared the generally weak Habsburgs, whom they knew; they wanted to return to the balance of powers between

---

[27] It should also be noted that intervention required invitation by the injured party to be legitimate.
[28] Osiander, "Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Westphalian Myth," p. 266. Wilson further notes that both France and Sweden, through a circuitous route, came to support the preservation of the Empire for their respective diplomatic ends. Peter Wilson, *Europe's Tragedy* (London: Allen Lane, 2009), pp. 1527-1528. On Imperial unity against Louis XIV, see John Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV 1667-1714,* (Essex: Pearson, 1999).
[29] Joachim Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire, Volume I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 626-627.

'emperor and Reich' that had been the basis of the German polity since the reign of Maximilian I."[30]

Nonetheless, Osiander's judgment that the most significant transition to modern international politics took place with the French revolution and the industrial revolution in the nineteenth century takes us too far in the other direction. It is clear from the fact that many contemporary observers saw power in the Empire as shifting towards the electors and away from the Emperor, that the Peace of Westphalia did still represent a real challenge to dynastic rulers exercising authority across borders. Moreover, during the reign of Louis XIV covering the second half of the seventeenth century, France—a relatively centralized state—was the dominant Western European power, and this dominance was the catalyst for the War of the Spanish Succession.[31] The armies of Louis during this period were "strong enough to stand against coalitions of all the other great powers."[32] In Northern Europe and the Baltic, Sweden was the dominant power until its losses during the Great Northern War, and like France it was also a relatively unified state for the time. From 1740 onwards, Prussia—itself a component of the Holy Roman Empire and a relatively unitary state—exerted strong pressures on the pattern of interactions in Central Europe. Given that the leading states, in military terms, for much of the post-Westphalian period were those structurally close to the unitary state, the complete erasure of the Westphalian Peace as a significant historical milestone is premature. In following sections, we examine why composite state survival is puzzling

---

[30] Ibid., p. 626.
[31] Wight, *Power Politics*, Chapter 2.
[32] John Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV 1667-1714* (London: Longman, 1999), p. 361.

from the perspective of work in the constructivist paradigm, as well as evolutionary biology.

Selection Pressures post-Westphalia

The significance of the threat to composite states represented by the Westphalian settlement can be garnered from Nexon's more recent theory, which views the Peace of Westphalia more as a symptom than cause of international change. He argues that sociological transformations in the nature of confessional loyalty were more pivotal in threatening the Imperial structure than were the Peace treaties as autonomous causal movers in their own right. According to this view, composite polities faced the prospect of internal fragmentation through confessional decomposition in the wake of the reformation. More damagingly, the traditional 'divide and rule' strategies deployed by the rulers of composite states to suppress such challenges, was fatally weakened by the confessional polarization introduced by the reformation. Religious belief was a more powerful driver of collective mobilization than the opacity of feudal obligations. This opened the way for external powers to intervene in the territory of others to protect co-religionists in neighboring populations, leading to the internationalization of domestic conflicts and exhausting the governance capacities of composite rulers. According to Nexon, damage to the network coherence of cross-territorial leadership preceded both the Thirty Years' War and the Peace of Westphalia, which were symptoms and not a cause of the decline of composite leadership.[33]

---

[33] Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe,* Chapter 4.

In other words, the coherence of confessionally diverse political entities was rapidly undermined during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries due to the effects of the Reformation. The Holy Roman Empire might, then, be expected to have undergone either a rapid rationalization or dissolution after the point when confessional identity became a dominant form of loyalty in its sociological structure. The mechanism through which such decomposition would likely have come about, is that of a cascade of defections whereby increasing weakness of the political center is taken advantage of by princes to break free of imperial authority. Similar processes of cascading defections were pivotal in two contemporaneous cases, the English Civil Wars and the Portuguese War of Restoration, both of which can be framed as cascading rebellion set off by a challenge to the authority of a political center.[34]

Against such expectations, it is remarkable that what was witnessed in the Reich was far from a decomposition, as the period has been called that of 'imperial recovery' by some prominent scholars.[35] Not only did the Holy Roman Empire—the entity which should have been most injured by the transformations Nexon describes—remain nominally intact until its eventual dissolution during the Napoleonic wars, but it retained elements of vitality throughout the post-Westphalian period. Thus, recent scholars of the late history of the Holy Roman Empire have challenged the dominant view that the

---

[34] J.H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2002), pp. 787-788. In the case of Portugal, the revolt of the Catalans of 1640 and Olivares plan to send the Portuguese nobility into Catalonia to fight for the Monarchy was an important catalyst for Portuguese rebels to quicken their plans for revolt. In the case of Scotland and the English Civil Wars, the direction of contagious rebellion was from periphery to the center, with religious and regional grievances in Scotland during the Bishops' Wars spreading westward and southward, setting off the Irish Rising and the restive Long Parliament in its wake. For a more detailed chronology of contagion in the case of the English Civil Wars, see the first part of Michael Braddick, *God's Fury, England's Fire: A New History of the English Civil Wars* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 2008).
[35] Wilson, *The Holy Roman Empire, Second Edition*; Peter H. Wilson, *From Reich to Revolution* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), Chapter 8.

Empire after Westphalia was merely a moribund entity masking factual sovereignty on the level of the principalities and territories. Clearly the reign of Leopold I covering the second half of the seventeenth century marked a strengthening of the imperial center due to the military successes enjoyed by imperial forces (with the help of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) against the Ottomans.

As can be seen from this discussion, even without the disruptive forces of nationalism, which were only to emerge fully in the nineteenth century following the Napoleonic Wars, the post-Westphalian survival of composite polities in Europe seems to be theoretically difficult to explain given what has been depicted as the comparative strength of religious loyalties over feudal loyalties in domestic societies. Spruyt weighs into this discussion and puts forward the additional evolutionary mechanism of institutional selection for why we should expect composite polities to demise shortly after critical events such as the Peace of Westphalia. For him, the critical mechanism driving institutional selection exists on the meso-level, and strengthens the leaders of territorially homogeneous polities who can limit domestic free-riding as well as enable credible commitments to be made between the monarchic rulers.[36] According to Spruyt, this process set in train a positive feedback loop whereby the emerging system of sovereign states and its leaders was further strengthened by their increasing numbers. The existence of feedback loops such as this suggests that the institutional fitness of declining units should have decreased not at a linear but at an exponential rate after the emergence of the sovereign states system.

---

[36] Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994). On this point, see especially Chapter 8.

The View from Evolutionary Biology

The puzzling nature of composite state survival is also evident when these dynamics are seen through the lens of evolutionary biology and demography. In the organic world, demographic approaches to mortality have isolated some important regularities, including that mortality increases exponentially for many species until a certain point late in the life-cycle, a pattern first identified by Benjamin Gompertz in 1825.[37] Gompertz observed that a person's risk of death in a given year doubles every eight years of the lifespan. In more recent studies, there have been ambiguous results that point towards a plateau and even a deceleration of mortality at advanced ages.[38] Gompertz originally postulated that death is the result of both chance, and an increased inability to withstand destruction.

More recent evolutionary approaches argue that death is a consequence of "the declining force of natural selection with age," a process whereby late acting mutations accumulate after the age when reproductive pressures generally decline.[39] The fact of aging and death has been seen as a frequent but puzzling fact for evolutionary theory to explain. Rose notes that the puzzle of aging is based on the fact that, even while natural selection tends to increase the mean fitness of a population, evolution has nonetheless "frequently produced organisms with survival and reproductive rates that decline with adult age."[40] The answer put forward by some evolutionary biologists to explain this

---

[37] Benjamin Gompertz, "On the Nature of the Function Expressive of the Law of Human Mortality, and on a New Mode of Determining the Value of Life Contingencies," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London,* 115 (1825): pp. 513-583.

[38] Leonid Gavrilov and Natalia Gavrilova, "Mortality Measurement at Advanced Ages," *North American Actuarial Journal 15, no. 3* (2011), pp. 432-447.

[39] Leonid Gavrilov and Natalia Gavrilova, "Evolutionary Theories of Aging and Longevity," *The Scientific World Journal* 2 (2002): pp. 339-356.

[40] Michael Rose, *Evolutionary Biology of Aging* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 3.

puzzle is that it is the absence of fissile reproduction—namely reproduction by division

rather than by sexual reproduction and fusion—which leads to greatly diminished forces

of selection at later ages.[41]

Social and political units do not reproduce themselves sexually, but rather

maintain structural features over time through social evolution and processes that ensure

structural continuity in areas such as leadership, language and socialization. Thus, for

social and political units, the pressures leading to dissolution do not come during a

specific phase of a predetermined life span but rather follow crises that threaten social

and political reproduction. The main threats to the integrity of a political unit come from

external attack, internal rebellion, and crises of leadership succession.

As we need a view of mortality that can simultaneously encompass the cessation

of both biological and social entities, we draw on Humberto Maturana's theory of

autopoeisis, which takes death to be the cessation of an entity's ability to continuously

maintain its unity and autonomy from its environment across time via homeostatic

mechanisms. These homeostatic mechanisms allow a living entity to "continuously

regenerate and realize the network of processes (relations) that produced them."[42] Niklas

Luhmann, in applying and extending the concept of autopoeisis to the study of social

systems, asserts that 'reproduction,' not in the sense of the production of new entities but

---

[41] Ibid., Chapter 1.

[42] This notion of life—which mortality negates—is taken from Maturana and Varela's work on autopoiesis. More fully, they argue that an autopoeitic entity, of which humans and other biological organisms are one form, "continuously generates and specifies its own organization through its operation as a system of production of its own components, and does this in an endless turnover of components under conditions of continuous perturbations and compensation of perturbations…an autopoeitic machine is an homeostatic (or rather a relations-static) system which has its own organization (defining network of relations) as the fundamental variable which it maintains constant." Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition* (Dordrecht Holland: Reidel, 1980), p. 79.

the constant renewal of system elements, is the key task that social systems must

accomplish continually to survive. He asserts that:

> All elements pass away. They cannot endure as elements in time, and thus they must constantly be produced on the basis of whatever constellation of elements is actual at any given moment. Reproduction thus does not mean simply repeatedly producing the same, but rather reflexive production, production out of products.[43]

Thus, from this perspective, illnesses and ailments of vital systems entail the

danger of positive feedback mechanisms being initiated that can endanger the ongoing

homeostatic reproduction of autonomy and the systems that ensure this. Diseases

contracted in vulnerable states of systemic health are much more likely to cascade

through positive feedback, leading to the onset of terminal decline and death. Death, in

this view, is equivalent to becoming too weak to sustain the organism's defenses against

centrifugal forces that are always acting to impair ongoing homeostasis. Once one or two

of these core homeostatic processes are damaged or when invading organisms have

successfully breached the outer defenses of the immune system, the floodgates are

opened and homeostasis becomes critically threatened.

Gilpin, echoing the evolutionary approach in his theory of international change,

argues that international systems are prone to change due to their governance being

subject to self-limiting mechanisms. In particular, he argues that the systemic

management provided by dominant states—which he takes to be a fact of international

history—are subject to diminishing returns and increasing costs as leading powers find it

increasingly difficult to raise the costs of defending the systemic status quo.[44] A recent

anthropological approach to societal collapse concurs in pointing to the salience of

---

[43] Niklas Luhmann, *Social Systems,* trans. John Bednarz (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 50.
[44] Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), Chapter 4.

diminishing returns in setting off mechanisms that lead to decline and collapse. Tainter in

his theory of societal collapse, notes that:

> [C]ontinued investment in sociopolitical complexity reaches a point where the benefits
> for such investment begin to decline, at first gradually, then with accelerated force. Thus,
> not only must a population allocate greater and greater amounts of resources to
> maintaining an evolving society, but after a certain point, higher amounts of this
> investment will yield smaller increments of return. Diminishing returns…are a recurrent
> aspect of sociopolitical evolution, and of investment in complexity. [45]

Thus, evolutionary theories of longevity and social systemic decline and

breakdown note that the resilience and dynamism of political leadership plays a key role

in sustaining the autonomy of the unit or system, and once its resilience is impaired, the

decline of the group begins and accelerates as diminishing returns processes kick in. As

decline begins, not only do leaders lose ground vis-à-vis internal challengers, but they

also become increasingly threatened by external challengers. Jervis mirrors these points

when he notes that "expansion initially leads to more expansion…it then generates

counterbalancing forces that retard or reverse expansion…in the final stages, retreats

undermine the state's power, leading to its collapse and accelerating the growth of

another state."[46]

The thrust of the evolutionary perspective suggests to us the following

expectation of systemic evolution following the Peace of Westphalia. The combined

pressures acting upon system units around the time of the Peace of Westphalia—which

included not only the reformation but also the devastation wrought by the Thirty Years'

War and the rapidly increasing costs of military competition—were increasing rapidly

and acting in unison across Western and Central Europe to put immense pressure on the

---

[45] Joseph Tainter, *The Collapse of Complex Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 92.
[46] Jervis, *System Effects,* p. 127.

ruling dynasties of the time. Against such a backdrop, the expectation is that territorially heterogeneous, decentralized and less integrated polities (i.e. composite states) would have quickly become subject to dissolution and state death. The fact that some composite states survived until the Napoleonic Wars is therefore puzzling from two independent perspectives: constructivist IR theory which expects cross-cutting alliances to break apart loosely integrated entities; and cyclical theories of political development which expect such pressures to set off decreasing returns processes and accelerate leadership decline. And yet, despite these expectations, we observe the survival of a number of important composite polities until the cusp of the nineteenth century.

The Objection of Path Dependence

A powerful objection calling into doubt the counter-intuitive nature of composite state survival post-Westphalia must be treated with caution given what we know about biological and institutional demise. Path-dependence is a framework that attempts to explain the counterintuitive longevity of seemingly suboptimal equilibria in time. In the political science literature, path dependence has been taken to refer to situations where "once a country or region has started down a track, the costs of reversal are very high."[47] According to this view, positive feedback and increasing returns explains why specific outcomes become consolidated during critical junctures—especially early in a particular process—and then stubbornly remain in place despite what seem strong countervailing trends.

---

[47] The passage, by Margaret Levi, is quoted in Paul Pierson, *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 20.

The example of 'varieties of capitalism' is given by Pierson as a case of the ability of path dependence to explain what seems to be the counterintuitive existence of multiple configurations of economic markets in different countries despite strong international pressures toward convergence. The start-up costs of an institutional market structure are substantial, giving rise to the resilience of existing structures even when countervailing pressures exist.[48] The path dependent argument would run, then, that the multiple crises of the early seventeenth century, despite seeming to pose severe challenges for the composite polities of the European system, nonetheless were not as threatening as they may seem due to the advantages and increasing returns reaped by the historically older polities which have an important time advantage over the centralizing polities, such as France and others. Amongst the advantages held by the composite polities would include the advantage of possessing a robust network of patronage relations and, in the case of the Holy Roman Empire and the Habsburg dynasty, the prestige associated with the traditionally preeminent title of 'Emperor.'

However, the approach of path dependence is hobbled by two important weaknesses. Firstly, it is unclear in which circumstances path dependence and increasing returns processes can be expected to be effective, and in what circumstances decreasing returns and accelerating decline can be expected to be salient. Pierson, by way of explanation, offers parameters for conditions usually marked by increasing returns; those characterized by multiple equilibria, contingency, sequencing effects and inertia. However, as these parameters—the existence of multiple futures, non-determinism, temporality, and conservatism—are characteristic of most political conditions, we are no

---

[48] For a more extensive analytical discussion, see chapter one of Pierson's *Politics in Time.*

closer to a criterion that might allow us to predict when increasing returns and when decreasing returns are dominant.

Secondly, systems theory suggests that increasing returns processes can turn into decreasing returns processes and vice versa: "positive feedback can prevail for a period of time only to be replaced by negative feedback, or the sequence can occur in reverse…this means that stimuli that set off positive feedback at one point in time can set off negative feedback at another as the state of the system changes."[49] The framework of path dependence is not of much help when we wish to know the conditions in which increasing or decreasing returns hold sway, nor does it have strong analytical tools to tell us when increasing returns shift into decreasing returns or vice versa.

Thus, the ongoing resilience of key composite polities well into the post-Westphalian period is still a historical fact confounding expectations and in need of explanation. Moreover, the question of what factors facilitated the survival of these composite polities for so long into post-Westphalian *ancien régime* Europe is an inexplicably overlooked question that urgently calls for examination using the conceptual tools provided by international relations.

I provide now, a short outline of the overall work. In Chapter One, I provide three historically grounded approaches to understanding composite state longevity: dynasticism, 'early modern' realism, and leadership learning. Although analysis of the empirical cases shows that dynasticism—and in particular the mechanism of dynastic deterrence—is the most satisfactory explanation for why some composite states reached an advanced age, I do not test these approaches at this point. Rather, at the end of this

---

[49] Jervis, *System Effects,* p. 126.

chapter I outline my overall research strategy, including issues of case selection. In Chapter Two, I undertake an in-depth historical analysis of two case contexts—the British Isles and the Iberian Peninsula—in order to understand the diverging pathways of composite states that were dissolved at a comparatively earlier stage in their lifespan. We find that, despite the multiple interacting causal forces at play, the role of a credible external threat was a vitally important factor in accelerating amalgamation attempts by composite state rulers, and dynastic recognition and alliances were vitally important for successful secessions.

Having found through these preliminary cases that the role of the perception of threat arising from the external environment was a crucial factor in composite state dissolution, I proceed in Chapter Three to elaborate in detail a theory of dynastic deterrence—a derivation of the approach of dynasticism—that I argue has great explanatory power in comprehending the longevity of some composite states. The reason why early death composite states are examined before late survival composite states is due to our conception of state survival as the successful negotiation of near-death crises by the rulers of a state. For this reason, early death states (and their process of dissolution) are critical source material upon which we can establish the gravest threats faced by composite states. The third chapter outlining the specific theory of dynastic deterrence is introduced after the second, as some of the puzzling phenomena the theory attempts to explain are thrown into greater relief by the preceding empirical analysis.

In Chapter Four, I provide a detailed analysis of two late-survival composite states: Poland-Lithuania and the Holy Roman Empire. Taking the cue from the earlier finding that external threats were decisive in bringing about early amalgamation, I place

particular emphasis in this chapter on examining 'near-miss' existential crises these states faced, and asking how they managed to avoid death in these cases. Through a comparison of these near misses and ultimate dissolution, I demonstrate that it was dynastic kinship ties between the rulers of these states and other dynastic rulers that protected them by deterring full conquest and/or annexation attempts by other states.

Though the role of military power is not supported, leadership learning was shown to play a part, paradoxically, in teaching some atypical dynastic rulers the advantages of flouting dynastic norms. It was these atypical dynastic rulers, such as Charles XII and Frederick II, who would play a pivotal role in weakening the force of dynastic norms as the eighteenth century progressed. In light of the fact that it was the failure of dynastic deterrence that led to the final dissolution of late-survival composite states, and 'near-death' crises of composite states were overcome due to the dynastic deterrence mechanism, the operation of dynastic deterrence is seen to be sufficient in explaining composite state longevity. In the Conclusion, I put forward a set of remaining questions regarding systemic transformations in the late *ancien régime* and their role in creating opportunities rife for exploitation by atypical dynastic leaders. The strategies and goals of these atypical dynastic leaders was one of the main drivers of the eventual dissolution of late survival composite states, and though their detailed study is outside the scope of this dissertation, we point here to the important questions that must still be answered about their role and influence. These questions and their comprehensive investigation would constitute a systematic research paradigm of early modern politics in the context of dynastic interactions.

CHAPTER 1

APPROACHES TO COMPOSITE STATE LONGEVITY IN ANCIEN RÉGIME

EUROPE

What are the existing approaches that explain the resilience and longevity of composite states after the Peace of Westphalia? In this chapter we outline three compelling approaches for understanding the longevity of composite states in early modern Europe. The dependent variable to be explained is the longevity of some composite states, which survived longer after the Peace of Westphalia than theory tells us should have been expected.

Though akin to theories in the Waltzian sense of statements that explain laws or regularities, these approaches are broader and are grounded in relations between a particular type of unit. They attempt to explain the evolution of the early modern European system and its units in terms of the nature of these relations. Strategic dynasticism posits that the early modern system was shaped by co-evolutionary relations between dynasties, and takes the nature of interactions between these dynasties to have been grounded in common interests (the aggrandizement of the dynasty, which depended on marriages and recognition between dynasties) and thus entailed positive-sum dynamics. Early modern realism sees systemic evolution to have been based on competitive interactions between states, and takes the nature of these inter-state relations to have been close to 'survival-of-the-fittest' competition for limited resources. Leadership learning takes the early modern system to have developed primarily due to cross-generational learning patterns both within and across dynastic lineages.

These approaches, though they do not perfectly map onto the three paradigms of contemporary IR theory—realism, liberalism and constructivism—nonetheless mirror the central dynamics of these three paradigms in the historical context of early modern politics in a way that brings their essence to bear on the period. One pitfall to avoid when undertaking historical analysis is anachronism, and the danger of anachronism has not been sufficiently cognized in the application of IR theory to historical cases. Rather than automatically assuming that contemporary theories have trans-historical validity, a careful contextualization is necessary to ensure that theories do not overemphasize the role of institutions and practices which either did not yet exist, or were less consequential.[1]

It should also be noted that each of these basic approaches operates primarily on one level of the 'levels of analysis' schema.[2] Strategic dynasticism operates on the third level of inter-unit (or international) interactions, and views these relations as determinative of state longevity. During the early modern period, regardless of the bureaucracies that were developing in the period, what corresponds today to international relations took place primarily between ruling dynasties. Early modern realism operates on the unit level and takes both domestic and regime variables to be primary determinants of state survival. Leadership learning operates on the individual level, but historicizes the

---

[1] Liberalism and its emphasis on markets as well as liberal institutions and norms, cannot be transposed un-amended onto early modern states, as markets and liberal institutions did not have the prominence then that they do now. Instead of such an a-historical approach, I have chosen to extract the essence of liberalism and constructivism—namely the positive-sum nature of much economic rationality and the historically evolving (not timeless) nature of international systems, respectively—and anchored them in the contemporary actors and institutions best placed to be 'carriers' of these essences.

[2] Kenneth Waltz, *Man, The State, and War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959); J. David Singer, "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations," *World Politics* 14, no. 1 (1961): pp. 77-92; Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976); Alexander Wendt, "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory," *International Organization* 41, no. 3 (1987): pp. 335-370;

decision-maker by embedding them in diachronic learning lineages. In the context of early modern Europe, dynastic upbringing and education was a finely honed means to transmit knowledge and learning across generations. Because of the intentional focus of dynastic education on learning lessons from the past, we take this to be an extremely important variable in deciphering the puzzle of composite state survival. We now briefly describe each of these approaches in a preliminary manner.

The first approach—strategic dynasticism—takes the main protective factor explaining composite state longevity to be a series of interlocking kinship networks forged through marital unions between the ruling houses of composite states and those of other states on its external periphery. This theory takes it that the relations between the dynastic rulers of early modern Europe were characterized to a significant extent by co-evolution rather than mere competition as has been presumed by previous IR interpretations of this era. Rather than a zero-sum struggle for survival between dynastic rulers, the dynastic fabric of early modern politics was one that tied together the major ruling families of Western and Central Europe in a web of collaborative kinship relations, and these kinship ties gave rise to an *ancien régime* strategic culture entailing a norm of sovereign co-existence, where sometimes fierce military conflict precluded absolute goals such as the overthrow of a rival dynasty. Though in a later chapter we give a more detailed account of the dynastic deterrence mechanisms that arose from this network of dynastic ties, in this chapter we give a broad-strokes account of the dynastic approach that fills in the historical and cultural context of these ties.

The second approach is that of 'early modern' realism and competitive power politics, which argues that it was political and military power gained through the

combined resources of composite states—dynastic and non-dynastic—that gave rulers of composite states a military advantage enabling enhanced survival capabilities in the environment of early modern international competition. This approach applies classical realist principles to the question of composite state survival, and notes the advantages held by composite states in warfare as being sufficient to allow them to compete successfully against more integrated territorial states until the latter began to gain the advantage through the quality of their resources, in particular the solidarity and cohesion they could draw on based on an emerging cultural homogeneity in their societies.

The third approach posits the protective factor as existing on the level of the ruler, and cross-generational learning by successive dynastic rulers is taken to be the variable forestalling the disintegrative forces associated with composite rule. Leadership learning in the early modern period involved the gradual adoption of moves to strengthen direct rule within the immediate sphere of a ruler's patrimonial authority. But it also encompassed the development of an increasingly effective response to internal rebellions, which did not endanger the cohesion of the composite state itself by pushing centralization too far. Cross-generational learning is difficult to discern, as measuring it depends not only on the successful response to crisis, but also the gradual decline over time of severe threats (such as rebellions) to internal rule. Evaluating the effectiveness of learning thus depends on measuring the non-occurrence of a certain class of political events, rather than on their occurrences. In the following sections, we lay out these approaches and the specific mechanisms comprising their hypothesized empirical effects.

The manner in which these approaches interact with each other in the context of this research, is as follows. Due to the fact that these approaches operate primarily on

different levels of analysis, these approaches are largely independent of each other (although interaction effects clearly do occur) and we can think of variation occurring on each level (while keeping the other levels constant). For this reason, and due to the fact of causal equifinality assumed by this research, it is possible that more than one of these approaches is confirmed by this research, but it is important to determine the underlying mechanisms through which longevity—where it occurs—was brought about. Due to the distinct mechanisms proposed by the different approaches, it is unlikely that more than one approach is confirmed in its entirety as having caused an outcome of composite state longevity. However, overdetermination is a fact of social reality, and different causes do at times lead to a single outcome. Dynasticism posits close dynastic kinship ties to be protective, so the more integrated a ruling dynasty is in a network of kinship ties with ruling dynasties in its immediate vicinity, the less vulnerable it is to core threats to its sovereignty. If the ruling dynasty of a state is not integrated into a network of kinship ties with its dynastic neighborhood, the more vulnerable it will be to conquest attempts. Non-dynastic states, such as (at its limit) elective monarchies and republics, should be seen to be especially vulnerable to conquest attempts and/or prone to attempt the conquest of others. Due to being particularly insulated from conquest attempts, dynastically highly networked states are expected to stand a better chance of reaching an advanced age.

In the case of early modern realism, the key variable is the composite nature of the state itself. According to this view, composite states have an important advantage in terms of being able to draw on greater resources for their defense, when compared to early modern states relatively simple in structure, such as the absolutist state. The expectation arising from this is that composite states have a greater capacity to wage

defensive war successfully than they would if they were broken up into their constituent parts. Moreover, due to these defensive capabilities, we expect composite states to stand a better chance of reaching an advanced age because they are able to prevent catastrophic defeat in war and also because the rulers of other states are deterred from invading composite states due to their relative invulnerability to conquest.

Leadership learning is a difficult approach to operationalize, but at its heart successful learning depends on a leader (or prospective leader) having access to learning resources to aid them in mastering the art of government. Though hereditary monarchs hardly claimed a monopoly over the tools of learning as it related to rulership, nonetheless hereditary monarchies were in many ways educational laboratories expressly directed at instilling in young heirs the required temperament and cognitive tools to successfully rule their state. For this reason, we hypothesize that dynastic rulers were more empowered to learn from the mistakes of their forebears than the rulers of non-dynastic states (such as the rulers of true elective monarchies and republican states). Even within the category of dynastic rulers, first sons given the full benefit of dynastic instruction in the art of kingship and latter members of a dynastic line with the benefit of a retrospective view of the mistakes of predecessors are expected to be in an advantageous position to forestall disintegrative domestic forces. Critical mistakes—such as misconceived reforms leading to inadvertent rebellions endangering a dynasty's grip on power or military decisions endangering the security of the state—must be avoided by future generations in a leadership lineage for a dynasty to be successful.

In this way, it is possible to evaluate the causal efficacy of each approach in explaining the dependent variable of composite state longevity after the Peace of

Westphalia. Though we undertake a comprehensive evaluation of these approaches

through the use of the comparative-historical method in the chapters that follow, these

qualitative methodologies are sufficient to demonstrating—when applied to the

comparative cases to follow—that the approach of dynasticism has the most explanatory

purchase on the puzzle of composite state longevity in early modern Europe. This is due

to its ability to satisfactorily explain the manner in which some late surviving composite

states overcame moments of existential crisis, but also due to the ability of this approach

to explain the manner in which late survival composite states met their ultimate end.

Dynasticism and Co-evolution

The dynastic nature of early modern rule is often noted, though it is under-

theorized by scholars of IR. The very object of analysis, when it is the relations between

ruling dynasties (or families), is hard to grasp for a discipline that holds relations between

unitary territorial states (or the *'inter-national'*) or relations between leaders as the central

unit of analysis. However, the system of dynasticism which created networks of kinship

stretching across territorial boundaries, is an important part of the fabric of early modern

politics. Dynasticism as a strategy for increasing one's power and prestige was pursued

actively by hereditary ruling dynasties in the early modern period. And pursuing

dynasticism reaped ample rewards in the form of active support and benign neglect on the

part of dynastic allies and rivals alike. Despite the recent upsurge of research on

composite states and the early modern period more generally, a comprehensive

theoretical and empirical analysis has yet to be undertaken of the mechanisms through

which such dynastic strategies operated and their overall effectiveness in bringing substantive advantage to the rulers who deployed them.

One initial observation recommends the focus on dynasticism as a variable important to understanding composite state longevity. In wars between the dynasts of the early modern period in Europe, change of leadership was rarely coerced after loss in a major war, a fact suggesting limits to the warfare of this period, and a degree of complicity between dynastic leaders ensuring survival of the dynastic fabric. In other words, not all was considered fair game when it came to early modern dynastic love and war. Wars of the early modern period framed by the dynastic principles of the time, even when affected by balance of power considerations, were wars fought for the recognition of dynastic claims by opposing rulers. To gain recognition for a claim, the opponent one wished to gain recognition from had to survive, not be destroyed. As Lynn writes, the early modern in Europe "was an era in which states struggled for discrete advantage, not to destroy other states or regimes and not to decide great issues of religion or ideology."[3] It was only with the rise of Revolutionary France that the conception of war being aimed at the overthrow of an antagonistic ruler became widespread.

The Means and Ends of Dynasticism

Dynasticism when operating normally was a system of interdependence that forged competitive yet collaborative bonds between dynasties and prevented the escalation of dynastic rivalries to zero-sum conflicts aimed at the destruction of rival dynasties. Rather, the terms of competition between dynasties during the early modern

---

[3] John A. Lynn, "International rivalry and warfare," in *The Eighteenth Century: Europe 1688-1815, ed.* T. C. W. Blanning (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 183.

period was a constant jostling for greater status and prestige than one's rivals.[4] Limited

territorial aggrandizement was also an important axis of dynastic competition. The

formalized and rule-driven nature of this competition protected dynastic leaders from

being overthrown in the wake of destructive wars—even where they had proven the

weaker belligerent. Dynastic ties of kinship continued to be built between competing

dynasties despite the seasonal alternation of war and peace, and an inter-dynastic

marriage between the ruling families of dynastic states often marked the successful

conclusion of a peace treaty between belligerent parties.

At the outset, we outline the ends which dynasticism, as a strategy deployed by

early modern rulers, was intended to secure, and the means through which these ends

were sought. The dynastic network in early modern Europe operated primarily through

ties of kinship entailing influence and support between royal and noble dynasties both

across territorial boundaries and within them. Though the competitive and destructive

aspect of dynasticism is well known, the collaborative and co-evolutionary aspect has not

been sufficiently appreciated.[5]

The complex and contradictory nature of dynasticism is well exemplified through

the central means by which dynastic ends were sought, namely the inter-dynastic

marriage. Though we will also examine other dynastic strategies—such as the dynastic

alliance and dynastic prestige—the most integral means of seeking dynastic ends was the

dynastic marriage. Beyond being necessary for the continuation of a noble or royal

---

[4] But importantly, prestige allows for absolute gains, as the prestige gains of one dynasty do not necessitate the loss of another's.

[5] The destructive aspect is well depicted by Howard, as he writes of the early modern period that "every child born to every prince anywhere in Europe was registered on the delicate seismographs that monitored the shifts in dynastic power. Every marriage was a diplomatic triumph or disaster. Every stillbirth…could presage political catastrophe." Michael Howard, *The Causes of Wars,* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), p. 14.

dynasty, the arrangement of an inter-dynastic marriage offered an opportunity for the main power-holders of a dynasty to secure the main end of dynastic politics, an increase or consolidation of the status of one's dynastic lineage in the status hierarchy of the European dynastic system. This goal of maintaining or increasing the status of one's dynasty in the hierarchical system outweighed the more typically modern imperative of increasing power in terms of material resources such as territory, military capability, wealth, and population. Dynasticism permeated the European aristocratic system, and for royal and non-royal dynast alike the goal of devoting one's efforts to uplifting one's family's status transcended the drive for individual achievement. As Scott notes, "the overriding goal was always the success of the family and the increase of its fame and fortune…"[6]

The primary prerequisite to maintain or increase dynastic status is of course to ensure dynastic continuity, and this required a smooth succession to another member of the dynasty—preferably male—after the death of a dynastic power-holder. Such succession could not be achieved without marriage and the generation of healthy offspring. However, marriage itself involves risks as the marriage tie entails the incorporation of a member of another dynasty into one's own. Such a circumstance meant that not only was dynastic succession partially dependent on the co-operation of other dynasties in offering eligible marriage candidates, but that one's own family dynamics could be influenced by the family of a bride and, most problematically, one's own dynastic possessions could (at a later date) be claimed by the members of a rival dynasty

---

[6] H. M. Scott and Christopher Storrs, "The Consolidation of Noble Power in Europe, c.1600-1800," in *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, Volume One,* London: Longman, 1995, p. 14.

in case of a breakdown in the normal chain of succession. On the other hand, marriage

offered the opportunity for dynasties to accumulate prestige and sometimes even

territorial possessions if a fortuitous marriage was entered into, as family inheritance was

then "the principle means of transmitting wealth, status, and privilege."[7]

Ronald Asch succinctly captures the nature of dynastic strategy in the early

modern period—and the opportunities that an advantageous marriage could proffer—as

follows:

> [D]ynastic 'states,' in practice of course often no more than 'loose conglomerates of self-governing territories,' could be created almost out of nothing by an astute combination of family policy—essentially marrying the right woman, preferably a potential heiress, at the right time—political ruthlessness, and the ability to construct legitimacy for the newly won status…[8]

With the purpose of dynasticism being the ennoblement of a dynasty in the status

hierarchy vis-à-vis its rivals, the dynastic marriage was an especially well-suited means

to achieve both the primary imperative of dynastic survival and the additional goal of

dynastic elevation. This goal of elevation held for noble families in general as much as it

did for royal dynasties. As Hurwich writes succinctly of the German noble family, "the

goal…was to 'maintain and elevate the lineage'…that is, to continue the family in the

male line and to enhance its territorial base and its prestige through marriage alliances

with other families of at least equal rank," a point that can be generalized to noble

families across the continent.[9]

---

[7] Clarissa Campbell Orr, "Dynasticism and the World of the Court," in *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Europe,* ed. Peter H. Wilson (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), p. 436.
[8] Ronald Asch, "Monarchy in Western and Central Europe," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History, 1350-1750,* ed. Hamish Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).
[9] Judith J. Hurwich, "Marriage Strategy among the German Nobility," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* XXIXL, no. 2 (1998): p. 178.

Status Competition

For royal dynasties, much of the political jostling associated with dynastic competition was a quest for the 'precedence' of one's dynasty as well as the accumulation of honorific titles held by its principal members—two interdependent objectives. One of the most intense areas of dynastic competition, precedence was a concept associated since the Middle Ages with the hierarchical ranking of the rulers of Europe. In the medieval world, the Holy Roman Emperor was long considered to be preeminent secular ruler of Christendom and counterpart of the Pope, a dual system that led to competition between the Emperor and Pope with regards to their primacy.[10] Wight describes the system of precedence in the feudal hierarchy as follows:

> From the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries it was assumed that the states of Western Christendom fell into a hierarchy. Feudal society was hierarchical; the society of princes, though each claimed to acknowledge no superior, likewise 'observed degree, priority, and place, office and custom, in all line of order.' Hence the rules of the papal curia, with their tables of the relative dignity of the monarchs and republics of Christendom.[11]

Competition for precedence took place between the occupants of the same title. The European hierarchy of ranked titles set 'emperors' higher than a 'king,' a 'king' higher than an 'elector,' an 'elector' higher than a 'duke,' and so on. And within each of these categories, dynasties and the rulers at their heads vied for a higher position in the rank. For instance, within the category of the Kings who formed a level below the Emperor, jostling for precedence is demonstrated by the quest for supremacy between the French and the Spanish monarchs during the seventeenth century, or the quarrel over rank

---

[10] Nicolson notes that: "the Church was regarded as the soul and the Empire as the body, each dependent on the other…the Pope, the visible head of the eternal Church, was entrusted [with] the care of souls; the Emperor, being human and temporal, was the guardian of men's bodies and acts." Harold Nicolson, *Kings, Courts and Monarchy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1962), p. 174.
[11] Martin Wight, (1977), *Systems of States,* Leicester: Leicester University Press, p. 135.

between England and Spain, and so on.[12] Below the level of polities with 'crowned heads,' entities such as the Dutch Republic, Venice, and various German electors also jostled with each other over questions of precedence.[13]

Categorical challenges put into question central categories within the ordering system itself, such as the preeminence of the Holy Roman Emperor in the European hierarchy, disputed by powerful Kings such as Louis XIV, who contended that the Holy Roman Empire was not a continuation of the Carolingian Empire (and thus lacked the claims to precedence of the latter). Louis argued, as did other French Kings in history, that the Kings of France—having been descended from rulers of the West Frankish Kingdom—had a better claim to be descended from Charles the Great (the first Emperor crowned by the Pope) than the Emperor himself. Nonetheless, despite occasional categorical challenges such as this, the pre-eminence of the Emperor was widely recognized even if such precedence was not well aligned with the power hierarchy in Europe.[14]

The Multiple Uses of Dynastic Marriage

The preeminence of dynastic marriage as the primary means to achieve dynastic aggrandizement was a result of the multiplicity of goals it could secure when successfully undertaken. Dynastic marriage—or, more to the point, the choice of partner as the consort for one's heirs—was a strategy designed to realize a series of interconnected and often diverging goals. These goals included: 1) ensuring dynastic continuity through the

---

[12] Evan Luard, *The Balance of Power: The System of International Relations 1648-1815* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), p. 135.

[13] Andrew Lossky, "International Relations in Europe," in *The New Cambridge Modern History, Volume VI,* ed. J. S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 170.

[14] Luard, *The Balance of Power,* p. 134.

creation of legitimate progeny; 2) raising the status of a dynasty by supplying brides to or

receiving brides from other dynasties higher placed in the precedence ranking; 3)

acquiring possessions including territory and resources through heirs inheriting the titles

of both their parents; 4) the consolidation of territory already held through marriages

between allied dynasties; 5) gaining or consolidating wartime alliances; 6) gaining allies

in elections for elective monarchies; 7) cementing peace between antagonistic dynasties;

and 8) staking legitimate claims on the territory of rival dynasties.[15] Though these goals

can be summarized in the language of political science as the search for dynastic survival,

consolidation and expansion, nonetheless analytically these goals are distinct.

Empirically, we see the choice of consort being undertaken with the aim of

realizing two or more of these goals simultaneously. In fact, we would argue that such

'multivocality,' or the pursuit of multiple goals simultaneously, is one of the hallmarks of

dynastic strategy as it was deployed by early modern ruling dynasties.[16] The first goal—

that of ensuring dynastic continuity—can be considered the essential end toward which

all dynastic marriages were oriented, as the rearing of children until marriage and

parenthood was a prerequisite for dynastic survival. This is akin to what the neorealist

---

[15] Raffensperger in his penetrating study categorizes dynastic marriages as follows: "marriages as part of fomenting or resolving a conflict; marriages to create Christianization; marriages that involve speculation (an exiled heir/ruler who may return home); and marriages that are part of large, often Europe-wide, political arrangements." Christian Raffensperger, *Reimagining Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 72.

[16] Padgett and Ansell use the term multivocality to describe the strategies deployed by Cosimo de' Medici in successfully founding a powerful European dynasty. They argue that for Cosimo, much of the effectiveness of his strategies came from such multivocality, or "the fact that single actions can be interpreted coherently from multiple perspectives simultaneously, the fact that single actions can be moves in many games at once…the 'only' point of this, from the perspective of ego, is flexible opportunism— maintaining discretionary options across unforeseeable futures in the face of hostile attempts by others to narrow those options. Crucial for maintaining discretion is *not* to pursue any specific goals. For in nasty strategic games…positional play is the maneuvering of opponents into the forced clarification of their (but not your) tactical lines of action." (p. 1264) John F. Padgett and Christopher Ansell, "Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici, 1400-1434," *American Journal of Sociology* 98, no. 6 (1993): pp. 1259-1319.

tradition in IR refers to as the 'survival' motive of states, though dynastic survival is even more tangible than state survival, as dynastic survival can be directly apprehended as it entails biological life and death (rather than the state which can only be conceptually intuited).[17] When other goals were sought alongside dynastic survival, these goals were sought as supplements to the survival motive rather than as substitutes to the same.

The goal of dynastic consolidation, akin to the status quo motivation in IR, was oriented toward protecting dynastic possessions. In the case of the Spanish and Austrian branches of the Habsburgs as well as amongst other powerful dynasties, consanguineous marriage was a common practice intended to consolidate a dynasty's hold over its dominions while restricting the succession claims of the members of out-groups. As Fichtner notes of the significance of frequent marriage ties between the branches of the Habsburg dynasty, "such a pattern suggests that the function of these unions in empire building may not have been primarily to pave the way for new acquisitions but to encourage…friendly relations with neighboring states necessary to protect and preserve earlier territorial gains."[18] The expansionist motivation was often accomplished through marriages by earlier generations of a dynasty when their territorial holdings were small, and entailed the use of marriage ties between well-landed dynastic offspring to increase the inherited domains of future generations. An expansionist dynasty is similar to the concept in international politics of the acquisitive, or greedy state.

Dynastic Strategy and Uncertainty

---

[17] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Boston: McGraw Hill, 1979), pp. 91-92.
[18] Paula Sutter Fichtner, "Dynastic Marriage in Sixteenth-Century Habsburg Diplomacy and Statecraft," *The American Historical Review* 81, no. 2 (1976): pp. 258-259.

It should be noted that though such a distinction between the various types of

motivation (status quo versus revisionist) can be made in theory, empirically actors must

make decisions in the midst of time constraints and an unclear view of the consequences

of their actions, and thus have only a limited awareness of the goals that a particular

action will realize. Faced with such limitations of time, choices, and knowledge, actors

often 'satisfice,' or decide in favor of a particular potential consort when an acceptable

threshold is met.[19] The practical limits of choosing the perfect political match for dynastic

heirs or rulers is particularly evident at times when the need for a successor is urgent. For

instance, faced with the urgency of ensuring a successor to the weak and ailing Charles

II, the carefully laid plans for the young king to marry the Archduchess of Austria, Maria

Antonia, were shelved due to the young age of the archduchess and the time that Charles

would have to wait to consummate the marriage. Instead, plans were hastily laid for

Charles II to marry the French princess, Marie Louise of Orleans due to her age,

perceived fertility, and physical beauty.[20] Furthermore, the survival motivation and that

of consolidation/expansion are intrinsically difficult to differentiate. In the early modern

system, active military leadership and military success was valorized as the hallmark of a

great king, and the alliances and materiel a successful political marriage could bring from

the family of a bride, though not essential for ensuring dynastic succession, may have

---

[19] On bounded rationality and satisficing, see Robert Keohane, *After Hegemony* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 111-116.

[20] Silvia Mitchell, "Marriage Plots: Royal Women, marriage diplomacy and international politics at the Spanish, French and Imperial Courts, 1665-1679," in *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics Since 1500,* ed. Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James (London: Routledge, *2016),* pp. 92-94.

been understood by the actors involved to be an intrinsic part of the justification for dynastic intermarriage.[21]

In terms of its efficacy as strategy, dynastic marriage at times facilitated the realization of some of these ends, and at other times undermined them and brought about destabilizing consequences. The very multiplicity of the ends sought through a dynastic marriage meant that the associated opportunities and risks were like a double-edged sword: dynastic gains could quickly become losses in changing circumstances, such as when dynastic power-holders died without legitimate successors whereupon the members of rival dynasties could claim rights to succession based on genealogical lines of descent. The destructive consequences of dynastic marriage could not be completely eliminated except by an endogamous system of strict intra-dynastic unions, a practice not adopted by leading dynasties in Europe. Even the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs, with their frequent consanguineous marriages, did not adopt a policy of strict intra-dynastic unions, though they made a self-conscious attempt to prevent other dynasties from gaining succession claims to their patrimony through frequent marriages between cousins of the two branches. Even this degree of consanguinity was to prove deleterious, and was ultimately to doom their hold over the Spanish Crown. Biological interaction between dynasties was one area where the natural monopolizing impulse was self-limiting due to evolutionary mechanisms. Historical dynasties in other parts of the world that practiced

---

[21] Black notes that in the early modern period "many rulers saw war as their function and justification as defenders of their subjects and inheritance, a source of personal glory, dynastic aggrandizement and national fortune." Jeremy Black, *European Warfare 1660-1815* (London: UCL Press, 1994), p. 213.

endogamy to an even higher degree were often beset by fierce rivalries between siblings for the spoils of succession.[22]

The Dialectic of Collaboration and Conflict

The complex dialectic between collaboration and conflict at the heart of the practice of dynastic marriage makes it difficult to comprehend solely in terms of the classic categories of modern politics such as power and conflict. Dynastic marriage transcends simple dichotomies of conflict or collaboration, as it was often aimed simultaneously at consolidating an alliance with another ruling family and undermining it by gaining legitimate claims of inheritance to their patrimony. Tying the knot of marriage both necessitated the collaboration of rival dynasties, but also undercut such ties by fomenting conflict between them. Dynastic unions were often made to secure a dynasty's line of succession *and* lay claims on the line of succession of another, or made at one time to cement an alliance with a friend during war *and* at other times to secure peace with a rival after war. The very multivocality of purpose that dynastic marriage possessed led to contemporaries' understanding of its nature and purposes becoming mired in ambiguity. In such a milieu, given the multiple goals that dynastic marriage sought to realize, the declared intentions of leaders cannot be the sole criterion by which their policies are judged. It is necessary to examine the empirical consequences of dynastic policies as much as their intended aims, especially when evaluating their contribution to long-term historical outcomes such as the survival of particular institutional lineages and forms, which were themselves only partially the outcome of conscious striving.

---

[22] Jeroen Duindam, *Dynasties: A Global History of Power, 1300-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), Chapter 2.

Conflict between royal dynasties could be mitigated somewhat by restricting dynastic unions between them, but this path was unavailable to many royal dynasties due to the need to maintain a lofty distance between the royal and noble strata. The primary consequence of dynastic marriage beyond ensuring a legitimate successor, at least according to contemporary understandings, was that of cementing a political alliance or understanding between two dynasties. Despite the frequent occurrence of dynastic conflict, the persistent urge to form inter-dynastic unions represents a crucial survival mechanism for early modern dynasties, given the dangers of creating kinship relations with the members of non-royal dynasties, an act that would have the effect of weakening the quasi-divine image of the monarch.[23] This drive to elevate a royal dynasty above the nobility entailed refraining as far as possible from entering ties of marriage with them, and for this reason dynastic marriages between royal dynasties was the primary means through which the transcendental position of a ruling dynasty within their societies could be ensured. By way of an example, though earlier French ruling dynasties occasionally married members of the nobility, the French Bourbon dynasty progressively refrained from entering into such marriage alliances in order to consolidate their royal position. In doing so, as Scott observes, "the new ruling family was determined to emphasize the importance of royal blood in order to assert the dignity of the dynasty and to distance the Bourbons from even the greatest of their subjects."[24] Some dynastic families were on

---

[23] "As Duchhardt makes the point, "members of a ruling house usually did not marry minor nobles: thus a Habsburg Archduchess did not marry an imperial knight or some minor rural Count…the higher nobility did their very best to avoid bad matches, harboring as they did, the potential for a considerable reduction in social prestige and the squandering of social capital." Heinz Duchhardt, Heinz, "The Dynastic Marriage," EGO European History Online, published April 8, 2011, http://www.ieg-ego.eu/duchhardth-2010-en p. 9.

[24] Hamish Scott, "The Line of Descent of Nobles is from the Blood of Kings: Reflections on Dynastic Identity," in *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe,* ed. Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini (Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), p. 217.

occasion open to marriages with non-royal or non-ruling houses, such as the English

Tudors or some of the ruling dynasties of Scandinavia and Russia previous to the

nineteenth century. But dynasties such as the Habsburgs, Bourbons, Wittelsbachs,

Wettins, and the houses of Savoy and Braganza were very careful to refrain from entering

into dynastic unions with non-royal families.[25]

Dynastic Coexistence and the Early Modern Court

Despite the endemic possibilities for conflict built into the institution of dynastic

intermarriage, nonetheless dynasticism was a force that ameliorated the destructiveness

of competition between early modern states ruled by hereditary dynasties. It did so by

shaping the goals of dynastic rule in the context of the early modern royal court, and in

this sense facilitated the co-evolution of different political units. The socializing impact

of royal courts on the foreign policy objectives of monarchs have to date only been

treated in a fragmentary manner, but this approach brings the constitutive role of courts to

center stage.

Dynastic marriage and the circulation of royal dynastic consorts around Europe

integrated the system of royal courts, and created what I call the *recognition of an*

adversary's right to exist between ruling dynasties sharing kinship ties. This emergence

of a higher level of normative understanding arising from the systematic interaction of

actors is similar to the emergence of the structure of anarchy and its causal consequences,

---

[25] Daniel Schönpflug, "One European Family?: A Quantitative Approach to Royal Marriage Circles 1700-1918," in *Royal Kinship: Anglo-German Family Networks,* ed. Karina Urbach (Munich: K. G. Saur, 2008), pp. 28.

depicted by Waltz in his *Theory of International Politics*.[26] Emergent structures arising

from interaction come to constrain the behavior of the actors themselves, with time. In a

similar manner, the network of royal courts had an imperceptible but very real effect in

shaping the relations between early modern political units. However, this imperative of

dynastic coexistence, which led to what I call in later chapters a 'conquest taboo' or

'conquest desistance,' nonetheless did not have a strong independent existence, and its

effect was relatively weak when close dynastic kinship ties were not present.

Nonetheless, contrary to the implicit narrative of mainstream scholarship in the field of

state and systemic formation, the dynamic existing between different types of units with

dynastic ties was not one of uninhibited competition, but was one where collaboration

and recognition occurred *despite* military competition.

When competition for precedence, succession rights or glory led to the outbreak

of armed conflict between polities, and when each state was ruled by a house with

dynastic ties with its rival, the ensuing conflict tended to aim for limited objectives rather

than overthrow of the rival dynasty. The recognition of a rival dynasty's right to exist was

proportional to the strength of kinship ties between them. On occasion, a rival dynasty

would be uprooted from their hereditary lands, but would invariably be compensated with

territorial holdings elsewhere. The critical social context in which such norms were

formed and internalized was the network of European courts, encompassing dominant

royal courts such as Versailles and Vienna as well as subsidiary ones such as the

Saubandian and Bavarian courts. In these social settings, royal dynasties and the high

nobility engaged in a complex interaction.

---

[26] Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Boston: McGraw Hill, 1979).

Royal Courts and the Routinization of Conflict

In order to understand the full significance of the royal court as a setting for the creation of normative understandings about the limits of military and political conflict, we demonstrate the dynamics existing in the socializing power of the *ancien régime* royal courts by way of a series of analogies between courts and other forms of social conflict. The key to the ability of courts to ameliorate the severity of dynastic competition is the notion of the *routinization* of conflict. [27]

The model of Norbert Elias depicting the early modern court as the space where the monarch captured the nobility, [28] has more recently been shown to be incomplete and even misleading in some respects, as studies have discovered that court dynamics did not neatly correspond to the Bourbon court depicted by Elias as the ideal-type. Though the court could serve as a setting for the domestication of the nobility, it could also buttress

---

[27] Max Weber uses the term 'routinization' in the context of charisma, and the manner in which the charisma of a founding leader becomes domesticated over time amongst his/her followers. He writes that: "In its pure form charismatic authority has a character specifically foreign to everyday routine structures. The social relationships directly involved are strictly personal, based on the validity and practice of charismatic personal qualities. If this is not to remain a purely transitory phenomenon, but to take on the character of a permanent relationship…it is necessary for the character of charismatic authority to become radically changed. Indeed, in its pure form charismatic authority may be said to exist *only in statu nascendi.* It cannot remain stable, but becomes either traditionalized or rationalized, or a combination of both." (p. 246) Max Weber, *Economy and Society, Volume One* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978). I use the term routinization in an analytically identical manner for the evolution of conflict. Conflict tending to an extreme cannot persist. It must either result in the annihilation of one of the other party in short order, or become *routinized* and mediated by rules and conventions. The notion of a permanent revolution is oxymoronic, a contradiction in terms. The *bellum omnium contra omnes,* or the war of all against all, similarly, cannot be a permanent 'state' of affairs. All regularized conflict between adversaries comes to take on rules of procedure and limits by a process of accretion.

[28] The royal court was not an object of systematic scholarly attention until the rediscovery of the court by the sociological work of Norbert Elias. Elias posited a macro-historical transformation whereby the former dependence of monarchs on the military power of the nobles was outgrown, and where monarchs gradually pacified this rebellious power in the context of courtly interaction and court manners. As he states, "the transformation of the warriors into courtiers, the change in the course of which an upper class of free knights was replaced by one of courtiers" was a critical part of the emergence of monarchical power, and he argues that this transformation also entailed an increasing dependence of the nobility on the monarchy and employment available in the context of the royal court, as "the produce from their estates…no longer allowed them more than a mediocre living…and certainly not a social existence that could maintain the nobility's prestige as the upper class against the growing strength of the bourgeoisie." See Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), pp. 394-5.

the continuing ability of the aristocracy to constrain the ruler.[29] Even the Bourbon court

itself came to be seen as much more complex, with multidirectional interactions

rendering monarchs constrained in previously unseen ways by court dynamics, such as

the customary restraints that prevented monarchs from being able to freely exercise their

right of dismissing holders of court office, which had by that time become *de facto*

hereditary within a noble house. Adamson summarizes this argument as follows:

> [I]t was not merely the personal failings of the prince, but the court itself, that imposed limitations on the authority and effectiveness of the crown. This was partly a matter of expectation and tradition. From vice-regal Dublin to 'imperial' Moscow, the court was embedded in a culture that esteemed custom and convention at least as much as it did the sacred rights of kings. Entrenched conventions governing appointments to court office; inherited perks and privileges; deeply ingrained attitudes towards 'proper' aristocratic conduct and honour: all these served to circumscribe the monarch's freedom of manoeuvre, fencing him in with a series of principles that were difficult, if not impossible to break.[30]

To be sure, a domestication of the nobility took place, but the process was far

more contingent and bi-directional than had initially been supposed. This was a historical

process in which both the nobles and the ruler were, to a degree, pacified, as factional

disputes were routinized and sublimated by the force of the web of emerging and existing

customs and traditions of the royal court. The king gained the power of surveillance as

the nobility became tethered to the moorings of the permanent court, but likewise the

king, try as he might to undermine the high nobility by appointing officials outside of

their ranks, was still constrained in the extent to which he could wield such control over

court appointments. The nobles, by sheer force of numbers, could still subtly shape the

---

[29] This is a point noted by Asch. See Ronald Asch, "Introduction: Court and Household from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries," in *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility,* ed. Ronald Asch and Adolf Birke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).
[30] John Adamson, "The Making of the Ancien Régime Court 1500-1700," in *The Princely Courts of Europe 1500-1750,* ed. John Adamson (London: Seven Dials, 2000), p. 16.

options available to the king, thus wielding what Bachrach and Baratz call power over the 'non decision-making process.'[31]

The royal court, then, regardless of whether one views it as a site where the king domesticated the nobility or vice versa, was an environment in which political conflict was apt to become routinized. In this sense, the court played a role similar to that of the parliamentary assembly in shaping the evolution of political conflict. And given that courts were the main setting in which the royal dynasties of Europe interacted with each other, the interaction of royal dynasties was also routinized. The routinization of conflict can be seen as a case of iterated conflict and its stabilization over time. When powerful adversaries in a political conflict do not have sufficient means to prevail outright, the conflict will begin to repeat itself as a series of iterated encounters, and this iteration has a tendency to gradually ameliorate what began as a struggle for life and death into a less absolute conflict with an implicit set of parameters set by governing rules and conventions.

Such a routinization of conflict can be seen in the historical evolution of sports, where there almost universally occurs a gradual process whereby rules become clarified and systematized. The gradual emergence of restraint via a series of mutual understandings on the level of nuclear strategy between the superpowers during the cold war is another example of the routinization of conflict.[32] There is also a family resemblance to the evolution of cooperation modeled by political scientists, and the

---

[31] Peter Bachrach and Morton Baratz, "Two Faces of Power," *American Political Science Review* 56, no. 4 (1962): pp. 947-952.

[32] See Freedman on the historical evolution of this strategic understanding and restraint. Jervis is still the most penetrating analysis of the reason why such restraint was predetermined. Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy, Third Edition* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003); Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1989).

various factors that may be preconditions for such cooperation to emerge. The example chosen by Axelrod of the development of cooperation in the United States Congress is instructive for our discussion:

> [I]n the early days of the republic, members of Congress were known for their deceit and treachery. They were unscrupulous and frequently lied to each other. Yet, over the years, cooperative patterns of behavior emerged and proved stable. These patterns were based on the norm of reciprocity.[33]

The system of early modern royal courts was the critical site where normative understandings about the limits of inter-dynastic conflict were formed and disseminated throughout dynastic Europe. The system of resident court offices functioned vertically by obligating regional nobles from different parts of the realm to participate collectively in court activities, thereby expanding their circles of loyalty beyond their own region. Horizontally, the royal court served as the locale for diplomatic interactions and the creation of inter-court and inter-dynastic networks, and tying all these separate threads together was the dynastic marriage. It is no accident, then, that the co-evolutionary dynamic tying royal courts to each other and to satellite courts in the provinces of the large kingdoms, was driven most of all by dynastic consorts and their attendants who were sent around Europe in the service of the dynastic marriage.[34]

Dynasticism's Expectations for Composite State Longevity

The approach of dynasticism, being oriented around the co-evolutionary interaction of dynasties, leads the analyst to a specific set of expectations with regards to our central research question of composite state longevity. If a composite state is a

---

[33] Robert Axelrod, *The Evolution of Cooperation* (New York: Basic Books, 2006), p. 177.

[34] The court system, in this regard, functions as the primary site of transmission of what Meyer *et al.* have called the 'normative models of the state.' See John Meyer et al., "World Society and the Nation-State," *American Journal of Sociology* 103, no. 1 (1997): pp. 144-181.

hereditary monarchy ruled by a dynasty tightly integrated into a network of kinship ties with neighboring ruling dynasties, this composite state should be significantly less vulnerable to conquest attempts arising from its environment. This is due to the limitation on conquest that holds between dynasties with strong kinship ties, especially direct marriage ties. If we assume that the greatest threats to survival a composite state can face are those originating in the external environment, we infer that such composite states possess an enhanced probability of reaching an advanced age due to these relations protecting its dynastic survival. This expectation holds also for elective monarchies, provided they are *de facto* governed by norms of hereditary succession.

Conversely, if a composite state is an elective monarchy or republic where the ruler is non-dynastic or selection of ruler governed by the elective principle and the ruler only loosely (or not at all) integrated into dynastic kinship ties with neighboring dynasties, we expect such a composite state to be especially vulnerable to conquest attempts by neighboring rulers, both dynastic and non-dynastic. By deduction, these states may also be especially prone to undertake conquest attempts. Dynastically ruled composite states, where the dynastic ruler is not related by kinship with other dynastic rulers, or where the dynastic ruler atypically does not pursue dynastic goals, can be expected to behave in a manner contrary to dynastic principles and/or be vulnerable to conquest attempts.

These diverging expectations also hold in an analogous manner for non-composite states. So absolutist dynastic states are also protected from wars of conquest, and non-dynastic absolutist states not protected, and so on.

Alternative Explanations

In this section, we outline two alternative explanations for the survival of composite states in the early modern period. The first of these alternative explanations is an adapted 'early modern' realist explanation stressing the military, economic, and demographic resources provided by the composite aspect of these states, providing them a larger pool of demographic and economic resources to compete militarily than they would otherwise if they were separate, and enabling them to survive the competitive environment of early modern Europe either directly through warfare or via deterrence. The second is that leadership learning, particularly the accumulation of cross-generational learning facilitated by hereditary monarchies, was a critical factor in aiding the rulers of composite states to successfully adapt to the challenges they faced from absolutist states. Both of these explanations compete with the dynastic explanation, as they put forward alternate mechanisms as being more decisive for composite state survival, but locate the explanatory factor not at the 'international' level of dyadic and/or multilateral relations between dynasties and dynastic rulers, but on the level of state and society (e.g. the realist explanation), and the individual (e.g. leadership learning).

As we have already seen, this categorization of explanations accords with the levels of analysis typology in IR scholarship, though it distinguishes between an inter-generational lineage of rulers, the domestic resources that such rulers have access to, and kinship ties between ruling dynasties—an amendment of the classic schema rendering it of more relevance to early modern politics by better representing the most significant institutions and units involved in the international interactions of the period. As we are

wishing to decipher the puzzle of why some composite states were able to survive for longer than expected, part of any answer must consider how comparatively decentralized states (i.e. composite states) fared in defending themselves militarily against the more centralized states of the time, of which we take the absolutist state as one representative example. The adequacy of composite states' rulers responses to the weaknesses they perceived in their own domains, or what Waltz calls internal balancing, should also be considered.

Leadership learning and deterrence are both critically tied up with perceptions.[35] Learning is a change in behavior and/or strategy based on limitations perceived by the past self, or of predecessors. Deterrence is the use of conditional threats to manipulate the calculations of an adversary to prevent them from attacking the state.[36] Here, threats must be perceived to be threatening (and offensive action untenably costly) in order to induce desistance. These considerations, involving as they do actors' perceptions, mean that theories attempting to explain outcomes in this historical period—if they are not to risk anachronism and thus lose analytical leverage over their subject matter—must be anchored at least in part in the categories through which historical actors saw their world.

'Early Modern' Realism

When it is asked how realism views the phenomenon of composite states given that it diverges significantly from the unitary state model, it is tempting to conclude that realism has difficulty in conceptualizing such entities. Indeed, most recent strands of

---

[35] For what is still the most comprehensive theoretical treatment of perception in international politics, see Jervis' magisterial *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*.
[36] Thomas Schelling, " The Diplomacy of Violence," in *Arms and Influence* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1996); Robert Art, "To What Ends Military Power," *International Security* 4, no. 4 (1980): pp. 3-35; Lawrence Freedman, *Deterrence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004).

realist thought have difficulty in transposing their explanatory framework to the early modern context. Although neorealism has not directly engaged with the phenomenon of composite states, in general neorealism takes it that systems have a homogenizing tendency, where difference is not easily tolerated and all units in a system come to resemble each other due to the strictures of self-help competition. However, it is noteworthy that some realist scholars with a historical bent have concluded that the formation of a composite state is a logical solution to the problem of self-help under certain conditions.

Martin Wight, in one of the only explicit discussions of the phenomenon of the composite state in the realist literature, develops the assertion of Carr that "the small country can survive only by seeking permanent association with a Great Power."[37] Wight argues that the strategy of becoming a client state (with varying degrees of independence) of a great power is a logical strategy for a small state in order to ensure its survival. Such a policy of voluntary clientilism entails the sacrifice of autonomy on the plane of foreign policy, but he asserts that:

> Tolerable methods, whereby the small country need not lose its individuality, have been worked out in the histories of Britain, America and perhaps Soviet Russia. They are of two kinds, according to whether the small country loses its political independence altogether, thus ceasing to be a Power, or is more loosely associated without being absorbed.[38]

This discussion is given more flesh by Schroeder when he notes that in European history most units could not afford to undertake expensive policies of self-help. He notes that: "they were like landowners with valuable property which they knew they could not possibly insure, first because insurance premiums were ruinously expensive, second

---

[37] E.H. Carr, *Conditions of Peace,* (London: Macmillan, 1942), p. 55.
[38] Martin Wight, *Power Politics,* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1946), p. 31.

because against the most devastating dangers no insurance policy was available at any price, and third because the very attempt on their part to take out an insurance policy would encourage robbers to attack them."[39] From this lesser known realist perspective, the phenomenon of the composite state—entailing voluntary clientilism, the pooling of resources and the outsourcing of foreign policy to a stronger state—can be seen to be a rational strategy to attempt survival when other means would fail.

Developing this perspective, we propose that a realist explanation which does justice to the competitive milieu of early modern politics, views composite states as being endowed with significant strengths that allowed them to successfully rebuff military challenges from other states, especially when compared to how they might have fared if broken up into their constituent parts. This is for the simple reason that the leaders of multiple kingdoms were able to draw on an enlarged pool of demographic and economic resources for defensive purposes, against both external and internal enemies. The rulers of composite states also possessed strong resources to maintain their rule, including the ability to use troops from one kingdom to suppress rebellions in another, in effect playing their subject provinces off against each other.[40]

The advantage in terms of additional capability that rule over multiple territories gives to a leader, despite its intuitive sense, has not been sufficiently acknowledged. This is because pure quantity seems to us today more of a weakness than a strength, given that

---

[39] Paul Schroeder, "Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realist Theory," *International Security,* 19 (Summer, 1994), p. 116.
[40] H. G. Koenigsberger, "Dominium Regale or Dominium Politicum et Regale," in *Politicians and Virtuosi* (London: Hambledon Press, 1986); J. H. Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," *Past and Present* 137 (1992): pp. 48-71.

cohesion[41] and force employment[42] are now seen as more critical measures of capability than size. And as multiple nationalities, languages, and religions were more salient in composite states, this diversity—as seriously undermining cohesion—has been seen to disadvantage composite states in their competition with their centralized counterparts. The awareness that the internal homogeneity of a state could be an important measure of its power (and a significant source of weakness when absent) was already emerging during the latter part of the eighteenth century, particularly due to the extraordinary military prowess of Frederick II's relatively homogeneous and cohesive Prussian army on the European military stage. Despite this, the more prevalent view during most of the early modern period was that the quantitative advantage given by a larger population and territory gave a ruler an important advantage in competition that outweighed any disadvantages resulting from possessing a multinational and multilingual polity. After all, what could be more intuitive than that more men, territory, more natural resources and more tax revenue leads to an increase in power rather than a diminution thereof?

In this vein, King James I, when discussing the benefits of the personal union between England and Scotland that came about due to his accession, as a sitting King of Scots, to the English throne, gives first the argument for added power gained through the union. This emphasis shows the importance he places on this factor:

> [I]f we were to looke no higher then to naturall and Physicall reasons [for the benefits of the Union] we may easily be persuaded of the great benefits that by that Union do redound to the whole Island: for if twentie thousand men be a strong Armie, is not the double thereof, fourtie thousand, a double the stronger Armie? If a Baron enricheth himselfe with double as many lands as hee had before, is he not double the greater? Nature teacheth us, that Mountaines are made of Motes, and that at the first, Kingdomes

---

[41] Edward Shils and Morris Janowitz, "Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (1948): pp. 280-315.

[42] Stephen Biddle, *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

being divided, and every particular Towne or little Countie, as Tyrants or Usurpers could obtaine the possession, a Segniorie apart, many of these little Kingdomes are now in processe of time, by the ordinance of God, joyned into great Monarchies, whereby they are become powerfull within themselves to defend themselves from all outward invasions, and their head and governour thereby enabled to redeeme them from forreine assaults, and punish private transgressions within.[43]

Along similar lines, another author, writing a hundred years later in advance of the full union between England and Scotland via the Acts of Union of 1707 under Queen Anne, writes that:

> *England* secures an old and dangerous Enemy to be their Friend, and thereby peace at Home, and in more safety to carry on Designs abroad. *Scotland* will not be allarm'd by the Threatnings of a powerful and rich Neighbour, nor so easily put under the yoke of a foreign Enemy. *England* gains a considerable addition of brave and courageous Men, to their Feet, Armies and Plantations: and we secured by their Protection, and enriched by their Labours.[44]

In other words, rulers as well as elites of the early modern era considered that whatever their disadvantages, political unions between kingdoms—whether full amalgamation into a single kingdom or composite union under a common monarch— held substantial advantages in terms of security against external threats due to the increase in men, resources, and revenue, that each additional kingdom would accrue to the ruler.

We can discern the importance of quantitative materiel not only from the declarations of contemporary actors, but also from another indicator. As we have already noted, dynastic marriages were for early modern dynasties a political opportunity of signal importance due to the possibility of obtaining a dynastic possession legally through inheritance. Territory obtained through inheritance retained greater legitimacy over those obtained through other means, and direct successions from parent to child were virtually

---

[43] James I, *The Political Works of James I,* ed. Charles Howard McIlwain (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1918), p. 271.
[44] William Seton, *Scotland's Great Advantages by an Union with England* (Edinburgh, 1706).

impenetrable to contestation. The realist explanation understands the early modern obsession with acquisition of territory through legitimate dynastic means as primarily driven by the concern to expand the military power of the state, and secondarily as an efficiency gain due to obviating the need to expend materiel in war. Thirdly, territory acquired through dynastic means is preferable, even according to the realist logic, due to the stability of possession that it entailed when contrasted with the unstable nature of territory acquired through raw conquest. The Count of Olivares, when explaining to his master Philip IV of Spain the distinction between his inherited territories and those gained through conquest, said that "all [the kingdoms] that Your Majesty possesses today, with the exception of a few small parts that it is not necessary to mention, you posses by right of succession; only Navarre and the empire of the Indies are conquest."[45]

Most dynasties participated eagerly in the practice of dynastic intermarriage, aiming to marry their daughters to the dynastic heir with the most possessions in the hope of laying claim to this patrimony and strengthening the resource competitiveness of the state. Prussia, a state often understood to have been fixated on military over other forms of power, itself continued to expand via dynastic instruments during the early modern era. When the Holy Roman Emperor allowed Frederick I to claim the title of 'King in Prussia' in 1701, he was the ruler of a composite political entity that included the Margraviate of Brandenburg, the Duchy of Cleves, the Country of Mark, and the Duchy of Prussia, amongst other patrimonial holdings. Late into the eighteenth century, even the Prussian rulers continued to expand the state through non-military means, with Brandenburg-Ansbach and Brandenburg-Bayreuth being sold to the King of Prussia by

---

[45] Quoted in J. H. Elliott, "The Spanish Monarchy and the Kingdom of Portugal, 1580-1640," in *Conquest and Coalescence,* ed. Mark Greengrass (London: Edward Arnold, 1991), p. 50.

the childless last Margrave Charles Alexander, in 1791.[46] For a militaristic state such as Prussia, dynastic aggrandizement can be interpreted as a means to the further end of military consolidation, rather than being an end in itself.

It was only during the final decades of the eighteenth century that heterogeneity within composite states began to be seen as a liability by monarchical rulers, with reform attempts being undertaken to homogenize the sociological diversity of the ruler's territorial holdings. As an example here can be cited the abortive reforms implemented by Emperor Joseph II to centralize the domains of the Habsburg monarchy and introduce centralizing measures—such as making German the official language throughout the composite realm—that would fail miserably due to resistance from the Hungarian nobility. Through the extensive measures undertaken by early modern rulers to add to their territorial holdings through dynastic unions—even at the risk of exacerbating the sociological diversity of their realms—we can discern that they saw the advantages of possessing multiple independent territories to outweigh any disadvantages of ruling a composite state.

The realist explanation for the resilience of composite states is not that the rulers of composite states necessarily had more military power and capabilities than the rulers of simple political entities (as composite states were not necessarily the largest entities in early modern Europe), but rather that it was the added materiel provided by combining territories that significantly enhanced the self-help ability of the constituent parts, assisting them to successfully weather the challenges of early modern military engagements and enabling them to deter aggressive moves.

---

[46] Jeremy Black, *Kings, Nobles and Commoners* (London: I B Taurus, 2004), p. 68.

<u>Dual Mechanisms of the Realist Approach</u>

We now outline the two main mechanisms via which the realist explanation might produce the effect of composite state longevity, greater armed personnel and strengthened deterrence. The first pathway is direct military engagement and the additional men, resources and taxes gained with each additional territorial holding allowing the rulers of composite states to compete in war against absolutist rivals sufficiently to, if not attain victory, then at least minimize defeat to a level that fundamental state survival is never endangered. As intuitive as this seems, even the mere strength of additional men, resources and revenue is not a factor that self-evidently gave the ruler possessing them an automatic advantage, especially given the nature of warfare at the beginning of the early modern period.

In the sixteenth century, wealth could offset the deficiencies of a ruler in terms of personnel and other factors, as armies were largely drawn from a polyglot pool of Swiss, German *landsknechte,* Italian, and other paid mercenaries.[47] These mercenaries happily served any master for pay, as national allegiance was not a salient factor in this era for recruitment. In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the role of trade and the wealth generated from offshore colonies gave to the trading powers—the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, English, and French—an important source of wealth to fund the increasingly costly war of the European continent.

But one development that occurred around the beginning of the period we are examining was a vitally important factor allowing composite states to take advantage of the resources that cross-territorial leadership offered. This was the decreasing role of

---

[47] Michael Howard, *War in European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976).

67

mercenaries and the emergence of a class of state agents who were full-time employees of the nascent administrative apparatuses that were springing up around this time. These developments, of course, presaged the entrance of the standing army onto the European scene.

Transformations of military practice and technology on the one hand and the development of a proto-bureaucracy and a nascent state organization on the other, was surely an iterative feedback process where the identification of a first cause is difficult if not impossible. Be that as it may, there is some agreement that transformations in the use of linear formations of drilled and disciplined musketeers led to the need for a massive increase in the size of armies, and also made possible the execution of more complex strategic plans than had been previously possible.[48] The great innovator of these strategies was the ruler of Sweden, Gustavus Adolphus, who through his years of campaigns against the Baltic countries and later the Habsburg armies during the Thirty Years War created a battle-hardened army renowned for their discipline in being able to instantaneously implement hierarchical commands.[49] But the trend towards a massive increase in armed personnel was a development that the rulers of composite states could adapt to by drawing on the population reserves of their composite domains to build sufficiently large armies to defend their dynastic possessions.

---

[48] These points comprise the essential outlines of the argument for a military revolution that took place in the early modern era. The key works here, are: Michael Roberts, "The Military Revolution, 1560-1660" in *Swedish History* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1967); Geoffrey Parker, "The 'Military Revolution,' 1560-1660—a Myth?," *The Journal of Modern History* 48, no. 2 (1976): pp. 195-214; Clifford Rogers, Clifford, "The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years' War," *The Journal of Military History* 57 no. 2 (1993): pp. 241-278; Jeremy Black, "Was there a Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe?," *History Today* 58, no. 7 (2008): pp. 34-41.

[49] Howard, Michael, (1976), *War in European History,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, Chapter 4.

This capacity to massively increase the size of their armies, or so the argument runs, was a possibility especially well suited for the rulers of composite states to exploit, given that these rulers had access to the manpower, revenue, and other resources provided by multiple patrimonial domains. However, the absolutist French case was the first context where the fruits of these military transformations were self-consciously implemented by bureaucrats such as Michel le Tellier and his son the Marquis de Louvois when constructing the much admired armies of Louis XIV as seen by about 1680. To be sure, these changes were guided by a civil bureaucracy to administer the army, a technique not yet seen in many of the more deeply decentralized states of the period, nonetheless these military institutions were copied by all the other rulers of Western Europe in quick succession.[50] And the quality of troops, according to this explanation, is important insofar as the touchstone of an army successful in its deployment of the firepower and strategies wrought by these developments was the one composed of a disciplined soldiery. The possession of multiple domains, in this regard, obviated to an extent the need to resort to less disciplined mercenaries for defense of the state. And the ethnic or linguistic homogeneity of such troops was not yet seen as an essential liability for an army to succeed in achieving its aims.

The second mechanism of the early modern explanation of the military advantages of composite states is that of deterrence. The assumption underlying this mechanism is that rulers of composite states who have access to the additional military resources of multiple domains have sufficient military power to deter neighboring (or non-neighboring) states from launching wars of conquest against them. Deterrence is

---

[50] Howard, *War in European History,* Chapter 4.

conventionally understood in international relations as the use of conditional threats to manipulate the value calculus of an opponent in order to prevent them from attacking the state. In the early modern period, as deterrence was not yet a formally developed concept, and as rulers rarely made formal deterrent threats against their adversaries, we may assume much of the deterrence that took place to have been implicit and not explicit.

Implicit deterrence, then, places the emphasis on a would-be-attacker and asks whether they intended conquest of a territory or throne and were dissuaded from pursuing their aspired conquest due to having perceived the impossibility or intolerable costliness of the same. Yet there should also be some indication that the ruler of the defending state, despite not having issued an explicit deterrent threat, nonetheless signaled in some way the invulnerability of his domains or the costliness of conquest. This show of strength need not correspond to actual capabilities but could be a form of swaggering—namely signaling that suggests greater strength than is actually possessed.

The notion of credibility is less important when considering implicit deterrence than when threats are explicit, as can be seen by the frequency in the natural world of weak species using mimicry and deception as a survival strategy against stronger prey. This use of deterrence, where an implicit signal of the danger or futility of an attack is sent without resort to an explicit deterrent threat, though less widely seen in the literature, has been termed by Lawrence Freedman as '*internalized deterrence,*' or as cases "in which deterrence is not…deliberately applied as a strategy, yet it still succeeds."[51] This is the sense in which I use the term 'implicit deterrence' here, and the early modern realist

---

[51] Freedman, *Deterrence,* p. 29.

explanation takes it that implicit deterrence was one of the two consequential

mechanisms working to protect composite states from conquest attempts.

Tanisha Fazal[52] has recently formulated a cogent theory of state death, but her

theory deals mainly with the period after (not before) the Napoleonic Wars, and the main

factor predicting death in her study—geographical location as a buffer state between two

competing rivals—was found not to be a compelling explanatory factor in the

representative cases of composite state late survival we examined because it begs the

question of composite state survival. If a peripheral domain of the composite state is

taken as being a 'buffer state,' then it is explicable that the threat of coming under the

sphere of influence of a neighboring power leads to composite state death by

amalgamation. But if this be the case, the process of territorial unification involving

amalgamation should have taken place much sooner, given the advantage the

monarchical center held vis-à-vis the periphery. The very fact of composite state survival

well into the post-Westphalian period—especially in cases such as the Reich where many

peripheral domains were extremely small and vulnerable—not to mention the long-term

survival of 'restored' composite state components such as Portugal, leads to the

conclusion that Fazal's buffer state theory is inadequate when extended to *ancien régime*

Europe.

Furthermore, Poland-Lithuania—included here as a case of a late-survival

composite state—is cited by Fazal as a case supporting her theory. However, the

Commonwealth's buffer status remained constant throughout the early modern period,

and yet variations in its security and military capabilities can be seen which the buffer

---

[52] Tanisha Fazal, *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), Chapter 5.

state theory cannot explain. This, together with our discovery that a weak form of the norm against conquest (which Fazal notes as emerging after 1945) also existed in Europe before the Napoleonic Wars, renders the buffer state theory peripheral for understanding the dynamics fore-grounded by this study.

The realist explanation for the late survival of non-standard types of political unit in the early modern period does not explicitly utilize anarchy as an explanatory mechanism playing a role in producing the outcome I am attempting to explain, due to the fact that the overarching condition of political interactions during the 1648-1789 period was one where the degree of anarchy that existed was constant, and thus had no explanatory power (due to this invariance). There was no discernible long-term shift towards either greater hierarchy or greater anarchy during this period, as the residual feudal (and hierarchical) framework of the Holy Roman Empire was not instantly extinguished alongside the Westphalian Peace. To the extent there took place a limited displacement of the Reich by the Habsburg Monarchy during the period we examine (and a limited shift toward a strengthening of horizontal relations), the survival and resilience of comparatively more archaic political units is rendered even more counter-intuitive given the advantage that anarchic conditions give to actors able to adapt to changing competitive conditions. According to Waltz, the originator of the neorealist perspective according to which anarchy is the primary structuring force in international relations, "if some do relatively well, others will emulate them or fall by the wayside."[53]

Realist Expectations for Composite State Longevity

---

[53] Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 118.

It is possible to derive a number of expectations for composite state longevity from the early modern realist approach. For early modern realism, the most important variable is the composite nature of the state, or what might be called 'regime type.' This realist perspective takes it that composite states are enabled to perform well in early modern warfare due to the added resources they gain from the additions to the core patrimonial estate. These benefits need not result in an offensive advantage for composite states. The expectation is merely that larger composite states are enhanced, due to the added resources of the composite domains, in their ability to ward off the threat of catastrophic defeat in war. Additionally, the perspective also posits that the latent defensive capacities of composite states provide a strong implicit deterrent, stopping other states—especially absolutist ones—from launching offensive moves against the composite state. This enhanced self-help capacity is especially marked when compared with the vulnerable state that the constituent parts of a composite state would have faced if taken apart.

From this, we expect that composite states perform at least as well in early modern warfare as absolutist (or otherwise non-composite) states of a similar or smaller size, but that this chiefly manifests itself in defensive capabilities protecting the composite state from catastrophic military defeat. In other words, early modern realism expects a state to stand an enhanced chance of survival as part of a composite entity than if it were separate and alone. It is difficult to operationalize this expectation without using counterfactuals,[54] but in general terms we expect that composite states possess a greater

---

[54] To be precise, the counterfactual would be that a state as part of a composite states has a greater chance of survival than if it were not part of a composite state. However, we do not find in early modern history

likelihood of surviving to an advanced age when they are larger with more composite domains than when they are smaller with fewer composite domains. Furthermore, it can be expected that composite states of a size greater than the average of an early modern composite province stands a better chance of reaching an advanced age than simple states of a size approximating the average of an early modern composite province. Moreover, we expect that composite states, when they reach an advanced age, do so due to their ability to continually fend off military invasions and conquest attempts from the external environment, rather than because of other factors. The absence of conquest attempts is expected to be due to implicit deterrence, rather than being traceable to the dynastic deterrence mechanism outlined in the previous section.

Intergenerational Leadership Learning

The final alternative approach for understanding the late-survival of composite states is that of leadership learning. This approach operates both within the lifetime of a leader and cross-generationally, and it leads to demonstrable adaptive changes in the way that leadership is exercised and followers mobilized. In general terms, leadership learning can be measured by the desistance of leaders from deploying strategies and tactics shown to have been ill-suited to realizing their objectives in the past, and their increasing reliance on strategies shown to have succeeded in the past. In this sense, behaviors enacted through learning are not necessarily well adapted to the environment in which they occur. Furthermore, leadership learning on a deeper level can lead to changes in the ends (and not merely the means) of leadership across a lifetime or across multiple

---

examples of composite state constituents breaking off and soon thereafter losing its sovereignty, and standalone counterfactual analysis is only of limited utility.

generations of a leadership lineage, though such changes are notoriously difficult to document due to the fragmentary or ambiguous documentary evidence of the ultimate intentions of early modern rulers.

Though past success does not necessitate future success—and perversely nothing fails like success, as Jervis[55] has rightly put it—nonetheless we can infer the presence or absence of learning through the increasing or decreasing frequency of certain leadership strategies across time. Maladaptive learning is just as much an instance of learning as adaptive learning and is analytically similar in structure. We here are not concerned to evaluate leadership learning according to some moral or absolute criterion of correctness, but are merely interested to trace the contribution of the learning undergone by the rulers (and lineages of rulers) of some early modern composite states toward the longevity of their states.

The 'General Crisis' and the Learning Imperative

In particular, for early modern leaders in the period 1648-1789, effective leadership learning was crucial in keeping at bay the threat of internal rebellion and dissolution from within. Internal rebellions were particularly prevalent during the first half of the seventeenth century, and an influential current of scholarship takes it that these separate instances of political crisis were not independent but interdependent events due to the occurrence of multiple crises in close temporal proximity.[56] This great confluence

---

[55] Robert Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 144. Though, even more paradoxically, it should be noted that feedback effects also lead to success bringing unstoppable momentum, as is evidenced by the adage, 'nothing succeeds like success.'
[56] This view of the interdependent nature of social and political crises during the early to mid seventeenth century assumes the epistemology of 'eventful temporality' outlined by William Sewell, which argues that there exists "a causal dependence of later occurrences on prior occurrences and assumes that social causality is temporally heterogeneous, not temporally uniform." William Sewell, "Three Temporalities:

of political and social rebellions and upheavals of the seventeenth century has been called the 'General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century' in influential articles by Eric Hobsbawm and Hugh Trevor-Roper.[57]

The more political dimension of the general crisis manifested itself in rebellions and revolts that included the English Civil Wars; the revolt of the Catalans and the Portuguese against the Spanish Monarchy (1640); the revolts in Naples and Palermo (1647); the Fronde in France (1648-1653); the 'bloodless' reaction of the ruling oligarchy to monarchical absolutism in the Netherlands (1650); the revolt of the Ukraine (1648-1654); as well as the Bohemian Revolt which led to the Thirty Years War and convulsed the Reich and its surroundings.[58] This context of proliferating dissent and rebellion was particularly damaging to the composite states of the early modern era due to their complex structures incorporating cross-cutting loyalties and ties, and it was undoubtedly the ever present possibility of rebellion that most troubled the rulers of composite states in the following century and forced on them the need to learn from the past.

The learned ability of the rulers of composite states to respond successfully to an initial phase of internal crisis was, according to this explanation, the critical factor behind later leaders' ability to ensure the resilience of their composite domains. In this regard, the European *ancien régime* (before its dramatic collapse brought about by Napoleonic

---

Toward an Eventful Sociology," in *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences,* edited by T. J. McDonald (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), p. 263.

[57] For the seminal essays on the 'general crisis' thesis by Hobsbawm, Trevor-Roper, Elliott, Roberts, Mousnier, and others, see the collection: Trevor Aston, ed., *Crisis in Europe 1560-1660* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963). See also later contributions to the debate: J. H. Elliott, "Revolution and Continuity in Early Modern Europe," *Past and Present* 42 (1969): pp. 35-56; Geoffrey Parker, "Crisis and Catastrophe: The Global Crisis of the Seventeenth Century Reconsidered," *The American Historical Review* 113, no. 4 (2008): pp. 1053-1079; and also his Geoffrey Parker, *Global Crisis: War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013). For a dissenting view, see E. H. Kossmann, "Trevor-Roper's 'General Crisis'," *Past and Present* 18 (1960): pp. 8-11.

[58] Elliott, "Revolution and Continuity in Early Modern Europe," *pp.* 35-56.

France), constitutes an excellent instance of a 'natural experiment,' where the long-term trajectory of leadership learning can be traced from an initial starting point that consists of an exogenous assigned random treatment.[59] There is a strong case for arguing that the 'general crisis' was indeed an exogenously (and thus randomly) assigned event affecting all of Europe equally, justifying a comparison between the varying responses and subsequent pathways of different rulers to the crisis. Whatever its origins, and we do not attempt within the parameters of this project to establish the origins of the general crisis, there is now some agreement that the 'crisis' of the seventeenth century was a general one. As Aston notes, there is "a basis of agreement…[that] there was an economic and political crisis all over western and central Europe in the seventeenth century."[60]

Though the general crisis was close to universally felt, it nonetheless did not affect all European societies. Therefore we must first differentiate composite states in Western and Central Europe in 1648 into those that did and did not undergo a severe domestic crisis of authority during the early seventeenth century. For those regimes not undergoing crisis, leadership performance in the eighteenth century can be evaluated by asking whether systematic weaknesses of leadership strategy can be attributed to the absence of learning opportunities during the previous century, or to the absence of early adaptive reforms. For composite states that did undergo a seventeenth century crisis, on the other hand, the initial response to rebellion and the consequences of this response on the evolving core-periphery relationship within the composite state would be the first

---

[59] Thad Dunning, *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 15-16. The designation of any empirical stimulus as a natural experiment is not unproblematic, as under historical conditions the treatment is not assigned by the researcher but is merely deemed to resemble a treatment. In other words, a case has to be made that the treatment was 'as-if' randomized and not self-selected.

[60] Aston, *Crisis in Europe 1560-1660,* p. 3.

stage of the learning process. The second stage would entail the ruler evaluating whether the initial response was adequate or inadequate, and then either continuing to implement a successful response or constructing another approach to the peripheral domains. The response to later authority crises occurring in the eighteenth century by states that did and did not undergo an early crisis can be compared, and the adequacy of this response evaluated to estimate the role of leadership learning in facilitating the relative stability of the composite state as a whole.

The learning process can be conceptualized in historical context, as follows. In the initial phase, composite state rulers who were unable to adequately respond to early crisis were unable to resist the centrifugal forces of political rebellion and/or foreign intervention affecting part or all of their realms. During this phase, it is highly likely the composite states ruled by leaders unable to respond to crisis will have dissolved. Nonetheless, some composite state rulers were able to adequately respond to early challenges while maintaining the inherently composite nature of their states. The classic case in this category is the Holy Roman Empire. Permanent failure of the half-hearted absolutist reforms attempted by Ferdinand II was indicated by the *modus vivendi* of the Westphalian Peace. Such ambitious centralizing reforms were not again attempted by Holy Roman Emperors until Joseph II and his unsuccessful reform attempts of the late eighteenth century, and such efforts would be limited to the Habsburgs' hereditary domains. Other composite state rulers responded to initial political crisis by concentrating (or attempting to concentrate) central authority (and in some cases installing an absolutist regime). The response in England was in such manner originally the replacement of composite monarchy by a unitary absolutist regime (the English Commonwealth), which

would nonetheless prove unable to survive for very long. The deleteriousness of absolutism was learnt by English monarchs during the English Civil Wars, and (excepting the clumsy attempt to move toward absolutism in the religious domain taken by James II) would not be tried again. For this reason, the response to the succession crisis of Anne (and the Scottish threat to essentially separate from England) was dealt with by a proposal for incorporating union that, in a limited way, respected the wishes of the Scots and preserved the parliamentary system.

In Spain, the premature centralizing efforts of Olivares would fail, and Portugal successfully seceded from the Iberian Union, but the rest of the Spanish composite state survived for a time. Nonetheless, after dynastic failure with the death of the last Habsburg king, Charles II, the learning internalized at an earlier stage—namely that premature centralization can backfire—was lost. After the War of the Spanish Succession, where the Aragonese sided with the Austrian Habsburg against the newly installed Bourbon ruler of Spain, the Nueva Planta decrees of Philip V would succeed in effectively eliminating the Spanish composite state.

The Lessons of the General Crisis

What are some of the commonalities that have been observed between the political upheavals that comprised the 'general crisis,' and what might be the task of leadership in responding to and learning from these challenges? Rather than viewing the emergence of centralized and homogeneous authority over a unified territory as a preordained outcome, we must look more closely at the strategies that early modern composite state rulers developed to control restive rebellions in the era of the general crisis. From the historical debate surrounding the general crisis and its manifestations,

one important and recurring theme is the critical role of the nobility and assembly in the uprisings of the period, and the consequent necessity for royal power to weaken this restive force without destroying it completely.

In a major contribution to the debate on the origins of the English Civil Wars, Adamson argues that these disturbances must be understood in the context of an aristocratic or 'baronial' reaction to what they saw as the encroaching power of the monarchy, leading the nobility to attempt a reorientation of the mixed constitution toward parliament and away from the king.[61] The Fronde rebellions in France (1648-1653) have also been read as an attempt on the part of sections of the aristocracy to gain a greater share of the benefits of royal government.[62] Other examples of the nobility as an important factor in the disturbances of the General Crisis might include the role of the noble estates in the Bohemian Revolt leading to the Thirty Years War,[63] as well as the Portuguese revolt against Spanish rule, amongst others.

In the wake of such aristocratic discontent, a number of responses were possible. They all entailed, in one way or another, co-opting the nobility by enmeshing them in ties of interdependence with the ruling dynasty at the same time as uncoupling them from their estates and the larger society as a means to suppress alliances between them and the populace. One of these—the solution exemplified in the English case—involved an accommodation between king and parliament where a *dominium politicum et regale* and stalemate between these two forces was routinized after the revolution of 1688 "behind

---

[61] J. S. A. Adamson, "The Baronial Context of the English Civil War," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 40 (1990): pp. 93-120; J. S. A. Adamson, *The Noble Revolt: The Overthrow of Charles I* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2007).
[62] Geoffrey Treasure, *Richelieu and Mazarin* (London: Routledge, 1998), Chapter 11.
[63] H. G. Koenigsberger, "The European Civil War," in *The Habsburgs and Europe 1516-1660* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971).

the veil of the…absolute sovereignty of the King-in-Parliament."[64] It was a hereditary

monarchy with parliament nonetheless possessing an implicit veto power over issues of

succession. Here parliament was to be tested as the setting that could integrate the

monarchical core and the composite regions.

The model adopted by the Holy Roman Empire was also that of an

accommodation between the emperor and powerful lords, or electors, in a complex

structure that formally remained an elective monarchy but in practice moved

substantively toward becoming a hereditary monarchy. During the eighteenth century,

despite this decentralization in the Reich, moves to cement centralized authority were

taken in the Habsburg hereditary domains, which included territory outside the empire,

such as parts of the kingdom of Hungary. But the decentralized structure characteristic of

the Reich remained, and the Reichstag—similarly to the British parliament—would

remain in place as an institution fostering integration among the elites of the different

imperial territories.

The second, as seen in the 'absolutist' French context, was that of limiting the role

of the assembly while drawing the nobility closer to the ruler in the setting of the court,

so they could be more effectively co-opted and their restive impulses dampened. The

consequence of this was social distancing which rendered the royal court more distant

from the third estate while temporarily magnifying its prestige, (though this distancing

would finally lead to dangerous levels of popular disaffection). This is the contribution of

Norbert Elias and his theory of the manner in which the nobility after Louis XIV was

---

[64] H. G. Koenigsberger, *Monarchies, States Generals and Parliaments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 334.

ensnared in a courtly competition for prestige, status, and the king's favor.[65] This is the model of a co-opted nobility without a role for parliament. But such a model of co-optation without assemblies was difficult for the rulers of composite monarchies to pull off without destroying the composite nature of their state due to the impossibility of divesting whole regions of their traditional rights and liberties while allowing regional assemblies to survive.

The role of the parliamentary assembly in acting as a pressure valve expressing the grievances of the nobility before they reached dangerous levels, as well as in taming regional polarization, is an important part of the explanation for composite state longevity. Though such an accommodation cannot be brought about by the ruler alone, there is a crucial role for monarchs mindful of the virtues of compositeness who—individually or cross-generationally—came to realize that the centralizing pressures recommending a concentration of military, extractive, and administrative capabilities should not be pushed too far in the direction of absolute power. The evolution of an understanding on the part of certain rulers and dynastic lineages that restraint in dealing with political assemblies—and preserving the status quo of a composite states—was necessary to avoid the disintegrative pressures of regional rebellion, is the third alternative explanation for composite state longevity after 1648.

Leadership Learning's Expectations for Composite State Longevity

Because of the difficulty in directly accessing the internal processes of leadership learning, we must approach it through proxy measures. There are nevertheless excellent proxy measures of leadership learning we can utilize to derive expectations and evaluate

---

[65] Norbert Elias, *The Court Society* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1983).

the explanatory power of this approach. The leadership learning perspective posits that some leaders have better access to learning resources to aid them in mastering the art of government. One of the most important sources of leadership learning for young dynastic heirs was the rigorous tutoring and discipline that royal houses reserved especially for a young prince. Such education was assisted not only by tutors hand picked by the monarch to initiate the prince into the ways of rule, but also by an entire genre of political treatises—the 'mirrors of princes'—that aimed to instruct the young prince in the nature and methods of kingly rule.[66] Many important political thinkers of the time wrote works intended to come under this genre, such as Machiavelli and Botero. The focus of such instruction and also of much political reflection of the period was that of learning lessons from history so as not to repeat the mistakes of one's kingly predecessors.

Such rigorous education justifies the use of royal dynastic upbringing as a proxy measure for leadership learning. Thus we expect hereditary dynastic rulers of the early modern period, all else even, to have been better educated in the art of kingship and more empowered to learn lessons from the past than non-dynastic rulers, such as the leaders of republics and elective monarchies. The leaders of these non-hereditary types of regime were not raised from birth to learn the craft of government in the same way that dynastic heirs of hereditary monarchies were, and thus the expectation would be that the leaders of these types of regime were not as well equipped to maintain the status quo of a composite state. Instead, we expect them to be more prone to attempt absolutist reforms, such reforms in turn being liable to ignite social opposition and either moves to amalgamation or spurring successful secessions. Thus we expect the longevity likelihood of composite

---

[66] Martha Hoffman, *Raised to Rule: Educating Royalty at the Court of the Spanish Habsburgs, 1601-1634* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011).

states are enhanced when they are also hereditary dynasties, and diminished when composite states are elective monarchies or republics.

Similarly, within the category of dynastic rulers, those raised as heir apparent are better empowered in terms of leadership lessons when compared with younger siblings who came to take on kingly responsibilities due to death of the eldest son, and those who accede to the throne after completing their princely education are better equipped to learn from the past than rulers forced to accede in their minority. In the diachronic view, the first ruler of a dynasty can be expected to have less access to the collective repository of kingship lessons that accumulate over the course of a dynastic line than later rulers of the same dynasty. Extrapolating from this, we can expect composite state death as being more likely to occur early in the sequence of a dynasty than later, and more likely during the reigns of younger siblings not raised to rule than eldest sons who were given access to all the institutional memory of a dynasty that it could give. Finally, it is expected according to this approach that composite state death—when it occurs—is catalyzed by internal rebellions rather than by external threats.

The Balance of Power as a Tool of Dynasticism and Power Politics

We now proceed to discuss the ambiguous role of the balance of power as a dynamic incorporating both dynastic and power political elements during the early modern period. Because the balance of power plays a role in shaping outcomes in all of the cases we examine, and due to its position straddling the different approaches, it is

unfruitful to posit balancing as an alternative explanation in its own right. Rather, it must be seen as a general environmental condition affecting all cases.

The balance of power, during the early modern period, was a mechanism that was closely tied with both dynastic and military factors. This leads to difficulty in isolating it as a separate variable unrelated to either the dynastic or the military approach. For this reason, we treat the balance of power in this work as a separate strategic factor, which played a role in both dynastic and power political calculations. The ambiguous status of the balance of power can be seen when we examine the historical evolution of the balance of power as an idea. The balance of power, as it was understood in the early modern period—far from completely contradicting earlier medieval norms—was a development and translation of the earlier custom of allowing the survival of weaker units. The medieval aversion to destroying one's dynastic enemies found its way into the early modern language of powers and forces, despite the desuetude of the strong legalist framework of the earlier medieval discourse. The balance of power, then, as it operated during the early modern period, worked to protect the maintenance of the dynastic system writ large.

The Genealogy of the Early Modern Balance

Though the balance of power has been widely seen as the dominant motive behind the outbreak of war in this period, the outbreak of many significant wars of this era were in fact precipitated by dynastic succession crises,[67] and the family resemblance

---

[67] The economically motivated wars between the English and the Dutch (1652-4, 1665-7, and 1672-4) are somewhat exceptional in this regard for their lack of dynastic motivations. Cf. Parrott, David, (2001), "War

between these and the legalistic wars of the Middle Ages points to the function of war as a crucial mechanism to restore order after dynastic breakdown, rather than as merely the sign of balancing behavior.[68] Wilson notes that interpretations of early modern warfare see it as framed by the drive to defend one's rightful possessions, (no matter how dubious the claims), and he writes that in this period "war was still regarded as an extension of a legal battle in which the resort to violence came only after all efforts at peaceful resolution had foundered on the obstruction and culpability of the other side."[69] Concomitantly, crises of succession brought an opportunity for ambition and conflict, but rarely was the legitimacy of a sitting prince challenged during his reign,[70] and it was successions where there was some deviation from the normal procedure where conflict occurred.

The principle of the balance of power and aversion to hegemony, much discussed in relation to the early modern period, remains an important aspect of the conflicts of this period. However, the nature of the relationship between the balancing motivation and the dynastic motivation must still be adequately explained. We view the concept of the

---

and International Relations," in Joseph Bergin, ed., *The Short Oxford History of Europe: The Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 142.

[68] War seen functionally as a means to maintain or restore order was first noted by Hedley Bull in his *Anarchical Society*. There, he asserts that "war…is a means which international society itself feels a need to exploit so as to achieve its own purposes…war is a means of enforcing international law, of preserving the balance of power, and, arguably, of promoting changes in the law generally regarded as just." (p. 181) Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995). To this list of purposes, or functions, which war secures could be added the critical one, prevalent in early modern times, of resolving succession disputes decisively.

[69] Peter H. Wilson, "War in German Thought from the Peace of Westphalia to Napoleon," *European History Quarterly* 28, no. 1 (1998): p. 17.

[70] The major exception to this, the Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689 in England, is the exception which proves the rule, as the Dutch Stadtholder William, was insistent that his intervention be invited by English nobles (in the face of the abuses against country and religion by James II) so as not to be seen as either an invasion or a revolution. Moreover, the English parliament was keen to frame the transfer of rule to William and Mary as a hereditary transmission in the face of the desertion or abdication of James, rather than his overthrow. From these points, we can see that deposing a sitting King in the middle of a reign, if it was to be accepted, required the most careful of justifications even where there existed substantial support for it. Cf. John Miller, *The Glorious Revolution* (London: Longman, 1983).

balance of power to be one of the most important outcomes of dynastic co-evolution in Europe, and one of the main enabling mechanisms through which such co-evolution could continue—a textbook case of negative feedback through which the system of co-existence between the distinct dynastic niches could maintain itself and survive. Though the concept of the balance, at a decisive moment in its development, came to stand for an antipathy towards hegemony, the origins of the concept lie in the medieval protection of rights and the protection of the weak. This genealogy of the concept is important for us to see how the balance continued to function even in early modern times to protect weaker dynasties and monarchs from extinction.

William Stubbs, in an essay written in the latter half of the nineteenth century on the characteristic differences between medieval and modern history, points to the way that the idea of right and rights dominant in the medieval era was gradually transformed in the modern period into the operation of the balance of power. He points to two critical examples from the Middle Ages:

> [T]he continued existence of small states throughout the middle ages is a very important illustration of the subject before us; another is the extreme dislike…[of] the forcible extinction of historical claims to territory…there was no fear of shedding blood, but there was great fear of destroying right.[71]

Clearly, the core element of the balance of power, which he describes as the principle that "the weaker should not be crushed by the union of the stronger,"[72] is already present in the medieval tendency to allow the continuation of dynastic claims. An aversion to extinguishing dynastic or hereditary rights survived most notably into the early modern period in the form of the imperial constitution of the Holy Roman Empire,

---

[71] William Stubbs, *Seventeen Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1887), pp. 243-244.
[72] Ibid., pp. 258.

an important case where constitutional mechanisms (rather than the balance of power)

ensured the survival of small units.[73] The right of a noble or royal dynasty if not to

individual survival, then to retain hereditary rights and privileges even when an

individual or generation might draw the ire of the Emperor, was normatively protected,

and there was strong societal pressure to restore or rehabilitate their descendants.

As Evans has pointed out, "the basic unit was always the family, and the family

did not suffer even if an individual fell from grace…"[74] There exists an important

parallelism here between the rights that noble dynasties possessed in the domestic realm,

and those that royal dynasties sought to protect in their competitive relations with other

royal dynasties. This is unsurprising given the roots of the dynastic system in a feudal

order where distinctions between the 'domestic' and the 'international' held little

meaning. The customary protection of the rights of a dynasty to its privileges and its

possessions even after disruptions made by their members to the social order, relates

partly to the notion of 'reconciliation' (or renunciation of the feud and vendetta) noted by

Brunner to be a foundational aspect of the feudal understanding of conflict,[75] and also

---

[73] Schroeder argues that it was the potential damage to these constitutionally protected liberties that led so many principalities of the Reich to oppose Joseph II's attempt in 1785 to exchange the Austrian Netherlands for Bavaria. He writes, that "The reason the proposed move would threaten the independence and security of the Reich and its members was not just that it would strengthen Austria, but also and mainly that it would damage the Reich as a legal order guaranteeing the liberties of all its members…" Paul Schroeder, "Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realist Theory," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): pp.118.

[74] R. J. W. Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 178. Adamson also makes the same point when he asserts that "on the occasions when there was a major breach with members of the nobility, as during a rebellion, the monarch was usually at pains to patch up amicable relations with the offending dynasty's next generation once order had been restored." Adamson, "The Making of the Ancien Régime Court 1500-1700," p. 16.

[75] Otto Brunner, *Land and Lordship: Structures of Governance in Medieval Austria* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), pp. 20-21.

partly to the accelerating practice of including amnesty clauses in peace treaties from the sixteenth century onwards.[76]

Whether this aversion to extinguishing the hereditary rights of the losing party in a dynastic conflict was a consequence of disinclination, prudence, or impotence on the part of medieval monarchs (it was likely a product of all of these), this impulse, together with the weak capacity for centralized coercion of the time, is a necessary part of the explanation for the ongoing resilience of smaller principalities well into the early modern period.[77] This aversion is also the reason why, despite the glorification of conquest by early modern theorists such as Machiavelli, raw territorial aggrandizement in Europe without dynastic justifications, was rare.[78] Political theorists would view this discussion through the lens of the 'sovereignty' concept. However, a dry abstract account does not do justice to the dynastic networks and norms which sustained and gave life to this concept—not only in the case of the so-called 'absolutist' states but in the smaller principalities where the notions of dynastic claim and legal title blended imperceptibly with the notion of sovereignty.

---

[76] Randall Lesaffer, "Peace Treaties from Lodi to Westphalia," in *Peace Treaties and International Law in European History: From the Late Middle Ages to World War One,* ed. Randall Lesaffer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 38.

[77] It is interesting to note that such a tendency to allow the loser in a contest to survive and fight another day is one of the core principles in the system of representational party politics. Spruyt has also pointed out that small territorial units surviving in the midst of the harsh competition of early modern Europe is puzzling, and he asserts that "the traditional story that the militarily strong simply annihilated the weak does not hold." (p. 157) Hendrik Spruyt, *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994). In the case of protestant regions of the Holy Roman Empire, it should also be noted that partible inheritance was an additional factor which "reinforced the existence of small, independent territories…" Mark Greengrass, "Introduction: Conquest and Coalescence," in *Conquest and Coalescence,* ed. Mark Greengrass (London: Edward Arnold, 1991), p. 10.

[78] As Greengrass has observed, "bare-faced conquest won few friends and the pillars on which diplomatic theory and practice rested throughout early modern Europe remained those of legal title and dynastic right." Greengrass, "Introduction: Conquest and Coalescence," p. 9.

When it was necessary for a dynasty to be deprived of its hereditary lands, the norm of compensation meant that it was generally granted rulership of a domain elsewhere.[79] This protection of dynastic rights, and the aversion to centralization that went with it, was also a prerequisite to the emergence in early modern Europe of an international system rather than a universal monarchy. The balance of power was originally a force protective of the weaker members of the system (and ameliorating predation) than it was a cause of the partition and extinction of such states. Though this dynamic has not been widely recognized by IR scholarship, it has been pointed out by Jervis, who, using systemic rather than historical analysis, asserts that an explanation for the rarity of wars aimed at the complete destruction of an adversary lies in the balance of power mechanism and the usefulness that an adversary could prove as an ally in future. He writes that:

> The knowledge that allies and enemies are not permanent and the expectation that losers will be treated relatively generously reinforce each other. Because the members of the winning coalition know that they are not likely to remain together after the war, each has to fear accretions to the power of its allies. Because winners know that they are not likely to be able to dismember the loser, why should they prolong the war?[80]

The Duality of Dynastic and Balancing Strategies

---

[79] It is noteworthy that, even as late as the negotiations comprising the Concert of Vienna, customary rules about the need to compensate dynasties deprived of their patrimonial estates remained strong. See Bo Strath, *Europe's Utopias of Peace* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), pp. 40-41.

[80] Jervis, *System Effects,* p. 134. Though the logic pointed to by Jervis is an accurate representation of the working of balance of power mechanisms in more recent times, it should be noted that some of the preconditions for a quick operation of the balance did not exist during the early modern period, such as the absence of confessional or dynastic commitments, which slowed the process of allying with first one, and then another power without qualms or hesitation.

As more recent theoretical treatments of the balance of power have asserted,[81] it is difficult to make behavioral predictions from theories of the balance of power, as a 'balanced' distribution of power can denote a variety of equilibria, implying indeterminacy at the core of the theory. Waltz in this regard views the balance of power as a systemic outcome most clearly observable in the aggregate rather than on the level of the behavior of individual states. Nonetheless, the systemic and automatic mode of balancing becomes questionable when we examine world history, where we see an equal prevalence of hegemonic and balancing systems, a fact suggesting that systemic imperatives alone cannot be driving balancing behavior where it exists.[82]

In the early seventeenth century, we see interventions that cannot be squared in a straightforward manner with balancing imperatives, such as the way in which France and Spain were trapped in an unwanted war (the War of the Mantuan Succession, 1628-1631) due to their commitments to their dynastic allies on the Italian Peninsula. To the extent that the dictate of assisting a dynastic ally became less compelling over time, increasingly freeing monarchs during the eighteenth century to construct policies that sometimes contradicted dynastic compulsions, this itself must have been a shift brought about by

---

[81] On the classic treatment of the balance of power, see Inis Claude, "Balance of Power: An Ambiguous Concept," in *Power and International Relations* (New York: Random House, 1962). Wight's account of the ambiguity of the term 'balance' is also highly instructive. Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978). The most explicit statement of the automatic perspective on balancing behavior remains Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. On bandwagoning, as well as more recent accounts, Randall Schweller, "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): pp. 72-107; Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Stuart Kaufman, Richard Little, and William Wohlforth, ed., *The Balance of Power in World History* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2007).

[82] As Wohlforth *et al.* assert, "a survey of 7,500 years of the history of international systems shows that balanced and unbalanced distributions of power are roughly equally common. There is no iron law of history favoring either a balance of power or hegemony." William Wohlforth, Stuart Kaufman, and Richard Little, "Introduction: Balance and Hierarchy in International Relations," in *The Balance of Power in World History*, ed. Kaufman, Stuart, Richard Little, and William Wohlforth (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2007), p. 20.

non-systemic factors. These points combine to suggest that the balance of power, to the extent it is a conscious goal of states, is at least partly shaped by normative factors.

In the case of the early modern system and the invocation of balancing principles by some leaders to rationalize their decisions, it would ideally be possible to determine objectively the extent to which actions were driven by pure dynastic and pure power political considerations, respectively. After all, in the case of political decisions the declarations of actors should not be taken at face value without some form of unmasking critique being attempted, and the two dominant framing discourses of this era were dynasticism and the balance of power. However, such a task is difficult primarily because in this period—a formative one where the concept of the balance of power was still in its infancy—the concept of the balance was used in general terms by contemporary actors with little specificity.

According to Herbert Butterfield, it was when France replaced Spain as the dominant (and most menacing) power in Europe in the latter part of the reign of Louis XIV that the doctrine of the balance developed, as statesmen of the time came to see universal monarchy arising from the abstract possibility of unbalanced power as the most pressing danger to be avoided. With such an aim, they deployed notions of the balance to try to roll back the power of such dominant monarchs.[83] Fittingly, according to this narrative, the first official use of the term 'balance' can be traced to the Treaty of Utrecht signed in the aftermath of the War of the Spanish Succession, where in Article II is found the passage:

---

[83] Herbert Butterfield, "The Balance of Power," in *Diplomatic Investigations,* ed. Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 139.

> [T]o take away all uneasiness and suspicion, concerning such conjunction [between the kingdoms of Spain and France] out of the minds of people, and to settle and establish the peace and tranquility of Christendom by an equal balance of power (which is the best and most solid foundation of a mutual friendship, and of a concord which will be lasting on all sides)… one and the same person should never become King of both kingdoms.[84]

However, to acknowledge that the balance of power was an important factor in this, as in many other conflicts of this era, does not require elevating the balance of power principle as the primary *ultima ratio* of early modern conflict. Rather, as we can see from examining the text of the Treaty of Utrecht, the renunciation of Philip V of Spain of his right to the French succession (and through this preservation of the balance) was seen as a means to an end—the creation of a lasting peace between Great Britain and Spain—rather than as an end in itself.

In this, it was just one of a portfolio of diplomatic tools—such as dynastic marriage, compensation, indemnity, honor and prestige, amongst others—for re-establishing a workable peace after war and preserving working relations between dynasties and their leaders.[85] Moreover, the declared goal of many peace treaties of the early modern period from Westphalia onwards was general peace within Christendom in the form of peace between Christian kingdoms.[86] And as Lesaffer notes, though "express

---

[84] George Chalmers, *A Collection of Treaties between Great Britain and Other Powers, Volume II* (London: J. Stockdale, 1970) p. 43.

[85] Schroeder, who makes this point about the diplomatic devices used to buttress post-war settlements in this period, also acknowledges that the balance of power was ostensibly seen as a means to solve war, but that it was equally a cause of conflict. He asserts that this was due to the fact that "there never was or could be any general consensus on what a suitable balance was." Paul Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 10.

[86] Cf. Derek Croxton, *The Last Christian Peace: The Congress of Westphalia as a Baroque Event* (New York: Palgrave, 2013).

references to the balance of power were rare, it was considered a necessary precondition for the tranquility and security of Europe."[87]

The most significant dangers to European politics, from the perspective of leaders of the early modern period, were the political crises occasioned by a breakdown of dynastic succession, and the balance of power was seen as an instrument to overcome such crises when they broke out into open warfare. Moreover, "the ruling families of the continent had become so closely inter-married…that succession in one state could bring to power a ruler closely related to the royal family of another,"[88] and thus any succession crisis could provide the occasion for multiple interventions by interested parties. The strategy of dynastic intermarriage, generalized by the beginning of the early modern period as the primary means to set royal dynasties apart from their local nobilities and thereby strengthen their prestige, was in this way creating the conditions for balancing strategies to become more prevalent in the settlement of political conflicts.

To conclude, the relationship between dynasticism and the balance of power during the early modern period can be summarized as one where dynastic considerations were generally crucial in the outbreak of hostilities or the formation of *casus belli*,[89] and considerations of balancing and equilibrium were more important in the conduct and conclusion of hostilities. Balancing considerations ensured that early modern wars were rarely decisive or aimed at the complete subjugation of an adversary, and through its influence negotiated peace terms were less burdensome for the losers than would otherwise have been the case. One of the most important but neglected consequences of

---

[87] Randall Lesaffer, "Peace Treaties and the Formation of International Law," in *The Oxford Handbook of The History of International Law, ed.* Bardo Fassbender and Anne Peters (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 87.
[88] Luard, *The Balance of Power: The System of International Relations 1648-1815,* p. 152.
[89] Cf. Benno Teschke, *The Myth of 1648* (London: Verso, 2003), p. 229.

the balance of power as it operated during the early modern period was that of facilitating the survival and co-evolution of dynastic units for longer than could have been predicted by theory. Moreover, the balancing mechanism acted to preserve dynastic kinship ties and co-evolutionary restraints that tempered the emergence of a vicious cycle of destructive competitiveness.

Case Selection and Overall Research Strategy

Before we turn to the task of empirically examining composite state dissolution and survival in the next chapter, we lay out a justification for selecting the cases of early and late composite state dissolution we chose to examine in empirical depth. First of all, we should answer the question of why we chose to compare variance in terms of early versus late death composite states, rather than between late death composite states versus late death non-composite states.

The comparison between early and late death composite states is a critical comparison for our research, due to the fact that we conceive of state survival as the successful negotiation of a series of near-death crises by the rulers of a state. In order to identify the most relevant category of crisis endangering state survival, then, it is necessary to examine early death composite states to determine if a common set of factors was at play in typical cases of early demise composite states, and what these factors were. For this reason, we have chosen to examine the British Isles and Iberian Peninsula as two rich historical contexts for the death and survival of composite states. In both of these regional contexts, the death of a composite state took place in

approximately the first fifty years after the Peace of Westphalia. These are Portugal-Castile, which was dissolved via secession with the Treaty of Lisbon in 1668, and England-Scotland, dissolved via incorporating union in 1707. Given that some composite states—specifically Poland-Lithuania and the Holy Roman Empire—survived until the late eighteenth century, and the *ancien régime* as a whole came to an end during the Napoleonic Wars, these two cases can be classed as early death composite states. Therefore, we have chosen these two early death composite states for close examination. The added advantage of the British Isles and Iberian Peninsula—and the reason these cases are indispensable—is because these two regions contain other composite states that outlasted each of the early death composite states. Castile-Aragon (including Catalonia) was another composite state that outlasted the Iberian Union, and England-Ireland was an unusual composite state that outlasted England-Scotland. In the second part of Chapter Two, we provide a within-case comparison of the early and late death composite states in these two settings, bringing to bear further comparative insights on our research question.

Our empirical research strategy involves an initial examination of cases of early death composite states in Chapter Two, from which we abstract what was perceived by early modern rulers to be the most serious existential threat to composite state survival from these cases. After positing the most cogent theory for how late survival composite states survived this category of threatening event in Chapter Three—the theory of dynastic deterrence—we go on to examine the manner in which late survival composite states successfully traversed these existential crises and eventually met their demise in Chapter Four. After evaluating the ability of the alternative approaches to explain the longevity of composite states, we conclude that dynastic deterrence provides the most

explanatory purchase over the actual historical process through which late death composite states managed to survive existential crisis and eventually dissolve.

The study of composite state death and survival, to be representative, must include both cases of early and late composite state death, and also cases of each of the four pathways to composite state death outlined in the introduction. To this end, our selection of cases satisfies two different criteria. And as the universe of composite state death cases is not large, the selection of cases is relatively straightforward. The two early death composite states we have chosen—the Iberian Union and England-Scotland, are both representative of two different pathways away from compositeness for distinct reasons: the death of the Portugal-Castile composite state was the only case during the 1648-1789 period[90] where a constituent part of a composite state successfully seceded from the parent body and thus demands inclusion; and the death of England-Scotland via amalgamation is exceptionally well suited for analysis due to the fact that the relative isolation of the British Isles leads the relevant causal mechanisms occurring in this case to be more distinct and separable out in thought from other confounding factors.

The two late composite state death cases are also representative of the remaining paths away from compositeness: Poland-Lithuania is representative of death by conquest as it was the only *ancien régime* composite state to be dissolved via partition[91] (a form of

---

[90] Though the Portuguese revolution of 1640 initiated the process of Portuguese secession, the restoration of the Portuguese monarchy did not become official until the 1668 Treaty of Lisbon, wherein the Spanish monarch recognized the Portuguese ruling house, the House of Braganza. For this reason, the dissolution of the Iberian Union comes under our periodization. Elliott notes that the only other cases of successful secession from a composite state were Sweden from the Union of Kalmar in 1523, and the Netherlands from Spain in the 1570s. However, both of these cases, besides taking place before the period we are examining, also displayed markedly different dynamics involving confessional contention, and thus we do not include them in our universe of cases. See Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," p. 68.
[91] Though the third and final partition which obliterated Polish-Lithuanian sovereignty did not take place until 1795, the process through which the Commonwealth was partitioned out of existence began in the

conquest); and the Holy Roman Empire was the only *ancien régime* composite state to die via disestablishment. Though the two cases of late death composite states both met their final demise after 1789, nonetheless they require inclusion for two reasons. Firstly, they are the only examples of composite state death along two of the pathways—conquest and disestablishment—and thus it is essential to study the process through which they met their end. Furthermore, events occurring after the 1789 cut-off—signifying the advent of the French Revolution—are not completely distinct in nature from those that preceded it. The coming to power of Napoleon in France throws into relief the distinctiveness of dynastic rule when compared with non-dynastic rule, and thus the analysis of the Holy Roman Empire and its demise is essential to demonstrating the interaction between dynastic and non-dynastic forms of rule.

Beyond these justifications, we should add that Poland-Lithuania exemplifies the late surviving primary composite state, whereas the Reich exemplifies the late surviving secondary composite state. Moreover, the expectations we derived from the three approaches elaborated in this chapter, highlight distinctions between dynastic and non-dynastic early modern states. Poland-Lithuania, as the most representative early modern elective monarchy, is critical to grasping the differential impact of dynastic kinship ties on the survival chances of dynastically embedded versus dynastically disembedded composite states.[92] The only remaining lacuna is the omission of non-composite states in this research. The comparison between composite and non-composite states is important,

---

1770s and a relatively homogeneous set of causes acted on Poland-Lithuania throughout this period. Thus, the Commonwealth is best seen as a case belonging within the parameters of the 1648-1789 period.

[92] The papacy—though an elective monarchy of a kind—was as an ecclesiastic state so distinct in its contours that it should be kept separate from the relatively 'secular' states examined here. The Reich, and perhaps even the English Crown after the Glorious Revolution, were also technically elective monarchies but functioned in practice as hereditary monarchies. Thus, in this research we consider them to more or less possess the properties of dynastic rather than non-dynastic states.

but the only non-composite state that 'died' during the 1648-1789 period was absolutist France. Not only are we not explicitly focused here with understanding the death and survival of early modern non-composite states, but the process of dissolution that befell *ancien régime* France is so complex and idiosyncratic, that we consider the comparison of composite and non-composite state death to be a task for the inevitable next stage of this research project, rather than something we can cover under the rubric of our current research design.

CHAPTER TWO

THE EARLY DEATH OF COMPOSITE STATES

When it is asked why some composite states survived to an advanced age, the questioner must also inevitably ask why others dissolved at a younger age. I take it that dissolution, or 'death,' for a composite state means traversing one of the 'pathways away from compositeness' outlined in the Introduction, and 'survival' means avoiding these pathways. There are four pathways through which a composite state can die, and they are: amalgamation, secession, conquest, and disestablishment. The causes of relative health and death in old age need not be the same as those for early death or expiration by illness or accident, but this does not negate the fact that in order to gain a good understanding of the factors behind the longevity of composite states, we must gain a preliminary understanding of the phenomenon of the dissolution of composite states.

This is necessary so we can identify the most vulnerable moments in the life course of a composite polity—the moments when its continued existence was most in doubt. By identifying these moments of greatest vulnerability, we can in turn identify the sources of greatest resilience of composite polities, as supportive factors in moments of great existential danger can—via a process of deductive reasoning—be inferred to be none other than their sources of greatest resilience. After pinpointing the factors posing greatest danger for composite states in this chapter, we go on in following chapters to examine what explains the ability of some composite states to successfully traverse these dangers.

In this chapter we provide an account of the most important factors underlying the early dissolution of two early modern composite states—England-Scotland and the Iberian Union—and then compare the circumstances surrounding their dissolution with the reasons for survival of other composite states in the same region, particularly Castile-Aragon and England-Ireland. The two early death composite states were chosen because they are representative instances of two of the pathways away from compositeness: England-Scotland was dissolved via amalgamation, and the Iberian Union was dissolved via secession. In the process to analyzing these two cases in depth, we test expectations derived from the three approaches explaining composite state survival after 1648 outlined in Chapter One. These three explanations are as follows.

Firstly, the approach of dynastic stability argues that the longevity of some composite states can best be explained by the existence of strong dynastic kinship ties between their ruling houses and those of their main competitors. This is because the conquest-motivation was restrained by the existence of dynastic kinship ties—especially those of marriage—between ruling dynasties. This approach does not posit that dynastic rulers with kinship ties never wage war against each other, but it does argue that the closer the kinship ties between a dynastic ruler and the leading members of another dynasty, (and *if and only if they have dynastic ambitions for their issue*), the less inclined one of these houses will be to wage a war of conquest against the other, and the less inclined they will be to pursue a foreign policy aiming at extinguishing the rightful possession of the other house over its hereditary territories.

Secondly, the military explanation argues that large composite states possessed military advantages that gave them an enhanced ability to survive military competition of

the early modern period when compared with smaller composite states and non-composite states of a comparable or smaller size. The two mechanisms operating in the military explanation are: a) the greater resources for military competition provided by additional composite domains, and b) the implicit deterrence arising from such capabilities. According to this explanation, composite state survival was secured by preventing conquest attempts during wartime and deterring conquest attempts through military strength.

Finally, a leadership learning explanation was given, according to which the rulers of some composite states were able to learn lessons from the seventeenth century European 'general crisis' (and other challenges of governing the early modern state) better than other rulers. According to this approach, the rulers of late-surviving composite states were able to avoid early death by avoiding premature amalgamation and thereby forestalling rebellions. The rulers of hereditary monarchies (when compared with those of elective monarchies and republics) were strongly advantaged in the task of leadership learning due to the exceptional instructional resources available to the hereditary heir of dynastic states. Elder brothers, rulers acceding after completing their instruction and later rulers in a dynastic line are also expected to advantaged in inter-generational learning when compared with younger brothers, rulers acceding in their minority and earlier rulers in a dynastic line.

We proceed through a series of purposive comparisons to evaluate the extent to which these explanatory frameworks are capable of encompassing the patterns of composite state dissolution and survival in the British Isles and the Iberian Peninsula. In

order for there to be variation in the dependent variable, we must compare cases of early composite state death and survival to rule out spurious causation and endogeneity.

We initially examine two composite states that dissolved early in the post-Westphalian period to ask whether there are common patterns to these cases that might be instructive for understanding systematic differences between these and cases of late-survival. The two cases we examine in depth are Portuguese secession from the Iberian Union in 1668, and the amalgamation of England and Scotland with the Acts of Union of 1707. In the second part of this chapter, both of these cases will be partially compared with other composite states in the same region that outlived these early death cases, namely Aragon-Castile until it was administratively amalgamated in 1707, and England-Ireland which remained in a personal union with England until 1800. These partial comparisons aid us in better grasping the core reasons for the diverging fates of early modern composite states. Through this set of comparisons, we come to see the vital role of premature centralizing reforms in fomenting regional uprisings, as well as the power of external intervention (or feared external intervention) in determining the success chances of secessionist movements and rebellions in early modern composite polities.
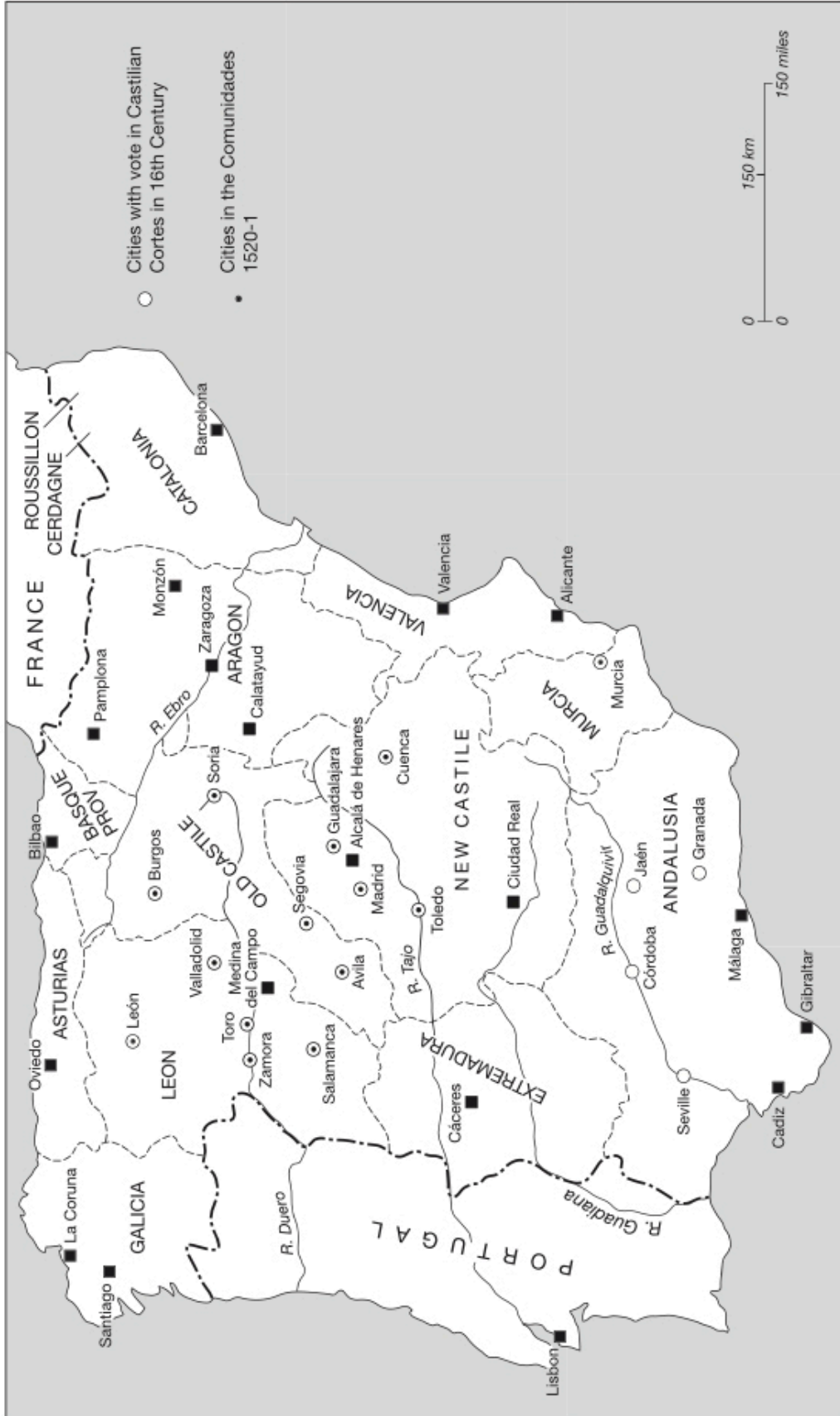
Map 1: Spain 1469-1714, from Kamen (2005).

Early Composite State Death

The Secession of Portugal from the Iberian Union

We begin our investigation into the factors underlying the early death of representative composite polities in post-Westphalian *ancien régime* Europe by examining the death of the Iberian Union between the Portuguese and Spanish Crowns, which lasted from 1580-1640/1668. We then move to examine the England-Scotland personal union, or the 'Union of the Crowns,' lasting from 1603-1707. These are important cases as the former is the only case of composite state death by secession post-Westphalia, whereas the latter is not only the most developed case of composite state death by amalgamation, but the unified state that resulted is still in existence today. Moreover, they are doubly instructive, because in both these cases one part of the composite unit would survive and outlive the parts that were dissolved, namely the Castile-Aragon personal union, which survived until the Nueva Planta decrees forcibly mandating amalgamation in 1707, and the England-Ireland union, which survived until the Acts of Union of 1800. These divergent outcomes allow us to ask sharp comparative questions about the reasons for the contrasting outcomes observed.

A Composite Union Hastily Conceived

We start by examining the Iberian Union and its demise with the Portuguese Restoration War. Why did the Iberian Union dissolve after a mere sixty years when the personal union between Castile and Aragon (which had been in existence since 1516)

would continue for approximately another half century afterwards? The Iberian Union, or the personal union of the kingdoms of Castile, Aragon, and Portugal (as well as the Spanish and Portuguese overseas possessions) under a single monarch, was the first of the composite polities on the Iberian Peninsula to disintegrate, doing so via secession of Portugal.

The union of Portugal and the Spanish crown had taken place in a moment of weakness, when the young King Sebastian of Portugal and much of the cream of the Portuguese nobility were killed in 1578 during an expeditionary raid to expand Portuguese military power to Morocco. In the wake of the succession crisis that followed, Philip II of Spain acted with speed and decisiveness in sending a Spanish army of 40,000 men into Portugal in late June of 1580 to secure the Portuguese crown on his behalf. As the oldest male descendant of Manuel the Fortunate, (the grandfather of the late King Sebastian), Philip had a not insubstantial claim to the Portuguese throne—though there was force involved in the assertion of his claim, and other strong claimants to the throne existed.

Philip's troops faced only scattered resistance in Portugal, and in 1581 Philip was crowned Philip I of Portugal. In treating the Portuguese kingdom not as a conquest but instead by allowing the Portuguese to retain their distinctive rights and form of government (including retention of Portuguese as the language of government and the exclusion of Castilians from offices in the government below the level of viceroy), Philip guaranteed to Portugal and its overseas territories an independent identity in Philip's monarchy, and in the process gained the acquiescence of the Portuguese elites for his accession. This was the same framework for a strictly personal union of crowns as that

which came about between the Crowns of Castile and Aragon in 1469 with the marriage of Ferdinand, heir to the throne of Aragon, and Isabella, the heiress of Castile.[1] There was no reason for the Castilian elite not to think that the Iberian Union had a glorious future just as did the Castile-Aragon union. However, composite state formation via dynastic intermarriage involved a lesser degree of coercion than the manner in which Philip claimed the Portuguese Crown.

The Disadvantages of an Absentee Monarch

The personal union between Castile and Aragon, then, had already been in existence for more than a century before Portugal was added to the composite polity. The decline of the peripatetic court and its increasingly sedentary nature, with construction of a permanent residence—the Escorial—begun by Philip II in 1563, created significant problems for the rulers of composite polities. During the years of their union, the absentee monarchy (in Aragon) and monopolization of positions in the Castilian court by Castilians had created resentments on the part of the Aragonese nobility. But the Portuguese could still hope for advantages from their own nascent union, due to the military assistance that might be available for Portugal to maintain her increasingly costly overseas possessions in East Asia and India, and access to the vast reserves of silver held by Castile due to her empire in the Americas.

To be sure, the Portuguese derived some advantages from the new union with Castile, particularly improved government, a low tax burden and increased stability that allowed for modest population growth compared with the declines that had been

---

[1] J. H. Elliott, "The Spanish Monarchy and the Kingdom of Portugal, 1580-1640," in *Conquest and Coalescence,* ed. Mark Greengrass (London: Edward Arnold, 1991).

witnessed prior to the union under the Aviz rulers.[2] Even in 1616, the proportion of the tax revenue towards imperial costs contributed by Portugal was small at 10 per cent, whereas Castile was contributing 73 per cent, the Netherlands 9 per cent, Naples 5 per cent, and Aragon a mere 1 per cent.[3] Thus, even as the weaker party in the union, the new political structure was not without its advantages for the Portuguese. As in the case of Scottish elites weighing (prior to the 1707 union to become a single juridical kingdom) whether to join England in a more complete union, the economic costs and benefits of being part of a composite polity extended for the Portuguese to the question of economic advantages gained via access to colonial territories abroad, and despite the juridical separation and concomitant customs barriers between the separate realms of the Spanish monarch, the increased level of openness and cooperation promised a brighter future than that outside the union.

However, despite these benefits—real or imagined—the problems of an absentee monarchy and the lack of opportunities at the Court in Madrid for Portuguese nobles would, similarly to the Aragonese case, be a source of resentment that would prevent a strengthening sense of allegiance to the composite polity on the part of the Portuguese. This would in fact be a problem perceived at the highest levels of the Castilian leadership, with Philip IV's favorite, the count of Olivares, who, as the monarch's chief political minister, conveyed to the king these festering problems in an important instruction presented in 1624. As Elliott recounts:

> He [Olivares] spoke of a general demoralization in Portuguese society, which he ascribed to royal absenteeism, and he recommended that Philip should satisfy legitimate

---

[2] Ibid., pp. 54-55.
[3] Henry Kamen, *Spain, 1469-1714: A Society of Conflict, Third Edition* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2005), p. 236,

aspirations by moving his court to Lisbon for a lengthy residence. He also recommended the appointment of Portuguese to the government in Madrid and the royal household, and their employment as viceroys and ambassadors. 'And I would regard it as expedient to do the same with Aragonese, Flemings, and Italians…impressing upon Your Majesty that this is the most important action that can be taken to ensure the security, stability, conservation and expansion of this Monarchy. This mingling of vassals currently treated as if they were foreigners, and their admission to the offices mentioned above, is the only way to achieve its unity.'[4]

This is a prescient view of the troubles besetting the Castile-Portuguese composite polity as seen by an influential contemporary actor.

The 'Union of Arms,' or the Imperative of Extraction

As echoed in the above comments by Olivares, one of the widespread perceptions of statesmen of this era, such as Olivares and Richelieu, was the need to strengthen the authority of the crown vis-à-vis its outlying possessions, thus knitting the monarchical center and the outlying kingdoms in closer ties of obligation and loyalty. And not just this, but extracting much needed revenue through such a strengthening was a critical part of the agenda as seen by such statesmen. Within Castile, the power of the Spanish Monarchy was strong, but in its 'composite' possessions—which were incorporated on the understanding that traditional rights would be safeguarded—its power was weak. But such a strengthening of monarchical authority was particularly urgent in an age where military expenses were increasing. Even the silver entering Castile from Peru was not enough to maintain the defense of the vast empire, and the decisions of the Castilian Council of State taken between 1618-1621 meant that Spain would enter the Thirty Years War in Germany, as well as renew hostilities with the Dutch, imposing additional costs.[5]

---

[4] Elliott, "The Spanish Monarchy and the Kingdom of Portugal," p. 58.
[5] Ronald Asch, "Monarchy in Western and Central Europe," in *Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History 1350-1750,* ed. Hamish Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 373.

Olivares, facing the challenges besetting the Spanish Monarchy at the beginning of the reign of Philip IV, "saw on the one side the massed ranks of Spain's enemies moving into action, and on the other a penniless king and a ramshackle Spanish Monarchy under the faltering leadership of a bankrupt Castile."[6] For Olivares, then, in the face of such constraints and requirements, "diversity was bound to seem a profound source of weakness in an age which looked to a greater concentration of power as the most effective answer to economic depression and military attack."[7] Thus he would attempt a series of abortive reforms in the 1620-1630s aiming to integrate the military forces of the different parts of the composite realm as well as the administration and nobility of these domains—a programme that would come to be known as the 'Union of Arms.'[8]

The Spanish Monarchy, in the words of Elliott, "was to be welded into a whole, starting with the Iberian peninsula itself."[9] And yet, however necessary such reforms, they just as predictably set off resistance on the part of the nobility who inevitably saw their heretofore inviolable privileges as under attack. It would be these over-ambitious centralizing reforms that would sow a significant portion of the discontent ultimately driving the Portuguese nobility to revolt and break off the personal union with the Castilian monarch. The military dimension of the reform agenda proposed a quota system whereby all the provinces of the Monarchy would contribute a predetermined number of

---

[6] J. H. Elliott, *Richelieu and Olivares* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 67

[7] J. H. Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 191.

[8] The Spanish Monarchy had in its decades of ruling Portugal, gone through several phases of policy. The first phase, which encompassed the years of Philip II's rule over the kingdom, were years of reform, where institutions were modernized and administration improved. The second, covering the reign of Philip III (1598-1621) were years of 'benign neglect.' The third and final phase, initiated by Olivares and lasting until the declaration of the Duke of Braganza as King of Portugal, were years of attempted intervention and integration.

[9] Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares,* p. 193.

men in case one of them should be attacked. The quotas were assigned as follows:

Catalonia 16,000; Aragon 10,000; Valencia 6000; Castile and the Indies 44,000; Portugal

16,000; Naples 16,000; Sicily 6000; Milan 8000; Flanders 12,000; Mediterranean and

Atlantic islands 6000.[10]

Failure of Reform and Path to Rebellion

The economic aspect of the reforms enacted by Olivares brought Portuguese

merchants and businessmen with Jewish ancestry to Madrid, bringing with them a

valuable source of funds for the Crown, but these new arrivals were viewed with

suspicion by the existing elites. The plans to integrate the nobility of the various domains

were not followed through, and the plan to temporarily relocate the royal court to Lisbon

was never implemented. This meant that a weakening of loyalty on the part of the

Portuguese aristocracy towards the Monarchy was not tackled on the all-important

symbolic level. Though Olivares attempted to gain the loyalty of the Portuguese nobility

by courting the Braganzas by promoting marriage ties between them and his own house,

the Guzmáns, such attempts would ultimately be unsuccessful in gaining clients among

the Portuguese.[11]

An initial people's revolt, which began in the summer of 1637 in Évora due to

resentment against the annual appropriation of 500,000 *cruzados* proposed by the new

governor of Portugal, Princess Margaret of Savoy, was successfully put down, though not

before spreading throughout southern Portugal, and even beginning to extend north of the

---

[10] Ibid., pp. 247-248.
[11] A. R. Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire, Volume 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 216.

Tagus.[12] The Portuguese nobility had shown noticeably little enthusiasm in suppressing the dissent, and several preachers were found to support the protests.

These signs of dangerous levels of disaffection among the Portuguese were ominous, but they were not clearly seen by the Castilian government. The revolt in the Catalans erupted in February and March of 1640, when civilians became hostile to the continued presence of the royal army in their province, posted there in preparation for a fresh campaign against the French along the border as part of the Franco-Spanish War (1635-1659). Soon the Monarchy was facing open rebellion in that province, and although Olivares—after initially pursuing a reactionary policy—reversed course and took on board a more conciliatory approach, it was too late, as the rebellion now had acquired more momentum and was aiming its wrath at the rich and all those in authority.[13]

It this moment of dire vulnerability for the Monarchy, a group of the Portuguese nobility had sensed an opportunity and began to discuss with the Duke of Braganza his attitude to a possible uprising. Although he at first took a cautious line, by the time that Olivares requested in November of 1640 that the Portuguese nobility accompany Philip IV to Aragon to convoke the Aragonese *cortes* and rally support against the Catalan rebels, the conspirators were ready and had the support of the duke. Soon they had infiltrated and then taken control of the viceroy's palace in Lisbon, and the Duke of Portugal was formally proclaimed King John IV of an independent Portugal on the 6th of December, 1640.[14]

---

[12] Ibid., p. 217.
[13] J. H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2002), p. 783-784.
[14] Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire, Volume 1,* Chapter 10.

The Portuguese Restoration War

The series of military confrontations between Portugal and the Monarchy that followed saw Castile tasked with not only returning Portugal to the Monarchy, but also fighting on two other fronts, against France in the Franco-Spanish War (1635-1659) and parrying the Catalonians as they revolted in the Catalans. The War of Portuguese Restoration would last until 1668, when Spain formally agreed to recognize Portuguese independence with the Treaty of Lisbon. The phases of the war consisted of an early stage where some major engagements demonstrated the Portuguese could not be easily returned to submission; a second phase (1646-1660) of military standoffs interspersed by small-scale raiding as Spain concentrated on its military commitments elsewhere in Europe; and a final phase (1660-1669) during which the Spanish King Philip IV unsuccessfully sought a major engagement in order to bring an end to hostilities.[15]

With the war having settled into a frontier confrontation and stalemate—though a bloody one with the use of foreign troops and mercenaries leading to acts of brutality on both sides—the war came to be shaped more by the limitations each side faced in conducting full-scale campaigns and assaults. As the Spanish Monarchy was in dire financial straits and often unable to pay its troops, this led to the soldiers preying on the population on the frontier, causing much misery. But relief was to come for Spain with the Treaty of the Pyrenees (1659), which concluded the Franco-Spanish War and allowed Philip IV to focus more directly on his Portuguese problem. [16]

---

[15] Stuart Schwartz, (2004), "Portuguese War of Restoration," in *Europe 1450-1789, Volume 5,* ed. Jonathan Dewald (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2004), p. 204.
[16] Ibid.

This would be a moment of signal concern for the Portuguese, anticipating a renewed Castilian assault on their territory. The treaty between Spain and France was unsatisfactory to the Portuguese, as it strengthened the ties between these two powers and left the status of Portugal in abeyance—due largely to the advantage accruing to France of ongoing conflict between Spain and Portugal. The unwillingness of France to sign a formal alliance with Portugal forced the Portuguese leaders to rely more on its old allies—particularly the English. Though the alliance had lapsed for the duration of the Iberian Union, the Anglo-Portuguese treaty (which was restored during the Interregnum in 1654) was renewed in 1662 shortly after the restoration of Charles II in England, and was then sealed in the same year with the marriage of Charles II to the then King of Portugal, Afonso VI's sister Catarina.

The treaty with England has been called "a vital breakthrough, without which the Restoration could scarcely have been sustained."[17] Though the cost of the alliance and the marriage was high—the dowry for Catarina included Bombay, Tangier, and 2,000,000 *cruzados* in cash—nonetheless the explicit assurance of English protection against Spain and Holland was instrumental in guaranteeing Portugal's security, and the dynastic marriage also signaled acceptance of the Braganzas as a legitimate royal dynasty by one of the most powerful royal dynasties of Europe, the Stuarts.

A series of important late battles, where the Spaniards embarked on a series of offensives, culminated in a Portuguese victory at Montes Claros on the 17th of June, 1665. Soon thereafter, the Portuguese gained what they had long sought, the support of

---

[17] Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire, Volume 1,* p. 227.

114

France, sealed via a formal treaty signed in 1667.[18] Though Philip IV had been reluctant to drop his Portuguese claims despite the urging of his ally King Charles II, his death in 1665 removed an important obstacle to the negotiation of a comprehensive treaty. With the mediation of England and the support of France, the Treaty of Lisbon—which recognized the legitimacy of the Braganza dynasty's rule over Portugal—was signed on the 13th of February, 1668.[19] In such manner the Portuguese Restoration War, which had constituted in many ways no more than "a series of small- or medium-sized guerrilla wars strung together across time and space,"[20] finally came to a close.

The Comparison with Catalonia

In contrast to the successful Portuguese restoration, the almost contemporaneous Catalonian revolt was unsuccessful in freeing part of the Crown of Aragon from the domination of the Spanish Monarchy. While the people of Catalonia held more severe grievances than the Portuguese, the nobility there held less legitimacy, and after Pau Claris, the leader of the movement for a Catalonian republic, died in 1641, no-one was left who held sufficient leadership abilities or prestige to prevent the revolt devolving into internecine feuds and social anarchy.

The support of the French soon drifted into French domination, and it did not take long for the French-controlled government in Catalonia to arouse the antagonism of the local nobility. Many of them left Catalonia for the Kingdom of Aragon during the rule of

---

[18] Ibid., p. 230.
[19] Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716,* Chapter 9.
[20] White also perceptively notes that one of the important reasons for the protracted nature of this, and other wars of the early to mid seventeenth century, was because European states did not possess adequate resources to conduct massive, lengthy wars. Lorraine White, *"War and Government in a Castilian Province: Extremadura 1640-1668"* (PhD diss., University of East Anglia, 1985).

the French, preferring the 'inefficient tyranny' of Philip IV to the far more authoritarian government of the French King.[21] By 1651, the Catalonian revolt was flagging, and the French position was dire due to their being beset by their own severe internal rebellion, the Fronde. In the absence of adequate French military support for the Catalonians, the forces of Philip IV began to gain the upper hand. After a long siege, Barcelona surrendered in October of 1652, and after Philip promised some months later to respect the Principality's rights and privileges as they had existed before the start of the rebellion, the revolt was effectively over.[22] The Spanish Monarchy had managed to avert the complete decomposition of its composite domains into their constituent parts, as had been threatening during the 1640s.

Why, then, despite gaining the support of France, were the Catalonians unsuccessful in their secessionist project whereas the Portuguese were successful? The historical debate surrounding the secession of Portugal has put forward a number of critical differences between the Portuguese restoration and the Catalonian revolt, which allowed the former to succeed but not the latter.

Firstly, it has been noted that Portugal had in John the Duke of Braganza and his house a legitimate king-in-waiting, whereas the Catalan revolt did not, and moreover the republican assembly, the *Diputació,* had considerable difficulty in gaining widespread foreign support in an age when monarchical rule had more prestige than republican rule. Secondly, Portugal has been argued to have possessed geographical advantages that Catalonia lacked, for instance being relatively further from powerful external patrons, such as England and France, so as to avoid coming under their domination while still able

---

[21] Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716,* pp. 805-806.
[22] Ibid., p. 805.

to receive their assistance. Portugal also had the remnants of an empire, and if territories such as Brazil could be recovered from the Dutch, this empire "held out the promise of a rich future, not only for Portugal itself, but also for its friends."[23]

Thirdly, the internal solidarity of Catalonia was not as strong as that of Portugal, and it fell prey to divided loyalties and internal conflict both within the nobility and between the nobility and the populace, whereas these internal frictions were less problematic in the Portuguese case. This may be a consequence of the comparative lack of focus of the Catalonian Revolt when compared to the Portuguese situation, the memory of Catalonia as an independent principality being more distant than the memory of independence for Portugal. These congenital weaknesses of the Catalonian Revolt have been described, by J.H. Elliott, as being due to "both an original uncertainty in their aims at the start of the revolution, and a continuing failure to create a sense of national unity and purpose that transcended traditional social divisions."[24]

The composite polity between Castile and Aragon was also ultimately destined to dissolve, though through amalgamation rather than secession. During the War of the Spanish Succession, which pitted supporters of Philiip, the Bourbon claimant to the Spanish throne, against the Austrian Habsburg claimant, Archduke Charles, the Catalonians—having been the victims of a harsh French-backed regime during the earlier revolt of the mid-seventeenth century—turned against the Bourbon claimant in favor of the Habsburgs. Aragon and Valencia were also supportive of the succession claim of Archduke Charles. This was, in its own way, an attempt at secession and a breaking free

---

[23] Elliott, "The Spanish Monarchy and the Kingdom of Portugal," p. 65.
[24] Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716,* p. 805.

of the association with Castile, although in this case it was channeled into the somewhat ironic support for Austrian rule.

As Elliott notes of this development, "the allegiances…were at first sight paradoxical, for Castile, which had always hated the foreigner, was supporting the claims of a Frenchman, while the Crown of Aragon, which had always been so suspicious of Habsburg intentions, was championing the claims of a prince of the House of Austria."[25] Paradoxical or no, this would turn out to be a costly miscalculation for the realms of the Crown of Aragon, for upon subduing Aragon and Valencia in 1707 during the war, Philip V proceeded to deprive Aragon and Valencia of their ancient liberties and rights as punishment for rising against him. He wrote to them in revoking their rights:

> Considering that the Realms of Aragon and Valencia and all those who dwell therein, by dint of the rebellion they did raise against Us…have voluntarily resigned all rights, privileges, exemptions and liberties which they did enjoy and which We, following in this the example set by Our magnanimous predecessors on this august Throne…and considering that to the rights which We do enjoy as lawful King of the said Realms of Aragon and Valencia are now added the rights of a conqueror…and considering also that one of the principal offices and rights that attach to Kingship is that of Law Giver, wherein are comprehended both the prerogative of creating new laws and that of rescinding old ones…We have deemed it opportune, both for the reasons set out above and because it is Our will that all the Realms of Spain shall obey the same laws and statutes, and observe the same customs and practices as one another, and that each shall be subject to the Laws of Castille…[26]

Barcelona, after holding out until 1714, would also lose its ancient liberties and rights upon succumbing to the forces of Philip V, and the *Nueva Planta* decrees which were subsequently promulgated on the 16th of January, 1716, effectively marked the end of the Spanish Monarchy as a composite polity and its birth as a centralized state.

---

[25] Ibid., p. 853.
[26] W. N. Hargreaves-Mawdsley, ed., *Spain under the Bourbons, 1700-1833: A collection of documents* (London: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 35-6.
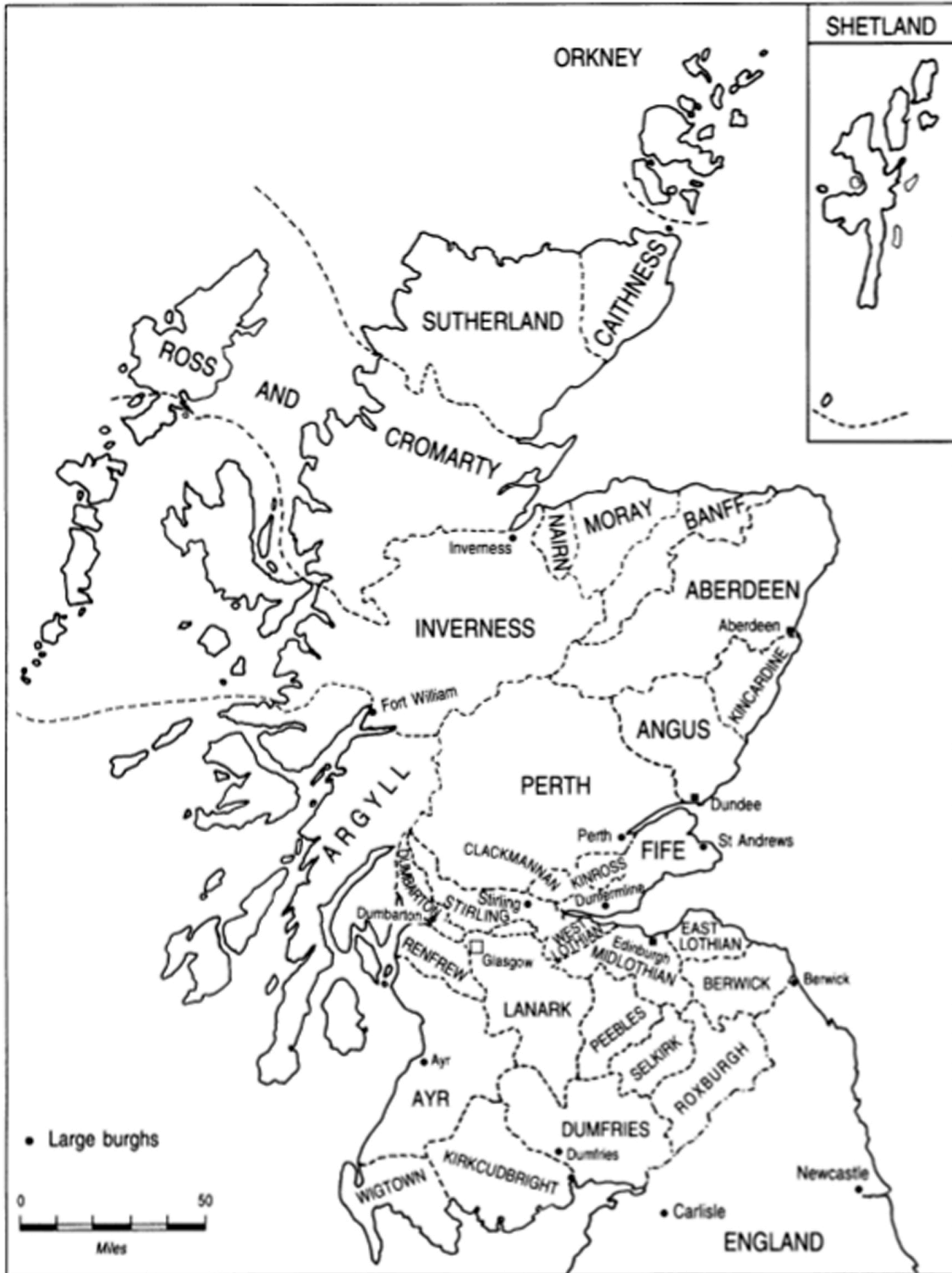
Map 2: Counties and major burghs of Scotland, from Donnachie and Hewitt (1989).

119

The Incorporating Union of England and Scotland

When examining the dissolution of the personal union between England and Scotland in 1707 and the reasons it came about, we are faced with quite a contrast from that of the dissolution of the Iberian Union, as here we find a case of death by amalgamation rather than by secession. In a sense, the English monarchy and parliamentarians accomplished, with their moves to amalgamate England and Scotland into a single kingdom, the reforms attempted by the Count-Duke of Olivares to further integrate the domains of the Spanish Monarchy, but with a significantly greater degree of success. Moreover, incorporating union was brought about by the English Crown together with parliament while resorting to merely the threat of economic (and not military) sanctions against the Scots if overtures for negotiations were rejected.

This was not an amalgamating, or in the terminology of the British discussion, 'incorporating union' in the face of a full-blown secessionist movement, but rather a union intended to forestall the possibility of a full-blown secessionist movement. We shall first review important moments in the relation between England and Scotland between 1603 and 1707 relevant to understanding the origins of the incorporating union. Next, we ask what the proximate causes of the union were and ask how these events relate to the three sets of explanatory factors for composite state death we have put forward.

Early Attempts at Union

During the seventeenth century, the history of the personal union—the Union of

Crowns—as it existed between England and Scotland since 1603, had seen at least two

serious attempts at amalgamation aiming for a merger not only on the level of foreign

policy but also on the level of law and culture. These attempts had been made firstly by

James I early in his reign, and secondly by Oliver Cromwell, the leader (or Lord

Protector) of the Commonwealth of England, during the English Civil Wars. There had

also been an attempt, by Charles I in 1637, to impose uniform beliefs and practices on

Scotland in the form of a new prayer book.[27] Though this was a move for amalgamation

taken only in the religious domain, due to the fact that it set off a patriotic Scottish revolt

which was more than a purely religious revolt, its cultural hegemonism can be seen to

have had strong overtones of an amalgamative policy over all realms.[28]

The first formal attempt at forming an incorporating union had been made by

James I (VI in Scotland) soon after acceding to the English throne. He made a proposal,

soon after the installment of his Court in London, to enact a 'threefold marriage' whereby

the Scottish legal system would be assimilated to that of the English, and the two

Churches and economies would also be joined in a system of common hierarchies,

customs unions, and commercial regulations. These plans of James I were discussed

between 1604-1607, but the parliaments of these two kingdoms were hostile, and the

plans went no further.[29] Debates in parliament revealed intense levels of prejudice against

the Scots, and the Scots also were strongly antagonistic to the idea of an incorporating

---

[27] See G. E. Aylmer, *Rebellion or Revolution? England from Civil War to Restoration* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), Chapter 1.

[28] J. H. Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," *Past and Present* 137 (1992): p. 64.

[29] T. C. Smout, "The Road to Union," in *Britain after the Glorious Revolution,* ed. Geoffrey Holmes (London: Macmillan, 1969), pp. 176-177.

union, to the extent that the Crown proposals prompted the Scottish Privy Council to roll back existing efforts to establish a customs union between the two kingdoms.[30]

Smout views this as the moment when the Crown realized an incorporating union would be necessary to solve the problems of the executive, but also realized the two other parties essential for such a union to come about—the English and Scottish Parliaments—would need much stronger incentives to be convinced of the wisdom of such a union.[31] The eventual Union of 1707 was, however, strongly affected by the failure of these early proposals. A union of Church and legal systems would not again be attempted, with the ultimately successful union being one solely between parliaments.

The Interregnum

During the English Civil Wars, the Commonwealth faced threats to its existence from Ireland and Scotland, and would go on to conquer both of these realms and impose incorporating union coercively for the duration of its existence until 1659. In Ireland, Catholic secessionists and Protestant royalists co-existed, whereas in Scotland, (though Charles I had been deeply unpopular), the regicide was rejected as illegitimate, and on the 5th of February, 1649, a few days after the execution of Charles I, the Scottish Covenanters—who had constituted the *de facto* government of Scotland since the onset of the civil wars, proclaimed the executed king's son Charles II as King of Great Britain, a move intended to reassert the identity of the house of Stuart in the union.[32] This move

---

[30] Ibid., p. 177
[31] Ibid.
[32] Allan I. Macinnes, *Union and Empire: The Making of the United Kingdom in 1707* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 74.

would provoke indignation in England, where Charles II was only taken to be King of Scots, not of Great Britain.

Cromwell, viewing the threat to the Commonwealth posed by Scotland to be serious, assembled an expeditionary force, and—due in part to internal dissention and the lack of cohesion on the part of the Scottish forces—occupied southern Scotland after the Battle of Dunbar, on the 3rd of September 1650.[33] After 1654, Cromwell would formally impose an incorporating union over the Scots, which was ultimately based on the coercive force of the English army and differed radically from the union desired by the Covenanters in their initial revolt against Charles I in 1638. Though it had an element of indigenous support and a degree of consent was sought in the terms according to which Scotland was to be incorporated into the Commonwealth, it was fundamentally coercive and not consensual in nature.[34] With the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Scotland also regained its status as an independent kingdom, and this was greeted by a majority of the Scottish people with considerable enthusiasm.[35]

The restoration reinstated the constitutional position that had existed in Scotland during the reign of Charles I—namely the personal union—and Charles II did not attempt any serious plans for a closer union between Scotland and England.[36] The period of forced amalgamation—with the large numbers of English soldiers garrisoned in Scotland—had proven deeply unsatisfactory for the Scots, and thus Charles II deemed it

---

[33] Ibid., p. 75.
[34] Ibid, pp. 75-79.
[35] Gillian H. MacIntosh, *The Scottish Parliament under Charles II, 1660-1685* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2007), p. 2.
[36] Charles II did nonetheless attempt to realize an ultimately unsuccessful plan for closer economic union to ameliorate the harmful effects of trade competition between the two kingdoms Smout, "The Road to Union,".

wise that Scotland be governed and administered largely from Edinburgh.[37] The memory of these years of the Cromwellian union left deep scars. As Goldie notes, "it led to a fear of being forcibly absorbed by English institutions, but also to a fear that English aggression was the price to pay if Scotland chose to go its own way."[38]

By reinforcing a strong sense of separate Scottish identity, the legacy of the Interregnum was to destroy the possibility for a future comprehensive union on the legal and cultural planes. Nonetheless, however problematically, it had also set a precedent for incorporating union merely by demonstrating its possibility, and the Crown had not been dissuaded of the ultimate desirability of incorporative union—only warned of the dangers of bringing it about through forcible means. As some scholars have noted, "the Cromwellian 'conquest' in some respects facilitated the later union of the Crowns…by sweeping away the independent hereditary jurisdictions of the great nobility, and encouraging a climate in which the Scots would be able to reassess the case for union."[39] The period of the interregnum would be the gravest threat that the England-Scotland composite state would face, and the composite aspect of the polity was only restored by the defeat of the Commonwealth with the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660.

The Economic Situation in Scotland Preceding Union

The incorporating union of 1707 was preceded by a number of important developments in the relationship between Crown and the English and Scottish parliaments, and indeed in Scottish society itself. One of the most consequential was the

---

[37] Toby Barnard, "Scotland and Ireland in the later Stewart monarchy," in *Conquest and Union: Fashioning a British State,* ed. Steven G. Ellis and Sarah Barber (London: Longman, 1995), p. 254.
[38] Mark Goldie, (1996), "Divergence and Union: Scotland and England, 1660-1707," in *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707,* ed. Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill (London: Macmillan, 1996), p. 223.
[39] Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," p. 64, footnote 53.

abolition of the Lords of the Articles with reforms made in 1689-90 after the Glorious

Revolution. These reforms considerably lessened the power the monarchy had to control

the Scottish Parliament, and made Scotland very difficult for London to govern.[40]

    And preceding the succession crisis during the reign of Queen Anne, there had

been years of economic difficulties in Scotland, which had been exacerbated by the tragic

disaster of the attempt of the Company of Scotland to found a colony in Darien. Located

in present day Panama, Darien was then the property of the King of Spain, and the affair

was a fiasco that contradicted Crown policy of the time as William III had built his

foreign policy around combating the influence of France, which necessitated an alliance

with Spain.[41] On top of being a fiasco, Darien was a tragedy generating significant anger

against local politicians in Scotland as well as resentment against the English

government, due to the significant loss of life and private savings that ensued. The

undercapitalized and badly managed colony soon collapsed due to its own weaknesses

and Spanish military efforts, with no assistance being rendered by the government of

William III to the stricken settlement.[42]

    It would be a mistake to conclude that almost a century of political association

was moving the two kingdoms inexorably closer to an incorporating union. In fact, in the

face of such economic and political developments, the existing personal union was

coming under severe strain. As Ferguson has noted, "[a]ll thinking Scots…had by the end

---

[40] Wout Troost, *William III, the Stadholder-King: A Political Biography,* trans. J. C. Grayson (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 273.

[41] This alliance was challenged by the Scots invasion of Spanish territory, and consequently William's ambassador in Madrid was "reduced to the absurd position of trying to explain to the Spanish Court that one of the nations over whom William ruled had invaded Spanish territory, but Spain should bear William no grudge since these particular subjects were acting against their monarch's expressed will." Smout, "The Road to Union," p. 179.

[42] T. C. Smout, "The Anglo-Scottish Union of 1707. I. The Economic Background," *The Economic History Review* 16, no. 3 (1964): pp. 455-467.

of William's troubled reign agreed that the existing bond between the two kingdoms was unsatisfactory and that it was slowly strangling the weaker nation."[43] From the perspective of the English, the Scots were becoming increasingly unruly and ungovernable, and the opinion of William was that these problems of governing Scotland could only be solved by closer union and not disengagement, and he urged the importance of an incorporating union to his successor in one of his last political acts.[44]

The Role of the Augustan Succession Crisis

Such circumstances as existed in the late seventeenth century would not have struck many contemporary observers as propitious conditions for an incorporating union. Indeed when the Crown under Queen Anne initiated discussions for a renegotiated union in 1702, these preliminary talks were scuppered by the English Parliament, who viewed the Scots as 'fools and rogues.' These talks had been undertaken in the anticipation that the Scottish Parliament would attempt to extract further concessions to accept the English Parliament's decision to confirm the Protestant succession and fix the succession on the Electress Sophia of Hanover and her issue.[45] Ironically, it would take a further deterioration of relations between the two kingdoms in the context of the succession crisis to convince the English Parliament of the urgent necessity for an incorporating union.

In the lead up to the conversion of the English Parliament to the cause of a union, there had been further moves by the Scottish government to change the terms of the

---

[43] W. Ferguson, "The Making of the Treaty of Union of 1707," *The Scottish Historical Review* 43, no. 136 (1964): p. 91.
[44] Ibid., p. 93.
[45] Smout, "The Road to Union," p. 181.

personal union established upon the accession of King James VI to the English throne. A succession crisis was anticipated in England due to the death in 1700 of William—the only child of Queen Anne to survive infancy—leaving only the Catholic issue of the exiled James II by his second wife, the Catholic Mary of Modena, to inherit the English Crown. This was an abhorrent prospect to the Protestant country, and the Act of Settlement passed in 1701 by Parliament stipulated that, in addition to disqualifying anyone Catholic or married to one from inheriting the throne,[46] the royal succession would pass to the Hanoverian candidates. Moreover there was an international dimension to the Augustan succession crisis, as Louis XIV had, in response to the Act of Settlement (and following the death of James II in 1701), recognized the Jacobite candidate—James the Catholic son of James II—as 'James III' and rightful heir to the English throne. There were thus fears, rightfully, that the War of the Spanish Succession might morph into a war over the British succession.[47]

The new Scottish Parliament that assembled in 1703 and 1704 was predictably keen to assert its independence of England, especially in the wake of the Darien disaster and economic distress. Its remit was more or less to define the constitutional position of Scotland on the royal succession after the death of Queen Anne.[48] Under the leadership of its most famous member, Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, this parliament passed two Acts: "the Act of Security and Succession, which in effect debarred a Hanoverian from the throne unless the Scottish government was severed from 'English or any foreign influence', and the Act anent Peace and War, which demanded the consent of the Scottish

---

[46] This reaffirmed the Bill of Rights of 1689.
[47] Macinnes, *Union and Empire,* Chapter 9.
[48] Ferguson, "The Making of the Treaty of Union of 1707," p. 97.

Parliament in waging war and drawing up peace treaties."[49] Coming soon in the wake of the Act of Settlement, the Acts of Scottish parliament—though they did not reach a decisive conclusion on the succession question—in effect opened the possibility of dissolving the personal union of England and Scotland as they expressed a refusal on the part of the Scots to be bound to the succession provisions of the English Parliament.[50]

The Augustan succession crisis and Scottish moves threatening a de-alignment of the line of succession of the King of Scots from that of the King of England, were to prove the decisive catalyst prompting the English parliament to hasten to bring about an incorporating union. The main fears of the English were at this time to do with the possibility of the re-emergence of an independent Scottish foreign policy, and its damaging implications. The alliance between Scotland and France had been a cornerstone of Scottish foreign policy since 1295 until the beginning of the Jacobean era in Scotland in 1567, and there were fears that this 'Auld Alliance' could be revived if Scottish foreign policy were to take an independent course, thereby rendering them friendly to French interests and hostile to those of England.[51]

The English and Scottish Parliaments Approve Union

The specter of hostile relations emerging between the two kingdoms, a possibility deeply inimical to English security, was unacceptable to the English Parliament, and after the rebellious sessions of the Scottish Parliament in 1703-1704, some among the English

---

[49] Smout, "The Road to Union," p. 181.
[50] Howard Nenner, *The Right to be King: The Succession to the Crown of England, 1603-1714* (London: Macmillan, 1995), p. 234.
[51] Smout, "The Road to Union."

were interpreting these moves as a threat of war.[52] This was the moment when the

English became convinced that, with the stark choice suggesting itself of war or union,

union was the more desirable course. The response to the Scots by the English Parliament

was the Alien Act of 1705, which imposed a series of punitive economic measures on the

Scots unless they agreed to an incorporative union. The Act deemed that:

> [A]ll Scotsmen, except such as were settled in England, Ireland, or the Plantations, or
> were employed in the army and navy, should be declared aliens, until the establishment
> of a perfect and entire union, or the settlement of the succession to the Scottish crown, in
> the same manner as decreed by English statute. They resolved…to prohibit the
> importation of Scottish cattle and sheep, and the export of English and Irish wool to
> Scotland. They accepted that the early of Torrington, to empower the Commissioners of
> the Admiralty to fit out cruisers to seize all Scottish ships trading with her majesty's
> enemies.[53]

Despite the Alien Act arousing intense distaste amongst the Scots, a key vote in

favor of Union with England was passed by the Scottish Parliament in September of

1705. This was despite a decidedly uncooperative mood among Scottish parliamentarians

in the parliaments of 1703-1704. The reasons for this *volte-face* have been the subject of

significant historical speculation.[54]

---

[52] James Mackinnon, *The Union of England and Scotland* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1907), p. 177.
[53] Ibid., p. 185.
[54] The main explanations advanced are as follows. Firstly, it has been argued that there had existed, submerged within Scotland (and despite the contrary impression given by the rebellious parliaments), a significant sentiment in favor of Union partly supported by evidence of moves made during the Glorious Revolution by the Scottish Convention in favor of an incorporative union. The reasons for such support are postulated to have been mainly economic, with the economic advantages of full union with England outweighing the disadvantageous trading situation under the 'Union of Crowns' for supporters of incorporative union. Secondly, dissatisfaction with the economic status quo amongst Scottish parliamentarians combined with internal division and a lack of agreement about what should take its place have been noted, supposedly leaving the Scots weak to the advocates of Union after 1704. This converged with a view espousing the benefits of gaining access to the English market and those of her colonies, which would be enabled by incorporating union. Thirdly, the success of economic coercion (in the form of the projected costs of the punitive measures threatened by the Alien Act) has been proposed as an important influence in changing the minds of the Parliament. Finally, there is a view that the Scottish politicians were effectively bought out through patronage and numerous venal incentives offered by London to the Scots. These explanations are laid out in Smout, "The Road to Union," p. 183.

As we have already seen, the general sense in Scotland was that the Scots were being slowly strangled economically by the English through laws enacted after the Restoration, such as the Navigation Acts, which prevented Scotland from trading directly with English colonies and placed it in the same disadvantaged position as England's enemies. If it would be necessary for the personal union to be dangled as a bargaining chip in order for the Scots' displeasure vis-à-vis the status quo to be registered, then so be it. Nonetheless, these resentments did not quite equate to a strong will to independence from England, as the Scots were aware of the weakness of their circumstances.

The Act of Security passed by the Scottish Parliament in 1703 has been called a 'calculated bluff' as the possibility of separation from England it opened up was problematic for the Scots were it actually to be gained. As Robertson has written, for the non-Jacobite Scotsman, "the bluff was two-fold: first, that a Protestant succession other than the Hanoverian could be found, and second, that after having had the Scottish king in London for 100 years the English would be prepared to accept a restored and separate Scottish monarchy."[55]

However, the deliberate vagueness built into the Acts of Scottish Parliament was enough to set the English thinking of worst-case scenarios. On the English side, the fears were not completely unfounded. The French king Louis XIV had made serious efforts, through his emissary Hooke, to revive the Auld Alliance with Scotland, and even beyond France it is not impossible that "Scotland might have found some powerful princes willing to have accepted her crown, and encouraged her to stand upon her own feet."[56]

---

[55] John Robertson, "An Elusive Sovereignty: The Course of the Union Debate in Scotland 1698-1707," in *A Union for Empire,* ed. John Robertson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 204.
[56] Mackinnon, *The Union of England and Scotland,* p. 180.

For his part, Louis XIV, who had treated the exiled Stuart court of James II with the utmost courtesy since their arrival in France in 1689, was wanting for allies in Europe after the Glorious Revolution, and was hoping that installing the Stuart contender to the throne in Scotland would destabilize politics in the British Isles. As Corp notes, "Louis's best hope was that civil war in the British Isles not only would weaken William there, but might also ultimately undermine his position in the Dutch Republic."[57]

Though the Williamite War in Ireland (1688-1691) was a defeat for Jacobitism, as the Irish under James II (with French support) had been defeated by William's forces, the danger of separatism still remained. The Jacobite cause was not unpopular, even after the inconsistencies of James II's reign and the humiliating events of the Glorious Revolution. As one author has written of the appeal of Jacobitism, "[a] truculent Dutchman and the prospect that he would be succeeded by a boorish German—these were the chief assets of the Stuart cause in England."[58] Already having seen the destabilizing influence that Scotland alone could wield, the English—already at war on the continent in the War of the Spanish Succession—felt themselves to be strategically vulnerable and were disinclined to wage a war with Scotland that could create a French ally right at the northern border.[59] A war of secession between Scotland and England as envisaged by the English, with the French supporting the Jacobite contender as ruler of Scotland, would not only have threatened England's security but would also have opened the fissures of political cohesion once again at a time when England's resources were already spread thin.

---

[57] Edward Corp, *A Court in Exile: The Stuarts in France, 1689-1718* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 16.
[58] David Ogg, "The Emergence of Great Britain as a World Power," in *The New Cambridge Modern History, Volume VI,* ed. J.S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 255.
[59] Ibid., pp. 254-255.

The Pivotal Role of the English Parliament

By the early years of Anne's reign the attitude of English leaders—both the crown and the parliament—had become convinced of the need for amalgamative union and dissolution of the composite state that had been in existence (with interruptions) since 1603. In some other country, the crown might have been able to accomplish incorporating union through its own force of will, but in Augustan England where parliament had recently prevailed twice in fierce struggles against the monarchy (during the English Civil Wars and the Glorious Revolution), the support of parliament was a *sine qua non* of such moves. Moreover, the failed experience of coercive union during the Interregnum and the continued independent-mindedness of the Scots, had alerted the crown and parliament to the difficulties of attempting amalgamation by force. This understanding of the inherent difficulties of forcible amalgamation was something the English would likely only have learned through arduous experience, just as the realization of the futility of forced amalgamation was grasped collectively by early modern European leaders only over the course of the seventeenth century, as attempts to crush the wave of revolts and rebellions of the mid-century by coercive centralization measures largely failed.

The monarchs of the Stuart dynasty, though they began to consider themselves English soon after taking the English throne, nonetheless retained a link with Scotland that took them back to their ancestral kingdom during times of difficulty. Examples of this include the Scots remaining loyal to Charles II (rather than to Oliver Cromwell) after the execution of Charles I—an important factor behind Charles II fleeing to Scotland to

continue his fight against the leaders of the Commonwealth. As a consequence of Scottish support for absolute monarchy and his own residual connection with Scotland, Charles II would give considerable autonomy to Scottish Parliament during his reign.[60] James II and the cause of the Stuarts would also continue to find substantial support amongst the Scots well after the Glorious Revolution.

It was no doubt this longstanding connection with the crown that aided the Scots in gaining concessions from William after the Glorious Revolution, and also when negotiating the arrangements for Union.[61] The guaranteed independence of the Scottish Presbyterian Church and maintenance of Scots law after Union, as well as the preservation of the trading rights of the Royal Burghs were significant concessions made to Scottish interests, which were undoubtedly vital in convincing the Scottish Parliament to accept incorporating Union.[62] The corrupt payments made to Scottish parliamentarians also undoubtedly played a part.[63]

Thus, when asking what undercurrents were at play in the early 1700s, we can see that Scotland was perceived as a source of great danger for England due to the manner in which deteriorating relations between the two kingdoms would exacerbate the already somewhat weak legitimacy of the protestant succession and potentially open the door to a full-blown succession crisis or ignite the spark of regional war. The heightened threat perception on the English side, fearful of a restive Scotland, and the compromises its negotiators made to placate Scottish interests, implicitly show the determination lying behind the English resolve to drive forward an amalgamation between the two kingdoms.

[60] Keith M. Brown, *Kingdom or Province? Scotland and the Regal Union, 1603-1715* (London: Macmillan, 1992), Chapter 6.
[61] Barnard, "Scotland and Ireland in the later Stewart monarchy,".
[62] Smout, "The Road to Union,".
[63] Ferguson, "The Making of the Treaty of Union of 1707," pp. 89-110.

Without the catalyst of the already troubled succession questions faced by the English monarchy, the threat posed by the historical ties between Scotland and the Jacobite Stuart pretenders to the English throne, and the ties between Scotland and France predating the 'Union of Crowns,' it is doubtful that great urgency would have been felt by the English to push strongly towards amalgamation. However, even without an English-led push for amalgamation, it is doubtful the English would long have acquiesced if the Scots had rejected the Hanoverian succession. Indeed Smout believes that amalgamative union would have taken place sooner or later, even if the negotiations leading up to the successful Union of 1707 had failed. As he notes:

> It is…rather difficult to imagine that it [amalgamative union] would not have come about at all…the international position of Scotland in the early eighteenth century was too isolated, her internal weaknesses and divisions were too acute and wide-ranging, and the determination of England to protect herself from these weaknesses by absorbing her neighbor was too strong, to offer much rational hope north of the Border that Scotland's cherished independence could be long preserved.[64]

This seems a considered view in light of the evidence we have examined. The role of the Scottish Parliament in initiating the events leading up to Union, while considerable, are secondary to the transformative impact played by the English Parliament deciding to pursue amalgamative union. Though some attempts had been made by the Scots to initiate amalgamative union during the reign of William, these never got off the ground due to the unwillingness of English Parliament to countenance such moves until after the provocation of the Scottish Parliament. Once the English Parliament had been convinced of its necessity, incorporating union was accomplished soon thereafter. We proceed now to analyze the causes of composite state dissolution in more analytic depth, through a comparative examination of the dissolution of the Iberian

---

[64] Smout, "The Road to Union," p. 193.

Union and the Union of the Crowns against the backdrop of developments in their respective regions.

Composite States on the Iberian Peninsula and the British Isles, Compared

We now compare the dissolution of the Iberian Union and the Union of the Crowns in the context of the political dynamics of stasis and change affecting composite states on the Iberian Peninsula and the British Isles. This broader comparative perspective is necessary to determine whether common factors underpin the dissolution of both these composite states. Composite state death is best understood when contrasted with composite state survival, especially where each of these processes co-exist simultaneously in the same political region.

The Meaning of Amalgamation, Compositeness, and Secession

Before moving on to identify the most important variables for understanding the early death of composite states, we must point to the importance of grasping the meaning of amalgamation, compositeness, and secession more substantively. Amalgamation means death of a composite state through integration, compositeness means continuation of the status quo of a composite state, and secession means death of a composite state through disintegration. However, the seeming simplicity of these terms in fact masks significant historical and contextual variation. To grasp these nuances, we examine the contextual meaning of these concepts in two historical contexts; in the British Isles by contrasting amalgamation (the Acts of Union) and maintained compositeness (England-

135

Ireland); and on the Iberian Peninsula by contrasting secession (Portugal from the Iberian Union) and maintained compositeness (Spain-Aragon).

In these two historical contexts, amalgamation, compositeness, and secession meant something distinct. Here we note three variables especially useful for untangling the complexities of these two sets of cases: birth conditions and length of historical acquaintance of a composite union; degree of equality between composite entities (measured by the extent of autonomy given to the regional assembly); and the strength of the alliances of a candidate for incorporation and/or secession.

<u>Birth Conditions and Historical Acquaintance</u>

The historical age of a composite association is important because it shows the degree to which two independent political entities have become accustomed to co-existing with each other in a composite union. At the time of Portuguese moves toward independence in 1640, the union between Catalonia (as part of the Kingdom of Aragon) and the Spanish Monarchy had already endured for over one hundred years from the accession of Ferdinand II to the throne of Aragon in 1479. The Kingdom of Ireland had come into existence in 1541 with an Act of Irish Parliament (the Crown of Ireland Act) that declared Henry VIII as King of Ireland. Thus England-Ireland had already been in existence for over half a century when England and Scotland were united under James I in 1603.

Castile-Aragon and England-Ireland preexisted the Iberian Union and the Union of the Crowns by significant lengths of time, and in Castile-Aragon the passage of time and mutual acquaintance had lessened restive tendencies, partly due to the magnanimous response by the Spanish Monarchy to an unsuccessful revolt by the Aragonese in 1591-

2.[65] This reduced tension is epitomized by the fact that the Catalonian revolt did not spill

over into other parts of the Kingdom of Aragon—Aragon and Valencia were reluctant to

throw their strength behind the Catalonians—and the historical relationship between

Castile and Aragon undoubtedly played a part. A long-shared history can lessen restive

tendencies not only through greater acquaintance, but sometimes also through the

historical memory of past mercies granted.

The birth conditions of a composite state also played an important, and perhaps

even decisive role in shaping the later fortunes of a composite state. The only composite

state formed essentially through a quasi-colonial process, England-Ireland, would not be

amalgamated with the monarchical center except under the most threatening of

circumstances as existed during the turbulent years of the French Revolutionary Wars.

The role of coercion involved in the formation of the Iberian Union perhaps left it

particularly vulnerable to separatist sentiments, though separatist sentiments were not

entirely absent even in cases of a more consent based union. Similarly, for England-

Ireland, time and the ameliorating force of historical acquaintance did not lessen restive

tendencies unlike with Castile-Aragon, as the latter had been formed through a more

consensual process, namely the dynastic marriage. In Castile-Aragon, a personal union

had come into existence from a dynastic marriage between the King of Aragon and the

Queen of Castile, and the England-Scotland composite state came into existence when

the Scottish king was essentially borrowed by England to be her king during a succession

crisis. In each of these cases, a degree of reciprocity and/or consensus (even if only on the

symbolic domain) was involved in the creation of the composite state, whereas in

---

[65] After the revolt ended unsuccessfully, Aragonese liberties were largely allowed to continue un-changed. Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716,* pp. 628-643.

England-Ireland a kingdom was created coercively and *de novo* as a means of deepening

the authority of the King of England in Ireland, with no dynastic ties whatsoever

connecting these two polities.

Inequality within the Composite State and its Consequences

In addition to the absence of dynastic ties, a high level of inequality between the

components of a composite polity can work against the moderating influence of historical

acquaintance. The Crown of Aragon was an independent kingdom before the personal

union with Castile, whereas Ireland was already nominally subject to the feudal authority

of the English king at the time of union in 1541. In becoming a nominal kingdom, Ireland

had been transformed from a feudal lordship under the overlordship of the King of

England (who was styled as the Lord of Ireland).[66] Under the terms governing the union

between Ireland and England—the Crown of Ireland Act and the Poynings' Act—the

Kingdom of Ireland was nominally equal in status to England, but in reality its status was

that of a subordinate province.[67] The Irish Parliament was clearly limited in the extent to

which it could autonomously generate legislation, and was vulnerable to ongoing

intervention from the English crown and parliament, leaving the Kingdom of Ireland

substantively less than a fully independent polity.

---

[66] This was done for three overlapping sets of reasons: the desire to strengthen the obedience of the Irish; the imperative to consolidate the king of England as the only legitimate king of Ireland; and as a step to delegitimize the claims of the papacy to supremacy in terms of feudal authority in the wake of the reformation in Tudor England. For more on this point, see Toby Barnard, *The Kingdom of Ireland, 1641-1760* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), Chapter 1; T. W. Moody, F. X. Martin, and F. J Byrne, eds., *A New History of Ireland, Volume III: Early Modern Ireland 1534-1691* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), pp. 47-48.
[67] This subordinate status is exemplified by the fact that nobody but the king of England could be king of Ireland, the Irish executive could only call a parliament after obtaining license from the king, and all proposed legislation was required to be approved by the king of England and his English council, certified under the great seal of England. M. Perceval-Maxwell, "Ireland and the Monarchy in the Early Stuart Multiple Kingdom," *The Historical Journal* 34, no. 2 (1991): pp. 280-281.

In other words, the union of Aragon-Castile came about more or less as the coming together of equal entities, whereas the England-Ireland union was the transformation of an already unequal feudal relationship into a nominally equal but substantively unequal relationship characterized by military reconquest of the Irish.[68] Here, confessional division between Catholics and Protestants was a complicating factor in the case of Ireland not present in Aragon.

Ongoing resistance by the Irish to these English policies of discrimination resulted in two failed uprisings—the Irish Rebellion of 1641 and the Williamite War in Ireland of 1689-1691—which in turn led to further punitive policies by London, dispossessing greater numbers of Catholic landowners, such that by the end of the Williamite Wars the Catholics' share of land had plunged to 14 per cent of profitable acreage.[69] The latter abortive Williamite War was, in many ways, a *de facto* struggle for independence, as the dispossessed Irish felt that their interests would be better safeguarded by the Catholic James II, though his premature flight before seeing through the struggle ensured that his betrayal would long be remembered by the Irish.[70]

Under such circumstances, if one asks why there were not, alongside the assimilation of Scotland into a unified polity in 1707, concurrent moves to amalgamate the Kingdom of Ireland, the answer must be that as a semi-colonial and semi-dependent territory of England, Ireland did not yet have a sufficient level of equality and respect to be considered a candidate for amalgamation. Moreover, support in Ireland for the

---

[68] This reconquest of Ireland entailed economic and cultural subjugation under a policy of Anglicization and inflows of Protestant settlers from England and Scotland.
[69] Barnard, *The Kingdom of Ireland,* p. 4.
[70] Ibid., pp. 37-38.

Jacobite succession, given the prevalence of Catholicism there, meant that upgrading the autonomy of the Irish Parliament was not an acceptable option.[71]

In contrast to the Irish situation, the cultural affinity between England and Scotland, as measured by their joint rule by a Scottish dynasty, and the relative absence of harsh colonial policies as had been inflicted on the Irish,[72] meant that there were few insurmountable impediments to amalgamation being chosen as the solution to Scottish moves to secede. Scotland also lacked an extraterritorial focus of authority in competition with the King, unlike the Pope who claimed spiritual authority over the Irish, a fact that promised to complicate any proposed amalgamation.[73]

The England-Ireland composite state was not yet a true composite polity connecting two independent kingdoms or principalities under a common ruler, and thus amalgamation—where differences in status between the inhabitants of the various realms would be erased—was inconceivable for either of the parties involved. Amalgamation was the favored means to deal with equal and not dependent territories, as the latter were to be kept at a distance where they could be denied enjoyment of the advantages and privileges of the dominant polity. In contrast to England-Ireland, the Aragonese Cortes was a wholly equal partner to its Castilian counterpart from the perspective of law and thus the continuation of the composite polity meant the preservation of its ancient rights and privileges, whereas the continuation of the composite polity between England and

---

[71] Rather, the governance of Ireland was managed such that the Irish Parliament was either held in abeyance—being convened just five times during the seventeenth century before 1692—or its membership was manipulated such that Catholics were excluded. Barnard, *The Kingdom of Ireland,* Chapter 4.

[72] As Perceval-Maxwell notes, "Ireland acquired a most unusual characteristic in western Europe of being both an imperial monarchy and a colony at the same time." Perceval-Maxwell, "Ireland and the Monarchy in the Early Stuart Multiple Kingdom," p. 283.

[73] Jim Smyth, "The Communities of Ireland and the British State, 1660-1707," in *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707, ed.* Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill (London: Macmillan, 1996), p. 256.

Ireland meant the continued dispossession of the Irish Parliament to legislate for itself, and for Ireland as a whole dispossession of its rights.

In contrast to the Portuguese and Scottish Parliaments, the Irish Parliament was not a threat to the political center, as it was controlled by Protestants sympathetic to the English Crown. Coercive union during the Interregnum was also recognized to have had negative repercussions. In sum, Ireland in the latter half of the seventeenth century did not pose a sufficient political threat to England for the English monarch to be pressured into developing a radical political response, nor was amalgamative union a strategy that was considered given the severely unequal rights possessed by Protestants and Catholics in Ireland, which would have rendered union problematic.

By comparing the survival of the Castile-Aragon composite state to that of England-Ireland, we have seen that the meaning of compositeness was different in the two cases. Castile-Aragon was an egalitarian composite state in the sense of a personal monarchic union between two independent kingdoms joined via a royal marriage, where the laws and liberties of each were protected. Ireland, having been a dependent yet separate polity since the Norman invasion of Ireland in the twelfth century, was redesignated from a lordship to a kingdom by a bill in Irish Parliament in 1541. Though the redesignation of Ireland as a kingdom legally created a composite state between it and England, the shift renewed and consolidated a state of dependence on the part of the Irish, and thus here ongoing compositeness meant the continuation of a state of quasi-colonial subjugation. Though a perceived external threat was the strongest driver of amalgamation overriding other factors, when the threat was not exigent, the degree of political equality between composite units played an important role in whether or not amalgamation was

141

pursued. When the disparity in political status between composite entities was too great, such as was the case in England-Ireland, monarchs generally demurred from pursuing amalgamation and preferred maintaining composite ties.

The Role of External Threats and Alliances in Effectuating Change

The survival of England-Ireland until 1800, when Ireland as an independent kingdom was abolished in the wake of the Irish Rebellion of 1798, mirrored the events surrounding the union between Scotland and England in 1707. Both 'deaths' of these composite states occurred in the face of a movement to loosen the weaker state from the bonds of a dynastic and/or political union with a stronger political entity. As seen earlier, the Acts of Union were framed in the context of Scottish moves to uncouple their Crown from the English Crown during the Scottish Parliament of 1703. The threat of Scotland reviving a separate monarchy, pursuing an independent foreign policy, and perhaps even reviving the Auld Alliance with France (Ludovician France had been discreetly lobbying the Scots in support of the Jacobite cause), was the critical circumstance that called for urgent changes to the structure of the composite state. The fact that composite states are generally composed of contiguous domains exacerbates the threat posed by the secession of a restive territory, as the secessionist state would pose a particularly dangerous threat to the remaining entity due to its close geographical proximity.

Ireland, in contrast with Scotland, could not count on the support of an extraterritorial power. Ireland's old ally Spain had rolled back its ambitions in Ireland following the end of the Anglo-Spanish War and the 1604 Treaty of London. Moreover, by the late sixteenth century, the inexorable decline of Spain's global military empire had begun, and Spain thus posed little military threat to England. The absence of a credible

external ally rendered a union between these two kingdoms less urgent.[74] Besides Spain, the other continental power with a strong interest in destabilizing the political situation in Ireland was Bourbon France. However, the specter of Bourbon France meddling in the affairs of Ireland was significantly diminished after the sound defeat of the Jacobite forces (which included a contingent sent by France in support of the deposed James II) at the Battle of Aughrim in July of 1691, and the voluntary exile of a large number of Irish Jacobite forces to the Continent after the war.[75]

The eventual incorporation of the Kingdom of Ireland into the United Kingdom in 1800, while puzzling if only because the sociological differences between these two kingdoms remained unchanged, can be explained by significant regional changes that took place in the intervening period. The French Revolution and the transformation of France from a monarchy to an expansionary republic keen to render aid to republican forces in adjacent countries led it to see its interests align with a separatist group, the Society of United Irishmen.[76] French support for such republican forces in Ireland culminated in an attempted invasion of Ireland in December of 1796, which failed due to coordination difficulties and deleterious weather conditions separating the French expeditionary fleet.

The central role of the international situation in driving the necessity of amalgamative union as a response to the separatist Irish Rebellion 1798 is well demonstrated by the writings of notable pamphleteers favoring of the path of union.

---

[74] It should be remembered that England was allied with France for some years.

[75] Sean Connolly, *Divided Kingdom, Ireland 1630-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 182-191.

[76] This group was initially founded with liberal aims of parliamentary reform, but it soon evolved—in the wake of the American and French revolutions—to aiming for the goal of ending English monarchical rule over Ireland and replacing it with an Irish Republic.

Edward Cooke, who wrote one of the first of these and a major statement of the pro-

union case, noted that:

> [I]n her affected plans of policy for the liberties of the British Empire, she [France]
> maintains the principle of separation, as essential to freedom, she considers the Union of
> England and Scotland as an usurpation of the former; and leaving England to her fate,
> would make Scotland and Ireland separate Republics…but as we wish to check the
> ambition of that desperate, and unprincipled power, and if that end can only be effected
> by maintaining and augmenting the power of the British Empire, we should be favorable
> to the principle of Union...[77]

Furthermore, the Prime Minister of England at the time of the amalgamative

union, William Pitt, when arguing in favor of union, pointed to the strategic imperative of

union as the first and foremost consideration before any economic advantages that might

accrue.[78] Thus, as the historian Sean Connolly notes of the overall contours of the debate

for and against amalgamative union, "supporters emphasized the mortal threat posed by

revolutionary France, and the consequent need for the closest possible coordination of

defense and security."[79]

The approach of early modern realism, cannot be decisively tested by application

to cases of early death composite states, as the key expectations of the approach pertain to

composite state longevity. Nonetheless, insofar as the approach is relevant to these cases

of early death, we would expect that simple states should not to attempt to secede from a

composite entity (due to the security advantage that would be sacrificed). This

expectation is *prima facie* contradicted in the case of the Iberian Union, as Portugal here

---

[77] Edward Cooke, *Arguments for and Against An Union, Between Great Britain and Ireland, Considered* (London: J. Wright, 1798), pp.9-10.
[78] In the House of Commons in April of 1800, he stated that "we must consider it [amalgamative union] as a measure of great national policy, the object of which is effectually to counteract the restless machinations of an inveterate enemy, who has uniformly and anxiously endeavored to effect a separation between two countries, whose connexion is as necessary for the safety of the one, as it is for the prosperity of the other." Speech in the House of Commons on April 21, 1800, in William Pitt, *The Speeches of the Right Honourable William Pitt, in the House of Commons, Volume IV* (Paternoster-Row: Longman, 1806), p. 70.
[79] Connolly, *Divided Kingdom,* p. 486.

is seen to choose a state of heightened vulnerability (as an independent entity) in place of greater security as part of the Union. The realist perspective finds it difficult to square that the greater threat felt by Portugal would be from Castile (its composite partner) than from potential hegemonic external states such as Bourbon France, which possessed greater war-making capabilities than the Spanish Monarchy. However, from another perspective, the centralizing moves of Olivares could have been felt as a core threat to state survival, as amalgamation can be seen as a form of peacetime conquest refracted within the boundaries of the composite state. Though early modern realism does not adjudicate between which of these threats (those from the composite core versus those from the outside) will be perceived by the early modern state to be more dangerous, it is puzzling that Scotland did not militarily resist English moves which actually led to incorporating union while Portugal responded with full-blown rebellion to the proposed Union of Arms reforms.

The military engagements that characterized the Portuguese Restoration War were desultory. However, the fact that a composite entity (Castile and its remaining composite domains) could not prevent the secession of Portugal with its inferior capabilities, does not strongly buttress early modern realism, though the alliance resources provided to Portugal by England and (at times) France makes a final determination difficult. Furthermore realism expects composite states to die through warfare, especially between independent states. The manner in which these composite states met their end—one of them through incorporating union and another through what essentially amounted to a civil war—does not fully conform to realist expectations of state death.

Nonetheless, the key role in reform and amalgamation efforts played by the *perceived threat* of a breakaway entity allying with an external enemy does provide general support to the realist emphasis on military interactions. Moreover, it tells us that the threats the monarchical center of a composite state took most seriously, were military in nature, and external in origin. The fact that composite state death in all the cases examined on the British Isles and the Iberian Peninsula were precipitated by a credible fear of external intervention, leads to the tentative conclusion that the most serious existential crises a composite state will face in its lifespan, is military invasion and/or intervention of an external power. A more concrete evaluation of the adequacy of early modern realism to explain composite state longevity must wait until Chapter Four, and its application to cases of composite state survival. When studying the process of composite state survival in that chapter, we utilize the insight gained here, and pay particularly close attention to the near-death experiences of those composite states vis-à-vis external threats, as the greatest sources of resilience will by implication be discovered by understanding these critical junctures.

The Dialectic of Separatism and Amalgamation

In both the case of Scotland in the early 1700s, and Ireland nearly a century later, moves to loosen the ties of a composite state were seen as threats to the security of the central composite entity due to the possibility of the weaker separatist polity aligning with an extraterritorial enemy—in both cases an expansionary France. In both of these cases, integration through unification and abolition of the looser personal monarchic union came to be seen as the necessary prophylactic. The survival of the England-Ireland

composite state for almost a century after the dissolution of the union between England and Scotland, though it may seem puzzling, is comprehensible in these terms. It was the absence of a threatening external enemy with whom the separatist polity could align, geographic location insulating it from continental military affairs, and a degree of sociological distance between the two societies, that served to retard any earlier moves towards closer integration.[80]

Though the emergence of an external enemy was a critical background condition (akin to Waltz's 'permissive cause') making amalgamation possible, the immediate catalyst (or 'efficient cause') for the enactment of an amalgamative union in both the Scottish and Irish cases was the emergence of serious moves to separate these polities from the monarchic rule of the center. As has been seen in both these cases, a separatist movement in each kingdom combined with the threat of the separated polity allying with a foreign enemy to energize moves to amalgamate the composite state. The 'Union of Arms' reforms also involved the external factor, as they were catalyzed by Olivares' fear of the impotence of Castile's revenue raising capabilities when faced with the threat posed by its enemies.

There is a similarity in this regard between the two cases in the British Isles and the ultimate amalgamation of the Crown of Aragon into Spain in 1707 after it had sided with the Habsburg claimant to the Spanish throne (and against Castile) during the War of the Spanish Succession, Archduke Charles of Austria. Later codified via the Nueva

---

[80] After the systemic changes brought by the French Revolution, the backwardness of the Irish suddenly came to be seen by the English as advantageous, in particular as an opportunity to develop Ireland and move it closer to England through union rather than as a drag on the English economy and union as a net loss. This was akin to a gestalt shift, a framing shift, in which backwardness and distance was reframed as advantageous and an opportunity for England rather than disadvantageous and requiring the Irish to be kept at a distance. But the catalyst for this gestalt shift was the threat from France reaching an intolerable level.

Planta decrees,[81] the abolition of the Crown of Aragon also mirrored the process through which Scotland and Ireland were amalgamated. The role of separatist movements and rebellions in creating political conditions in which amalgamation becomes likely, shows that insurrection and separatism foments an action-reaction dynamic and makes difficult a return to pre-rebellion conditions in which a looser political union existed. Once the stakes increase and conflict drives communities further towards polarization, the looser relationship of a composite state becomes much more difficult to maintain.

The demise of the Iberian Union between Castile and Portugal through secession, as well as that of the composite union between Castile and Aragon, can be fruitfully compared to the two cases of composite polity 'death' via amalgamation in the British Isles because similar mechanisms were present in all of these cases, namely cultural distance, rebellion, and an expansionary foreign power. However, the two composite states joined to England (as well as Castile-Aragon) ended through amalgamation while the Iberian Union ended through secession. Can we thereby infer that, had Portugal been unsuccessful in its attempt to secede from the Union, the Iberian Union would also have likely ended in amalgamation?

Though there seems an intimate connection between secession and amalgamation—with each of these forces often feeding into the other—it should be remembered that an amalgamative union along the lines of England and Scotland in 1707 was near unprecedented at the time of its occurrence, and was in fact an influential precedent for subsequent unions. It was the parliamentary nature of the incorporating

---

[81] The Nueva Planta decrees of 1707-1716 marked the effective end of the Crown of Aragon as an independent entity. As Elliott notes of these pivotal reforms, they mark, in effect, "the transformation of Spain from a collection of semi-autonomous provinces into a centralized State." Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716,* p. 855.

148

union between England and Scotland in particular, balanced with the limited autonomy granted Scotland to retain its system of law, that forged a new example of union—one different in kind from the United Provinces and Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth that had been created in previous centuries, which exemplified a more confederal style of political union.[82]

The seventeenth century was marked by a number of unsuccessful attempts made by monarchs to militarily unify the separate polities over which they ruled. Both Charles I and Oliver Cromwell ultimately failed in their attempts to consolidate the composite state surrounding England.[83] Moreover, Spain's Philip IV's favorite, Olivares, pointedly failed in further integrating the kingdoms and provinces of the Iberian Peninsula (contrary to the ambition of the Union of Arms reforms),[84] and for his efforts succeeded only in setting off the revolt of Catalonia and the Portuguese insurrection.

The Historical Specificity of Amalgamative Union as Strategy

Amalgamative union on the parliamentary level was an option that only gradually entered the European political imagination during the latter half of the seventeenth century. It did so partly through the crucible of failed attempts at coerced political unification of the seventeenth century, and partly also through the example of Ludovician France and its comparatively successful attempts at centralization.[85] The government of

---

[82] John Robertson, "Empire and Union: Two concepts of the early modern European order," in *A Union for Empire: Political Thought and the Union of 1707,* ed. John Robertson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 3-36.

[83] Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," pp.. 64-65.

[84] For more on the abortive Union of Arms policy, see Elliott, *The Count-Duke of Olivares,* Chapter 7.

[85] As Lynn notes, the concept of territorial borders was evolving from out of the earlier framework of frontiers during the latter half of the seventeenth century. And during the War of the Reunions, (1679-1684), Louis XIV began to develop a military strategy which involved annexing territories in order to

Louis XIV had implemented a "conscious policy of political, administrative and cultural Gallicisation."[86] These elements were starting to give to the French state a degree of unity which other polities lacked, (though it was still penetrated by feudal rights and obligations typical of *ancien régime* polities), and such unity together with its great military power put pressure on the more composite and loosely associated monarchies surrounding it to respond in some manner to these administrative developments.

In this regard, the amalgamation of Scotland and England via the Acts of Union might even be considered an attempt to, in a distant way, respond to the reform efforts in France by integrating these two territories while simultaneously learning from the failures of integrationist projects of the previous century. Through these acts a single unified Kingdom of Great Britain came into being where previously there had been two kingdoms, and despite a single unified parliament at Westminster superseding the Scottish legislature in Edinburgh, nonetheless the Scots "managed to preserve its church, its basic education system, its *corpus* of laws, its courts and their structure."[87] The union of England and Scotland was more limited in its aims for integration than that aspired to by earlier generations of reformers such as Olivares and Cromwell, who had dreamed of creating integrated states where customs barriers would be eliminated and local laws and privileges would be abolished in favor of uniform national laws, and who had attempted to accomplish these ends through coerced measures.[88] Though the formation of the Union

---

facilitate the creation of "more defensible and better delineated frontiers…" John A. Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV 1667-1714* (Essex: Pearson, 1999), p. 162.

[86] Elliott, "A Europe of Composite Monarchies," p. 65.

[87] John Arrieta Alberdi, "Forms of Union: Britain and Spain, a Comparative Analysis," *Revista Internacional de Estudios Vascos,* Cuad 5 (2009): p. 51.

[88] Elliott notes that this was the aim of Olivares, but Cromwell was also clearly motivated by such aims. Obviously the military response to separatist rebellion in Portuguese and Catalonia led by Olivares is evidence enough of his intent to coerce unity in the face of dissent. Elliott, *Richelieu and Olivares,* p. 74.

of 1707 was not altogether free of coercion, nonetheless the process of its ratification involved a greater degree of consent on the part of the weaker polity than was sought during the establishment of the Commonwealth of England under Cromwell and other integrationist attempts.

The strategy of amalgamative union as a response to separatist rebellion, then, was not available to all rulers irrespective of their historical location, but was rather one that emerged during the latter half of the seventeenth century in response to exigent political circumstances. Based on this, it is anachronistic to automatically assume that Portugal would have been amalgamated with Castile if its rebellion had failed, especially given that the autonomy of Catalonia was preserved after its failed rebellion. This said, in the *longue durée* it is likely that, given the amalgamation of Castile and Aragon after the War of the Spanish Succession under the Spanish Crown with the Nueva Planta decrees, Portugal would also have suffered a similar fate sooner or later during the eighteenth century, even if it could had successfully avoided this fate for the duration of the seventeenth.

The Role of Leadership Learning

An additional explanatory factor should be introduced to account for the creation of a new state structure where the monarchy and parliament would be given strong powers, without either of these power centers becoming servile to the other as had

---

The Irish dimension of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms has, in this respect, been called by Pocock "a war of conquest and colonization," and though a unified republic was successfully established, it should be remembered that this republic was followed by the Restoration, and subsequent to that by a rebellion and land redistribution policies which systematically dispossessed the Irish populace. J. G. A. Pocock, "The War of the Three Kingdoms," in *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707,* ed. Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill (London: Macmillan, 1996), p. 191.

previously been the case in composite states. Here it is necessary to understand how the strategy of amalgamative parliamentary union came into existence.

We noted previously that amalgamative union as a strategic response to a cross-border rebellion was a political option developed in the context of specific historical conditions present in late seventeenth century Western Europe. Incorporating union enacted with a degree of consent on the part of weaker constituents was not a widely accepted solution to political coordination at the time it was enacted by England and Scotland in the first decade of the eighteenth century. Rather, incorporative union, where it took place, was generally attempted via grossly coercive means, and often involved the suppression of the parliamentary principle (in the polities to be amalgamated) by the force of monarchical power. The most pertinent examples here are the Commonwealth of England and Olivares' Union of Arms reforms, both of which aimed to establish a more unified state (via monarchical force) in place of an existing composite state. However, the integrated state envisaged by Olivares was never established, and the Commonwealth of England did not outlast the fall of the English Republic in 1659.

The parliamentary incorporating union forged by England and Scotland was shaped by the contemporary milieu and the need to respond to an expansionist France under Louis XIV which had in 1672 come within a hair's breadth of conquering the United Provinces and creating something resembling a Universal Monarchy, recalling the continental rule of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V a century earlier. With the flight of James II to France following the Glorious Revolution and the ongoing efforts of Louis to use the cause of Jacobitism to weaken the ties between the realms ruled by the English

Crown, William III had become convinced of the need to integrate England and Scotland still further than the monarchic union that existed at the time.[89]

During their deliberations, the Scots were faced with a number of undesirable or unattainable possibilities. The model of coerced union, where the subsidiary polities are subsumed by the dominant polity, was unpalatable to the Scots and provided a strong negative example in the early 1700s when Scottish pamphleteers and elites were debating their course in response to the Hanoverian Succession. On the one hand, the confederal union as a union of more or less equal and individually sovereign states—embodied in a case such as the United Provinces—provided a model of political union preserving separate assemblies and a loose constitutional structure. However desirable, influential Scottish pamphleteers such as Andrew Fletcher were aware that the fact of inequality between the three kingdoms of the British Isles made the creation of a viable confederation difficult without reconstituting the internal structure of each of these kingdoms.[90]

Other alternatives to the Hanoverian succession were also unrealistic, given the hostility of English elites to the Scots' attempt to uncouple the Scottish from the English crown. It was widely understood that a Jacobite king would trigger a religious war between the Presbyterians and their enemies, between England and Scotland, and even if Jacobitism won through in the civil war that ensued, this would mean the resumption of servitude to a king more English than Scottish.[91]

---

[89] Robertson, "Empire and Union," p. 32.
[90] This point is expressed particularly eloquently in Fletcher's final major contribution to the debate between confederation and incorporating union. See Andrew Fletcher, *Account of a Conversation Concerning a Right Regulation of Governments for the Common Good of Mankind* (Edinburgh, 1704). Also see Robertson, "An Elusive Sovereignty,".
[91] Smout, "The Road to Union," p. 185.

It would be in the context of a choice between these undesirable or unattainable options that the Scottish and English Parliaments would transcend the aporia—akin to the difficulty of navigating Scylla and Charybdis—between a parliamentary union that veered toward a republic, as in the case of the English Commonwealth and United Provinces, and amalgamative union that suppressed the independence of the periphery, as in the reform proposals of Olivares. The solution forged in the Acts of Union represented the perfection of the model first extolled by Gilbert Burnet, the Bishop of Salisbury, in his sermon given at the coronation of William III and Mary II. In this sermon, he depicted the then emerging English model, which avoided the extremes of republicanism and absolutism, as follows:

> [A] Rigour in Commanding, and a Cruelty in Punishing, must find Patterns elsewhere, then in Gods Governing the World, or in Christs Governing the Church. Happy we, who are delivered from both Extreams; who neither lie under the Terror of a Despotick Power, nor are cast loose to the wildness of ungovern'd Multitudes; who neither groan under the Tyranny of Inquisitors, nor the Madness of Lawless Men; and whose Laws are neither writ on Sand, nor with Blood; neither easie to be defaced; nor cruel in their Execution.[92]

In the case of the Acts of Union between England and Scotland, the weakness of the other cases of confederate union (due to their lack of a strong executive) was acknowledged, and this union did not attempt to supplant or weaken the monarchic principle, but rather sought a strong monarchy through paradoxically strengthening the parliamentary principle itself and endowing it with the authority to legitimize the process of dynastic succession.[93]

---

[92] Gilbert Burnet, *A Sermon Preached at the Coronation of William III and Mary II* (London: Printed for J. Starkey and Ric. Chiswell at the Rose and Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1689), pp. 9-10.

[93] There is no contradiction between asserting that parliament sought to strengthen monarchical power by creating a closer tie between monarch and parliament, and acknowledging that this arrangement would have unintended consequences in the long term.

However, not only was leadership learning evident on the level of parliamentary assemblies, but it was evident also in the monarchical center. Although the case of incorporating union of England and Scotland does not support cross-generational leadership learning as a factor ensuring the survival of composite polities, nonetheless there can be seen here to have taken place learning of a kind, as there was a definite evolutionary development in the strategies proposed by the monarchical center with regards to amalgamation. We have seen that amalgamation was a priority for the Stuarts since the time of James I, but there is evident a shift in the degree of coercion thought necessary to accomplish it. It is suggestive that Oliver Cromwell, a republican non-dynastic leader, was most beholden to coercive means in attempting amalgamation (even more in some ways than Charles I), whereas the Stuart rulers gradually ameliorated their reliance on coercive means as the dynastic line progressed. From this perspective, it is explicable that the culmination of amalgamation efforts took place under the reign of Queen Anne, the last Stuart ruler.

The evolution of amalgamation attempts in the British Isles, then, provides limited backing to the existence of cross-generational leadership learning within a dynastic line, although in this context such leadership learning did not lead rulers to maintain the composite status quo as an answer to the problem of maintaining domestic order posed by the seventeenth century. The opposite of cross-generational leadership learning is that of cross-generational memory loss, an occurrence that manifested itself in early modern Europe with the inauguration of a new dynasty to the royal seat. In this regard, the Nueva Planta decrees and amalgamation of the Castile-Aragon composite state, though an intuitive response to treason on the part of a composite province, was not

a strategy that could have been expected if leadership learning had taken place in the Iberian context. This is due to the fact that the history of the seventeenth century in the Iberian Peninsula shows the failure of centralization efforts to achieve their intended goals. Against this backdrop, it was fortuitous that this amalgamation did not set off a crippling rebellion—a near miss perhaps due to the fatigue induced by the War of Spanish Succession. The inauguration of the Spanish Bourbon dynasty in November of 1700 was perhaps a moment where a large part of the accumulated cross-generational learning of the Spanish Habsburg dynasty was lost.

Grand Comparisons

When examining the two pairs of composite states—two on the Iberian Peninsula and two in the British Isles—where one of each pair suffered an early demise and the other survived for a longer period, we can identify some common factors behind the cases of early decline.

The most influential factor driving composite state dissolution is a credible foreign threat, particularly the danger that a separatist constituent of the composite state might ally with a foreign enemy. In the case of Scotland, English fears of a reemergence of the alliance between Scotland and France played a decisive role in convincing English elites of the need to push forward with an incorporating union with Scotland to forestall this possibility. In the case of the Crown of Aragon and the Kingdom of Ireland, the threat of an alliance with a foreign power overshadowed the bonds of the composite union, leading in both cases to the center initiating an incorporating union, with varying degrees of autonomy for the amalgamated polity.

156

The failure of a separatist entity to successfully establish a robust alliance with a foreign power was a critical factor hampering separatist attempts and rendering it vulnerable to the whims of the monarchic center. Conversely, in the case of the Iberian Union, it was the strong and robust ties Portugal could establish with external allies that gave succor to the separatists and facilitated successful secession. For Portugal, it was the assistance of multiple external allies—the Dutch and French but especially the English— which proved critical to withstanding Castilian offensives over the course of 28 years of the war of restoration and to successfully achieving their goal of independence from the Union.

One measure of the robust cross-border alliances that Portugal was able to establish upon declaring John as the King of Portugal, was the dynastic marriage which John was able to engineer between his daughter, the Infanta Catherine, and King Charles II of England. As soon as the Braganza dynasty, which led the Portuguese separatist forces, gained dynastic legitimacy by marrying their heiress to the King of one of the major powers of Western Europe, the cause of Portuguese independence from Spain was given an immeasurable boost. In contrast, the weakness or absence of anti-kings in Scotland, Ireland, and Aragon was a serious impediment to separatist efforts in each of these polities, especially because the legitimacy and political alliances afforded by dynastic ties was not available to them. In Ireland and Aragon an anti-king was altogether absent, and in the Scottish case neither the exiled James II nor his son, James (the 'Old Pretender'), had married dynastic spouses who could bring the kind of external military

assistance that was afforded to John of Portugal.[94] The other key weakness of the Jacobite anti-kings was that they were absent from the territories they claimed to rule, whereas John was physically present at the moment of political restoration.

The role of domestic uprisings in catalyzing the dissolution of the composite states in question is clearly indicated insofar as the demise of the Iberian Union and the Union of the Crowns were both precipitated by insurrections and/or separatist demands. In the case of Aragon and Ireland also, it was insurrections or quasi-insurrections in the peripheral constituent polity, together with the threat of cross-border ties with external enemies, that propelled the political center to implement an incorporating union.

Though the role of external allies in facilitating or obstructing successful secession is of central importance, composite state dissolution in these cases came about from secession and/or incorporation of a constituent part of the composite polity rather than conquest by an external state. This fact suggests that these composite states were insulated from the forces of conquest in some way. We return to this point in the following chapter when we link the longevity of some composite states to their ability to deter conquest attempts through dynastic ties. In the case of Portuguese separatism, military collaboration with another constituent part of the composite state, for instance with Aragon, might have brought about secession even faster, but thoroughgoing cross-polity collaboration did not take place, and assistance from allies outside of the composite state was of greater importance in facilitating independence for Portugal. This indicates that the mechanisms of cross-segment alliances as argued by Daniel Nexon to have been

---

[94] James II was married to Mary, an heiress of the northwestern Italian Duchy of Modena, and his son James Francis Edward, was married to Maria Clementina Sobieska, the granddaughter of the Polish-Lithuanian king, John III Sobieski. The Duchy of Modena was small, and Poland-Lithuania was an elective monarchy. Neither of these allies were useful when pursuing the Jacobite claims.

operative during the reformation, were not salient in the dissolution of the composite states examined here.[95]

A final and no less important point emerging from these cases is the role played by dynastic ties in each of the two early cases of composite state dissolution. In the case of Portugal and the Portuguese Restoration War, it was the dynastic marriage tie between the Portuguese ruling dynasty and the English Stuarts which consolidated the renewed alliance between these two countries, (broken during the years of the Iberian Union, when Portugal was forced to side with Spain), and guaranteed English support for Portugal against Spain without which successful secession from Castile would hardly have been possible.[96] The importance of the dynastic marriage in consolidating the alliance between Portugal and England is attested in an important work on the diplomatic relations between these two countries:

> The [English] commissioners objected to Charles binding himself to defend Portugal as if it were England, but Sande [or Francisco De Mello E Torres, Conde Da Ponte, Marques De Sande and Portuguese ambassador to England] insisted on this, declaring that otherwise he would not make a treaty, since this condition was the chief reason for the marriage, and he appealed to the King, who ordered the demand to be conceded, which was done…[97]

The comparison with the unsuccessful secession attempt of Catalonia clearly shows the importance of the dynastic factor in the restoration of Portuguese

---

[95] Daniel Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), Chapter 4. This is likely because the dynamics of religious contention were largely disarmed by the settlements of the Westphalian Peace.

[96] Davidson well described the terms of the marriage union between Catherine of Braganza and Charles II as being protection for Portugal against Spain and the Netherlands. In that work, the support of Louis XIV for the union between Charles and Catherine, which was important for his policy of taking all steps necessary to weaken Spanish Habsburg power, is also noted, and this goes to show that dynastic marriage unions—insofar as they were focal points of political machinations—were critically important events for diplomatic competition and intrigue. Lillias Campbell Davidson, *Catherine of Bragança: Infanta of Portugal & Queen-Consort of England* (London: John Murray, 1908), p. 46.

[97] Edgar Prestage, *The Diplomatic Relations of Portugal with France, England, and Holland from 1640 to 1668* (Watford: Voss & Michael, Ltd, 1925), pp. 147-8.

independence. Though the English side was drawn to the alliance with Portugal at least in part through self-interest and the promise of gains from trade with the overseas Portuguese Empire, nonetheless the political benefits accruing to the Portuguese secessionists—both of military aid and dynastic recognition—were very real and more than offset the dependent economic position into which Portugal would gradually sink vis-à-vis England.[98] In this case, dynastic ties were critically important for the successful secession of Portugal and the dissolution of the Iberian Union.

In the case of the Scotland and England also, dynastic factors were critical in absentia, as it was the threat made by Scotland to the unity of the dynastic holdings of the English monarch that prompted intense efforts of both the English Crown and Parliament to reverse the Scottish Parliament's recalcitrance on the issue of the Hanoverian succession. It was also the severity of the threat posed by Scottish moves to uncouple its Crown from that of England, which convinced English parliamentarians of the necessity of an incorporating union, a conviction which had until that time been held only by the English sovereign and not the parliament. The severity of the threat to dynastic integrity posed by the Scottish Parliament can be seen when we contrast it with the threat posed by the Jacobite Irish Parliament of 1689, which supported the deposed Stuart King James II at the outset of the Williamite Wars (also a grave threat to the English monarchy), but which was weakened by the fact that the Irish Parliament exercised little real authority.[99] Therefore parliamentary and civil opposition in Ireland during the Williamite Wars was

---

[98] This is attested by the deep despair with which Philip IV received news of the renewed alliance between England and Portugal. R. A. Stradling, *Europe and the Decline of Spain* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981), Chapter 4.

[99] This weakness was due to Poynings' law, which dictated that every bill be approved in advance by the king and his English council. J.G. Simms, "The Jacobite Parliament of 1689," in his *War and Politics in Ireland 1649-1730* (London: Hambledon Press, 1986), pp. 65-90.

of little consequence to the English Crown when compared with the parliamentary opposition of Scotland to the Hanoverian succession, which had the actual power to decouple the two crowns united in the same person since 1603. The ensuing moves by the English Parliament to bring about an incorporating union—a much more drastic response than took place in the wake of the Williamite Wars—can be seen in this light as a more urgent response to a more pressing danger.

However, it must be remembered that in none of these composite states did a center-periphery model exist where a peripheral entity possessed its own separate ruling dynasty. This is due to the fact that all of the composite states examined in this chapter were primary composite states, a significant difference when comparing these cases of early demise with the structure of the Holy Roman Empire—a secondary composite state—that did retain quasi-independent dynastic rule in the peripheral components. We later see that, though these peripheral dynasties could prove problematic when their ambition outgrew their subordinate status, nonetheless it was dynastic kinship ties between the center and periphery that on occasion lent stability to the composite state that would elude the cases we examined in this chapter. This was the case insofar as kinship ties and patron-client relations between center and periphery rendered amalgamation (which required abolition of the peripheral dynasty) virtually impossible. The existence of dynastic ties between two dynasties meant that conquest and the abolition of one of these dynasties became unthinkable according to the normative framework of early modern politics.

CHAPTER THREE

THE THEORY OF DYNASTIC DETERRENCE

Interaction of Causal Factors in Early-Death Composite States

Before we outline the critical role of dynastic deterrence as the mechanism

underlying the late survival of some composite states, we must reiterate the way in which

the explanatory approaches tabled in Chapter One interact in historical context. We can

now see the manner in which the three explanatory factors—dynastic ties, military

threats, and leadership learning—interacted closely to shape the vicissitudes of early

dissolution in two representative contexts: the dissolution of the seventeenth century

England-Scotland Union of the Crowns in 1707 through amalgamation; and the formal

dissolution of the Iberian Union in 1668 via secession.

We saw that maintaining control of composite domains in the face of the

combination of an external threat and a rebellion was a compelling motive for monarchs

to either create a more unified polity (Scotland), or attempt to preserve the composite

state while instituting centralizing reforms (the Iberian Union).[1] Moreover, the dynastic

dimension was critical for Portugal in successfully suing for independence, as it was only

after Charles II ascended the throne with the English Restoration and married the late

John IV's daughter Catherine in 1661, that English military assistance would become

significant and signal acceptance of the Portuguese Braganzas by other European royal

---

[1] It should be remembered that the Portuguese War of Restoration itself came about due to attempts by Philip IV's favorite—the Count Duke Olivares—to impose a more integrated structure on the constituent parts of the Iberian Union with his Union of Arms reforms, a move that was vigorously opposed by both the Portuguese and the Catalonians.

dynasties.[2] In both of the cases of early demise, the factor of dynastic control interacted with military power in important ways, with the military capability gained from dynastic allies being sufficient to secure secession in one case, and the absence of significant military assistance from dynastic allies leaving Scotland vulnerable to amalgamation by England.

In the early demise cases, we saw two pathways to dissolution: dissolution by amalgamation initiated by the political center, and dissolution by successful secession of a peripheral component of the composite state. The threat of internal rebellion constituted one of the most serious threats to monarchical rule throughout the early modern period, but particularly in the seventeenth century—a period believed to have been characterized by 'general crisis' due to the frequency and ferocity of internal rebellion and war. As we noted in the previous chapter, in order to understand in proper perspective which factors were efficacious in enabling the late survival of some composite polities, we must compare two broad sets of factors: factors that underlay the early death of some composite states, and those that aided late-surviving composite states to weather the most severe existential crises they faced. Understanding the causes underlying the early death of some composite polities points us to the dangers that composite states in general must transcend to reach an advanced age. And looking at how late surviving composite states successfully traversed similar existential moments of crisis allows us to isolate the protective factors enabling these polities to avoid early death.

Having now examined some early dissolution composite polities, we should ask whether the ties of dynastic marriage and kinship we posit as an important factor in

---

[2] A. R. Disney, *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire, Volume 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 229.

aiding late survival were present or absent in these cases. In fact, the dialectic between rebellion and dynastic recognition can help us to separate the cases we have examined into two categories. In the first category, we find—as in Scotland—a nascent attempt at separatism was unsuccessful as there was no strong consensus on the anti-king to claim the Scottish crown, dispersing the energies of separatism and allowing the political center to stage a parrying move and enact incorporating union before consensus around an anti-king could emerge and deepen the crisis. This is abortive separatism without an accepted monarchic claimant. The second category, which includes Portugal, is one where there was an accepted anti-king (John Braganza) who was able to gain recognition from another significant dynastic ruler—the Stuart king Charles II—both in the form of a marriage tie (between Charles II and John IV's daughter Catherine) and a formal pledge of military assistance.

Focusing on the role of dynastic recognition and assistance allows us to view early death composite states in a new light. Though the occurrence of an internal rebellion in one or more composite state domains and the perception of an external threat by the center together constitute a key conjuncture preceding composite state death, these rebellions interact with the variable of dynastic recognition—here synonymous with the presence of a dynastic kinship tie—in such a way that the failure of a rebellion (which at least leaves open the possibility of composite state survival) can be predicted from the absence of strong dynastic ties between a restive domain and a neighboring dynastic house.[3]

---

[3] In this regard, the international system has not changed significantly from early modern times, as the success of a separatist movement even in contemporary times is premised on its ability to gain recognition for its claim as a legitimate government from at least one of the systemic great powers.

164

Dynastic recognition was found to be vital in aiding a secession attempt due to the concrete military assistance rendered to the breakaway polity. This can give it enough strength to successfully resist the monarchical center, as in the case of Portugal. A composite state is subject to certain dissolution when a secessionist rebellion in a constituent domain succeeds. If a rebellion fails, the defeated domain is at the mercy of the monarchical center, which can then decide whether the restive domain is amalgamated or preserved. And it is difficult for a rebellion to succeed without strong dynastic ties between the rebels and powerful dynastic supporters.

If the presence of strong dynastic ties (involving dynastic recognition and military support) between a restive domain and an external dynasty is enough to facilitate the success of a rebellion, and the absence of an accepted anti-king in a restive domain dooms a rebellion to failure, the importance of dynastic ties is indicated in a general manner. However, these early death cases do not tell us much about the relevant dynamics when the monarchic center was directly threatened by military action from outside of the composite state (not via the proxy of the composite domain). In these cases, the dynastic approach would expect that dynastic ties between a monarchic center and neighboring states (as well as those between the monarchic center and the composite domain where they exist) would be of greater salience than dynastic ties between a peripheral domain and a neighboring state. Furthermore, dynastic ties are not always sufficient to ensure the success of a rebellion. In the case of Frederick V, the Elector Palatine (who by agreeing to election as King of Bohemia came to lead the Bohemian Revolt), dynastic ties with James I of England (via his spouse Elizabeth who was the eldest daughter of James) were not sufficient to guarantee him support from England.

As such, secessionist rebellions were not always the most significant threats faced by a composite state. There seems a significant gap between the cases of early death and late survival composite states, as there did not take place in either Poland-Lithuania or the Holy Roman Empire secessionist rebellions similar to those that occurred in the Iberian Union, at least during the post-Westphalian era. In the case of the Holy Roman Empire, the closest we see to such a dynamic occurred during the War of the Austrian Succession (examined in Chapter Four) when the Bavarians under the Wittelsbach Elector Charles Albert made a push to claim the imperial throne, in violation of its customary monopolization by the Habsburgs. We shall see there that due to the complex structure of the Reich as a 'secondary' composite state, where the composite domains possessed a greater degree of autonomy due to their possessing their own ruling houses, this rebellion melded aspects of a civil war and international conflict.

In the constitutional structure of the late surviving Holy Roman Empire, we see the absence of a preponderant power in the relations between the center and periphery, which prevented both successful secession and amalgamation into a unified polity.[4] In the Empire, the Catholic sphere was balanced in an uneasy equilibrium against the Protestant

---

[4] In other cases of early death composite states not included here, we also see an intermediate survival of the composite state after an initial rebellion if neither the forces of rebellion nor the forces of conservation in a composite polity were able to gain preponderance in their struggle. In our framework, this occurs when a component state of the composite polity is led by an anti-king and the separatist forces are successful in obtaining military support from an external power for their cause, but unsuccessful in gaining dynastic recognition from other monarchs. In this case the rebellion can smolder on for some time before it is ultimately defeated. Austria-Hungary resembles this intermediate pattern, where neither the monarchical center (the Habsburg court) nor the anti-king (the Transylvanian Princes) was able to gain a decisive advantage. Here the Transylvanian princes could draw on military support from the Sublime Porte though they could not gain recognition from another Christian monarchical ruler for their claims. It is telling that in the Hungarian case the composite structure of the polity survived for the longest period after the initial challenge—just over one hundred years from when Bethlen was elected in August of 1620 until the passage of the Pragmatic Sanction by the Hungarian Diet at Pressburg in 1724. In comparison the England-Scotland and Austria-Bohemia composite states lasted barely a decade after the first articulation of dissent, and the Iberian Union technically lasted for twenty-eight years from the acclamation of John IV as anti-king of Portugal in 1640 until the acknowledgment of the Braganzas as Portugal's ruling dynasty by Spain's Charles II in February of 1668.

electorates and duchies. In the most consequential institution of the Empire—the Electoral College—the Catholic prince-electors had force of numbers to be able to determine the result of the Imperial elections, a fact that allowed the Austrian Habsburgs to maintain a virtual monopoly over the Imperial crown throughout the post-Westphalian period. Even the sole exception to this pattern, Charles Albert the Wittelsbach Elector of Bavaria—who was elected Emperor as Charles VII (and the only non-Habsburg to be elected Emperor after 1452)—did not break the religious pattern insofar as he also was Roman Catholic. Nonetheless, though Catholics controlled the Electoral College throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they never held a preponderant political position in the Empire and thus were unable to displace the Protestant forces entirely. The principle of *"cuius regio, eius religio"* (or "whose realm, his religion"), which epitomized the Peace of Augsburg (1555) and the Peace of Westphalia, represented the uneasy *via media* due to the inability of either Catholics or Protestants to gain a preponderance over the other.

Though neither the imperial center nor any of the composite domains could gain dominance, the *modus vivendi* for coexistence was one where Catholics maintained a precarious hegemony over the Electoral College and the Imperial crown. However, the absence of preponderance in a composite polity was not itself sufficient for a composite state to survive, as a sudden or gradual shift in the balance of power could doom a component polity.[5] In the Holy Roman Empire, there were moments during the eighteenth century when both the Catholic forces under the Habsburgs and the Protestants

---

[5] This is a dynamic seen in another case not included in our study—Austria-Hungary—which saw the Habsburgs under Leopold I eventually gain preponderance over the Hungarian magnates after the defeat of the Ottomans at the Battle of Vienna. At this point Hungary was assimilated into the Habsburg domains via the imposition of hereditary Habsburg succession.

under the *de facto* leadership of the Prussian kings seemed to be teetering on the edge of defeat by successive coalitions of Imperial states and outside powers. Yet the Empire as a whole managed to cling on and survive. Defensive resilience is certainly an important part of the explanation for the ability of the powerful states of the Reich to withstand offensive campaigns by opposing coalitions at moments of maximum weakness—such as during the War of the Austrian Succession. Facilitating defensive resilience during the War of the Austrian Succession was the support that Maria Theresa was able to garner from the Hungarian magnates, which allowed the Habsburgs to weather the Prussian challenge in the Empire. However, upon close examination of the empirical record, we see that decisive defeat of one or the other side was forestalled as much by the disinclination to push home a decisive advantage as by any other factor.

This suggests that, besides the absence of a radical power imbalance between the constituent domains of the composite polity, another factor is necessary for us to explain the outcome of composite state late survival.[6] We now put forward another explanation we consider sufficient to explain composite state late survival: dynastic deterrence and its amelioration of the conquest impulse in *ancien régime* Europe via the mechanism of intermarriage and kinship ties between ruling dynasties. This explanation is a derivation from the approach of dynasticism elaborated in Chapter One, and can be understood as the main pathway through which a weak norm of conquest desistance was sustained between dynasties with strong kinship ties. We examine the mechanisms behind this

---

[6] On the subject of preponderant power in the Holy Roman Empire, it should be noted that some of the constituent political entities of the Empire—for instance the duchies, bishoprics, and free imperial cities—were very weak militarily, and it is therefore noteworthy that they survived until the demise of the Empire. The security of many of these entities, at least with regard to predation by forces within the Empire, was guaranteed by the Emperor. However, in terms of the durability of the overall constitutional structure, the critical factor was the relationship between the Catholic and Protestant territories, and here neither of these forces held a preponderant power advantage over the other.

explanation in more detail before proceeding to test the ability of this theory to adequately comprehend the late survival of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Holy Roman Empire.

The Unintended Consequences of Dynastic Marriage

The theory of dynastic deterrence, which we argue provides a powerful explanation for the late survival of *ancien régime* composite states, is premised on the core insight that proximate kinship ties between European ruling dynasties have deterrent effects on the desire to conquer. More specifically, the theory argues that hereditary monarchs with dynastic aims will exercise restraint and avoid waging wars of conquest on dynasts with whom they share a close kinship tie, though such ties do not restrain them from waging wars of limited territorial gains. The extent to which a monarch prioritizes dynastic aims can be inferred in part from measures such as their marriage status and the number of their offspring. But it can also be gauged through an analysis of biographies, primary historical materials, and so on, in order to arrive at a holistic judgment about the extent to which a given ruler was committed to the goal of dynastic advancement. Though it is not easy to find statements by European monarchs clearly expressing the inner logic of dynastic deterrence in their own words, this is likely due to the fact that the concept of dynastic deterrence was unknown at the time. We postulate that wars of conquest were eschewed by early modern dynastic rulers because of the expectation that conquering the polity of another monarch would severely damage the

reputation of their dynasty and harm the marriage prospects of their children, thus greatly damaging the main means of dynastic consolidation and advancement.

The standard early modern understanding of the purpose of dynastic marriage, held over from the Middle Ages, was that it would promote peace and increase power through alliances gained. The association between dynastic marriage and the consolidation of alliances was close and well established, as we have seen in the earlier theoretical chapter. King James I, in his instructional treatise, *Basilikon Doron* (originally written for his eldest son, Henry Frederick), notes that the alliance made possible with the nation of one's wife is one of the principal benefits of the well-chosen marriage.[7] Though Erasmus was no supporter of dynastic marriage, in making his arguments he nonetheless pointed to "the common opinion [which] is that such marriages are like iron chains of concord between states…"[8] The logic and mechanism underlying such a peace secured via dynastic marriages was not clearly elaborated at the time. But nonetheless the belief persisted that marriage ties between two dynasties would secure peace between them. The notion that marriage between two groups (or between the ruling families of two groups) fostered harmony and peace between them, was noted by Botero in his *Reason of State*, where he gives two examples of inter-group marriages (between Alexander the Great and the Persian Roxana, as well as between the Capuans and Romans) when outlining strategies for a ruler to ease inter-societal conflict in a newly acquired kingdom.[9]

---

[7] James I, "Basilikon Doron," in *The Political Works of James I,* ed. Charles Howard McIlwain (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1918), p. 35.
[8] Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 97.
[9] Giovanni Botero, *The Reason of State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956), p. 97.

It is noteworthy that the Duke of Sully, who wrote one of the first peace proposals

for Europe in the early seventeenth century, placed 'a union between all these princes' as

the centerpiece of his vision, and the first concrete measures he recommended toward the

creation of such a union, were "proposals made to the kings of England and Sweden, and

the dukes of Savoy and Lorraine, for alliances by marriage…"[10] The status of his writings

as actual efforts made by the diplomats of Henry IV, or conversely an imaginary scheme

for European peace written by one of Henry's close advisors, is unclear.[11] Nonetheless,

this work shows the integral connection that early modern observers saw between

dynastic marriage and alliances as well as peace.

During the early modern period, as Mattingly notes, "force was employed not to

advance a rational interest but to support a legal claim," and legal claims were structured

primarily by dynastic marriage and inheritance patterns.[12] Moreover, as brute conquest

was not generally seen as sufficient for a monarch to supplant the sovereignty of another

monarch, military force was generally utilized in the service of limited territorial

engagements, or to buttress the hereditary claims of a ruler to succession in another

kingdom.[13] The fact that brute military force was disdained due to the widespread

acceptance of just war theory, meant that conquest attempts were rare and only made

---

[10] Maximilien de Béthune, duc de Sully, *Sully's Grand Design of Henry IV* (London: Sweet and Maxwell, Limited, 1921), p. 46.
[11] F. H. Hinsley, *Power and the Pursuit of Peace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), pp. 24-25.
[12] Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1955), p.125.
[13] Peter Stirk, *The Politics of Military Occupation* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p. 12; see also Evan Luard, *The Balance of Power: The System of International Relations 1648-1815* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).

when a monarch disregarded these norms governing conquest (such as in the cases of Frederick II and Charles X).[14]

As we see below, it was extremely rare for an early modern sovereign to invade the land of another sitting monarch with the intention of conquering that domain *in toto,* and a critical part of the supportive mechanism suppressing the conquest impulse was the thickening network of dynastic marriage ties which embedded monarchs in a relational web that reinforced norms of dynastic legitimacy. The critical deductive move that early modern commentators could not make, was one that would obscure from them the very real empirical consequences of dynastic marriages. This incomprehension was what led Erasmus to conclude that dynastic marriages did not ensure peace between monarchs related by marriage, as many examples can be found of monarchs invading the territory of a neighboring monarch with whom they shared some dynastic ties.[15] One of the few early modern authors to come close to comprehending the role of dynastic marriages in suppressing conquest attempts was Richelieu, though he was able to point merely to the good will and mutual respect imparted by dynastic marriages, and which led them to be in his view indispensable in peace negotiations. As he writes:

> [T]hey [dynastic marriages] must not be neglected, for they not infrequently provide one of the most important keys to a given negotiation. They always possess at least the one advantage that for a time they foster the continued respect each party has for the other, and even that much success justifies them.[16]

---

[14] Thomas Baty, "The Relations of Invaders to Insurgents," *Yale Law Journal* 36, no.7 (1927): p. 967. Conquest attempts made to force the settlement of a disputed case of dynastic succession do not fall under the rubric of brute conquest, as it is underpinned by a dynastic claim.

[15] Erasmus, *The Education of a Christian Prince*, p. 97. However, the important point is that these invasions were predominantly invasions aimed at attaining limited territorial gains.

[16] Richelieu, *The Political Testament of Cardinal Richelieu,* trans. Henry Bertram Hill (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), p. 100.

Nonetheless, though dynastic marriages neither prevented invasion nor secured

peace, they did deter wholesale conquest attempts from taking place except in

circumstances outside the parameters of the theory. As a consequence, early modern

warfare was restricted largely to limited wars of acquisition centered on attempts to

expand territorial boundaries. In addition to the core mechanism of deterrence,

challenging the dynastic legitimacy of another sovereign (when a thick network of

kinship relations existed with neighboring dynasties) inevitably meant that one's own

legitimacy would be weakened as most monarchs held dynastic claims in reserve on their

neighbors.[17] The ensuing cascade of legitimacy challenges was what James I wished to

avoid in denying material assistance to his son-in-law, Frederick V during the Bohemian

Revolt.

It is also noteworthy that dynastic marriage negated to an extent the need for

conquest as an acquisitive strategy, due to its acting as an effective alternative means to

increase territorial holdings without recourse to war. As the famous saying by the

Hungarian King Matthias Corvinus, captures well, *"Bella gerant alii, tu felix Austria*

nube" ('Let others wage war: thou, happy Austria, marry'),[18] conquest and inheritance as

acquisitive strategies were seen as alternatives for the early modern mind.[19] And in fact,

---

[17] Osiander notes the need to preserve stability as being another important auxiliary reason for why jurists of the early modern period were loath to acknowledge the right of conquest. If the right of conquest was acknowledged in one case, "treaties to be concluded could not be lasting, given that all princes had demands on their neighbors…" and princes would increasingly be emboldened to attempt to press their claims through force. Andreas Osiander, *The States System of Europe, 1640-1990* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 50-51.

[18] Sidney Whitman, *The Realm of the Habsburgs* (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1893), p. 258.

[19] As Fichtner puts it, "[a]s instruments for the perpetuation and enhancement of status, the conservation of wealth, and the maintenance of privilege and power, dynastic marriage and the family system associated with it played a natural role in the ruling of empires." (p. 264) Paula Sutter Fichtner, "Dynastic Marriage in Sixteenth-Century Habsburg Diplomacy and Statecraft," *The American Historical Review* 81, no.2 (1976): pp. 243-265. It should also be borne in mind that in early modern times, another strategy of territorial acquisition, namely purchase, was also widely known and practiced—especially in the colonial world. Cf.

when successful, inheritance and acquisition through dynastic marriage provided not only

a less contentious means to acquire territory than conquest,[20] but the territorial gains

possible through inheritance—if we think for example of the acquisition by the Austrian

Habsburgs of the Kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary through inheritance with the death

of Louis II—were also far in excess of the gains possible through conquest.

This led to a generalized disinclination to relinquish one's own dynastic claims or

extinguish those of others through brute force. In an age when sovereignty was thought to

be akin to property, such forcible confiscation of territory was seen as a kind of theft. As

Stubbs notes of the dynastic *weltanschauung* in a classic sentence, "there was no fear of

shedding blood, but there was great fear of destroying right."[21]

Mechanisms of Dynastic Deterrence

Dynastic Marriage

The most important type of kinship tie with the demonstrable effect of

strengthening dynastic deterrence is dynastic inter-marriage. As we have seen in the case

of Bohemia—where the Bohemian King Frederick's marriage to James' daughter

---

Joseph Blocher, "Selling State Borders," *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 162, no.2 (2014): pp. 241-305.

[20] As we have seen in a discussion in Chapter Two, early modern period Europe, insofar as it was still heavily influenced by the legal language of Christendom and the Middle Ages, was disinclined to recognize brute conquest nor sanction war waged with only with power on one's side without a rightful legal claim. See William Stubbs, *Seventeen Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1887), p. 238-245. If there were strong legalistic arguments taking issue with the uninhibited conquest of the Americas by the Spanish, as articulated by Francisco de Vitoria, then how much more onerous would have been the unstated moral injunctions against European rulers waging wars of conquest on their fellow Christian monarchs? On this point, see Chris Brown, Terry Nardin, and Nicholas Rengger, eds., *International Relations in Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), chapter 4.

[21] Stubbs, *Seventeen Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History,* p. 244.

Elizabeth Stuart did not prompt James to give significant English support to Frederick—a marriage tie between two dynasties did not automatically lead to an alliance and/or material aid. However, this does not mean these ties did not *negatively* exercise a significant constraining influence on the behavior of dynastic monarchs. In particular, we see from the empirical record of warfare in *ancien régime* Europe between the signing of the Westphalian Peace and the start of the Napoleonic Wars, that dynastic monarchs did not wage wars of conquest on the European continent against fellow monarchs with whom they shared a marriage tie.[22]

Part of the causal role of dynastic marriages in ameliorating the impulse to conquer, was due to its having given rise to the dynastic practice of refusal to legitimize occupations and conquest. Though conquest was understood to be legally valid, the desistance from it in practice (we also call it the 'conquest taboo') was activated at moments such as during wartime to arouse resistance to conquest attempts, as evidenced by the resistance to the invasion and occupation of Poland-Lithuania by Charles X. Moreover, though at several junctures wars fought for limited gains threatened to devolve into unmitigated wars of conquest, dynastic relations played a role in preventing the escalation to total war. We see the inhibiting role of dynastic ties at work during the War of the Austrian Succession, where Charles Albert was dissuaded from making a final push to take Vienna likely due to his kinship tie with Maria Theresa via his spouse.

It is this hitherto unnoticed background condition of early modern dynastic politics that also explains why late-surviving composite states such as the Polish-

---

[22] The wars of the French Revolution were led on the French side by republican and not dynastic leaders and largely involved the non-dynastic ruler Napoleon waging wars of conquest against the dynastically ruled *ancien régime* polities.

Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Holy Roman Empire were spared from death by external conquest by neighboring monarchs while ruled by *de facto* hereditary dynasties.[23] The absence of conquest attempts (in the modern era the primary manner in which states have died) by monarchs on the domains of marriage-bound fellow monarchs is a noteworthy regularity during the early modern period (1648-1789) similar in structure to the postulated 'democratic peace' during modern times. The puzzling aversion of dynastic rulers to conquering the sovereignty of their counterparts, was first captured by Andrew Lossky in the following classic passage:

> Dynastic ties certainly did not avert wars, although they did exert a certain influence on war aims. No matter what schemes a sovereign might lay to harm his relative, no matter how unceremoniously he would chase him from his lands in time of war, he hardly ever sought to compass his total ruin and the destruction of his State. It was expected that at the end of a war, the same *dramatis personae,* or their lawful heirs, some of them rather crestfallen, would still be there to make peace.[24]

The early modern period in European politics was one where, despite the unprecedented frequency and regularity of military conflict between monarchs, wars with very few exceptions were overwhelmingly fought to win limited territorial gains rather than to overthrow the sovereign ruler of another polity and claim it as one's own. This was an uncanny anticipation of the stability-instability paradox[25] familiar to us from the

---

[23] The Habsburg capital, Vienna, was close to being invaded by Charles Albert in 1741, but was inexplicably spared when the Franco-Bavarian forces chose instead to march into Bohemia. As we see below, the role of marriage ties between Charles via his spouse, Maria Amalia, (who was an Archduchess of Austria by birth), and the Austrian Habsburgs, was an important factor in the decision to spare Vienna. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was invaded twice by Sweden—first in 1655 by Charles X of Sweden, and again in 1701 by Charles XII—and neither of these invaders were related by marriage to the reigning king of Poland-Lithuania.

[24] Andrew Lossky, "International Relations in Europe," in *The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VI,* ed. J. S. Bromley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), pp. 168-169.

[25] For the classic discussion of the stability-instability paradox, see Glenn Snyder, "The Balance of Power and the Balance of Terror," in *The Balance of Power,* ed. Paul Seabury (Scranton: Chandler, 1965), pp. 185-201. Snyder's initial insights were further refined by Jervis in Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), pp. 19-23.

cold-war era, as stability in the form of a general aversion to wars of conquest coexisted

with the almost constant use of military means to gain limited territorial advantage.

Dynastic Reputational Concerns

Secondly, a monarch was restrained from destroying relations with neighboring

ruling dynasties due to obligations to their unmarried offspring. When a monarch has

issue, the theory expects them to be constrained in their behavior toward neighboring

dynasties by the need to ensure the most prestigious marriage possible for their children.

The fundamental principle of dynastic aggrandizement upon which dynasticism of the

early modern period was based, asserted that a dynasty not merely maintain its present

status but also improve its position vis-à-vis other dynasties in the European family of

nations.[26] The long-term maintenance and increase of the prestige of a dynasty in a

hereditary monarchy depended very much on the quality of the dynastic marriages a

monarch could secure for their offspring, as early modern dynastic aggrandizement

depended to a large degree on marrying one's own children to the children of similarly

powerful dynasties with the intent to aggrandize one's dynasty via inheritance and status

gains. If a dynastic monarch waged aggressive wars of conquest against fellow dynasts,

their offspring would become less desirable as candidates for dynastic matches due to the

hostility and ill will engendered by the actions of the parent.[27]

---

[26] Guy Rowlands, *The Dynastic State and the Army under Louis XIV* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 15.

[27] Here we must proceed by extrapolation. The marriage of Charles XI to his betrothed, the Danish Princess Ulrika Eleonora, was seriously endangered when Sweden under his rule participated in the harsh Scanian War (1675-1679) against Denmark. The planned marriage was officially postponed, and was widely thought to have become untenable due to the bitterness of the conflict. If this was the effect of a war not involving an attempted conquest, we can surmise that a war of conquest would have aroused even more opposition to marriage proposals between the scions of the victorious and defeated dynasties. On the

This constraint holds even when not all of the offspring of a monarch were slated for unions with the offspring of ruling dynasties, as it was generally expected that the heir to the throne should enter a foreign union even if it was permissible for younger siblings to enter unions with the scions of domestic nobility. Primogeniture and its acceptance during the Middle Ages, (culminating with the Laws of Toro of 1505), meant the status of the eldest male heir and the other siblings diverged, as it was only the eldest son who was eligible to succeed the title and offices of the dynastic head. The other children received a share of the inheritance through dowries, appanages and careers in the military or church, but the prestige of the family increasingly converged on the figure of the eldest son and the dynastic main branch.[28] From here, it was only a short step for ruling dynasties to distinguish themselves from even the highest of the local nobility by exclusively seeking royal marriages for their heirs.[29] The pressure for ruling dynasties to marry offspring to royal candidates may have increased over time, strengthening the constraining influence produced by dynastic deterrence.

Dynastic Kinship Ties and Interdependence

---

marriage of Charles XI and Ulrika Eleonora, see R. M. Hatton, *Charles XII of Sweden* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1968), pp. 19-20.

[28] Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini, "Aristocracy, Dynasty and Identity in Early Modern Europe," in *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe,* ed. Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini (Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), pp. 13-14. The way in which early modern dynasties thought about the differences between children is well captured in the following passage: "A firstborn son was an heir to be prized. A second son was a spare in case something should go wrong. A third son could be a gift to the church and a powerful force in holy orders for the family. More sons than that were dangerous to the succession…daughters can…be seen as treasured members of the family, guarantors of potential alliances, and agents of influence in foreign courts." (p. 62) Christian Raffensperger, *Reimagining Europe* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

[29] For instance, the French Bourbons ceased to marry their offspring with the offspring of the local nobility, "in order to assert the dignity of the dynasty and…distance the Bourbons from even the greatest of their subjects." Hamish Scott, "The Line of Descent of Nobles is from the Blood of Kings: Reflections on Dynastic Identity," in *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe,* ed. Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini (Surrey: Ashgate, 2015), p. 217.

An alternative mechanism of dynastic interdependence via kinship ties also exercised a much weaker and yet not insignificant role in ameliorating the conquest impulse for dynastic dyads even where direct marriage ties were absent. The network of kinship ties connecting all of the major European royal dynasties gradually increased in density over the course of the Middle Ages and until the early modern period, which represented the zenith of the European dynastic system and *ancien régime.* In Table 1, drawn from the work of Armin Wolf, we see that the ratio of dynasties to kingdoms decreases from 85% in 1100 to 31% in 1610. In other words, the number of dynasties ruling European kingdoms decreased from 11 in 1100 to 5 in 1610. This is a significant decrease, and clearly implies that the kinship network encompassing these ruling dynasties correspondingly increased in density during the same period.[30] This progressive increase in density of the dynastic kinship network coincided with a notable decrease in the duration and magnitude of great power wars from 1650 till 1750, as depicted by Jack Levy.[31] Empirically we see a correlation between an increase in the density of the European dynastic kinship network and a corresponding decrease in the duration and magnitude of great power war. Though these two measures of great power war do not directly correspond with a decline in the conquest impulse, there exists an elective affinity between these measures and conquest.

The mechanism underlying the empirical decline in war duration and magnitude even in the absence of a direct marriage tie is analytically similar to the theory of trade

---

[30] Amin Wolf, "The Family of Dynasties in Medieval Europe: Dynasties, Kingdoms and 'Tochterstämme'," *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 12 (1991): p. 192.
[31] Jack Levy, *War in the Modern Great Power System 1495-1975* (Lexington KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1983), p. 133.

expectations and peace outlined by Copeland.[32] According to this approach, interdependence can foster peace, but such conditions of peace only obtain when states expect that trade levels will be high into the foreseeable future. If highly interdependent states expect that trade will become increasingly restricted—that is, if their *expectations* for future trade are declining or low—realist self-help expectations kick-in and the most interdependent states will not hesitate to initiate war to gain access to the raw materials necessary for preservation of the economic wealth that supports long term security.[33]

As Copeland notes, "high interdependence can be either peace-inducing or war-inducing, depending on the expectations of future trade."[34] When such a mechanism is superimposed onto high-density kinship networks, we can deduce that as long as expectations of ongoing patterns of intermarriage between dynasties are high, inter-dynastic conflict will tend to be ameliorated or suppressed.[35] Though limited wars were intrinsic to dynastic competition and functioned as a channel through which hierarchies of dynastic prestige could be established, nonetheless, the most damaging form of conflict—wars of conquest—were largely avoided in the early modern period. As we have seen, the need for offspring to be desirable in the dynastic marriage market meant that gaining a reputation for truculence was a damaging prospect for an early modern monarch as such a reputation inevitably harmed the marriage prospects of their offspring.

---

[32] Dale Copeland, "Economic Interdependence and War," *International Security* 20, no. 4 (1996): pp. 5-41.
[33] In other words, high levels of interdependence do not correlate directly with peace, but can be either peace-inducing or war-inducing depending on the predominant expectations of future trade.
[34] Ibid., p. 7.
[35] The corollary, of course, is that when the expectation of patterns of dynastic intermarriage into the future declines, the possibility of a resurgence of wars of conquest is opened up.

Kingdom / Year	1100	1150	1200	1250	1300	1350	1400	1450	1500	1610
France	Capet	Capet	Capet	Capet	Capet	Capet-Val	Capet-Val	Capet-Val	Capet-Orl.	Capet Bourbon
England	Normandy	Champ.Blois	Plantagenet	Plantagenet	Plantagenet	Plantagenet	Plantagenet	Plant.Lanc.	Tudor	Stuart
Scotland	Duncan	Duncan	Duncan	Duncan	Plantagenet	Bruce	Stuart	Stuart	Stuart	Stuart
Portugal	—	Capet-Burg.	Capet-Burg.	Capet-Burg.	Capet-Burg.	Capet-Burg.	Capet-Aviz	Capet-Aviz	Capet-Aviz	Habsburg
Castile	Pamplona	Ivrea	Ivrea	Ivrea	Ivrea	Ivrea	Ivrea	Ivrea	Ivrea	Habsburg
Navarra	Pamplona	Pamplona	Pamplona	Champagne	Champagne	Cape t-Evreux	Capet-Evreux	Ivrea	Foix	Capet-Bourbon / Habsburg
Aragon	Pamplona	Pamplona	Barcelona	Barcelona	Barcelona	Barcelona	Barcelona	Ivrea	Ivrea	Habsburg
Sicily	—	Hauteville	Staufen	Staufen	Barcelona	Barcelona	Barcelona	Ivrea	Ivrea	Habsburg
Naples	—	—			Capet Anjou	Capet-Anjou	Capet Duraz.	Ivrea	Iverrea	Habsburg
Hungary	Arpad	Arpad	Arpad	Arpad	Arpad	Capet-Naples	Luxemburg	Habsburg	Jagellon	Habsburg
Bohemia	Przemyslid	Przemyslid	Przemyslid	Przemyslid	Przemyslid	Luxemburg	Luxemburg	Habsburg	Jagellon	Habsburg
Poland	Piast	Piast	Piast	Piast	Piast Przemyslid	Piast	Jagellon	Jagellon	Jagellon	Vasa
Sweden	Stenkil	Stenkil	Stenkil	Folkung	Folkung	Folkung	Pomerania	Bonde	Oldenburg	Vasa
Norway	Yngling	Yngling	Yngling	Yngling	Yngling	Folkung	Pomerania	Oldenburg	Oldenburg	Oldenburg
Denmark	Sven Estr.	Sven Estr.	Sven Estr.	Sven Estr.	Sven Estr.	Swen Estr.	Pomerania	Oldenburg	Oldenburg	Oldenburg
Germany	Salian	Staufen Guelph	Staufen Holland	Staufen	Habsburg Wittelsbach	Luxemburg	Luxemburg	Habsburg	Habsburg	Habsburg
Number of Kingdoms	13	15	15	15	16	16	16	16	16	16
Dynasties	11	13	14	14	12	9	9	8	8	5
Ratio %	85	87	93	93	69	56	56	50	50	31

Table 1: Ratio between the number of European kingdoms and the number of distinct dynasties, from Wolf (1991).

181

Dynastic Deterrence Unpacked

Let us examine in more depth the specific manner in which dynastic intermarriage functioned to suppress conquest attempts in early modern Europe. Here we unpack the mechanisms through parallels with IR theory. The traditional view of the purpose of dynastic marriage in *ancien régime* Europe, was that it was meant as a vehicle for the accomplishment of a number of diplomatic aims, in particular the creation of alliances between two states, the settlement of peace treaties, and also the protection and acquisition of territorial possessions through the manipulation of inheritance laws. Dynastic marriages also, in some cases, secured for the queen a small degree of influence over the domestic politics of another court, such as in the maligned case of Marie-Antoinette and her perceived pernicious influence in leading a pro-Austrian faction in the French court.[36] Alliances were created and consolidated primarily through dynastic marriages due to the mutual obligations and gift giving which accompanied each marital union between dynasties.[37] There is historical support for dynastic marriages functioning to realize these goals, but they were clearly imperfect vehicles.

Some of these goals are expressed, though in a somewhat vague manner, by Cárdenas, the Spanish ambassador in Paris, prior to the double marriage between the

---

[36] On this point, see Thomas Kaiser, "Who's Afraid of Marie-Antoinette? Diplomacy, Austrophobia and the Queen," *French History* 14, no.3 (2000): pp. 241-271.

[37] We have seen the marriage between Charles II of England and Catherine of Braganza had as its aim the consolidation of an alliance between England and Portugal. The union between Louis XIV of France and Maria Theresa of Spain in 1660—celebrated concurrent to the signing of the Treaty of the Pyrenees which ended the Franco-Spanish War of 1635-1659—is one of the best known examples of a dynastic marriage concluded to cement a peace treaty. Obviously the Habsburgs' ability to consolidate and expand their territorial holdings through their many dynastic marriages exhibits the manner in which marriage and territorial and sovereign acquisition were integrally linked.

Spanish Habsburgs and French Bourbons in the second decade of the seventeenth

century. Of the principal advantages of these dynastic marriages, he notes that:

> [T]he first is to ensure and fortify the Catholic religion in all Europe, giving a new breath of life to Catholics, along with other benefits. The second is to marry your daughter to a great king. Given the present state of the world, this is more important than anything that has occurred over the last two hundred years. The third is to allow Your Majesty to adjust the affairs of your Monarchy while remaining the arbiter of the world, and draw to him the monarchy that has been his adversary and made itself the leader of the Protestants.[38]

Before outlining the vitally important empirical pattern which dynastic marriages

generated, and the mechanisms through which it did so, we should of course add that

dynastic marriage was not always successful in achieving its intended aims. For instance,

dynastic marriage was not always sufficient to guarantee an alliance (or mutual military

support) between two dynastic polities. As we have noted in the case of England and

Bohemia, the dynastic marriage between the Elector Palatine Frederick and Elizabeth

Stuart (daughter of James I) was not sufficient for James I to provide effective military

support to Frederick during the Bohemian Revolt led by the latter in his role as King of

Bohemia. In the case of peace treaties also, we find that dynastic marriage unions were

not always successful in securing a lasting peace between two dynasties. For instance, the

marriage between Louis XIV and Maria Theresa of Spain which accompanied the Treaty

of the Pyrenees ending the Franco-Spanish War of 1635-1659, did not usher in a

permanent peace between France, and Louis XIV would invade the Spanish Netherlands

a mere eight years later to capture what he claimed was rightfully his stemming from his

marriage. The limited ability of dynastic marriages to ensure peace was known to

contemporary observers, and as a guarantor of alliances and peace, a dynastic union was

only an imperfect vehicle to realize its intended aims.

---

[38] Quoted in J. H. Elliott, "The Political Context of the 1612-1615 Franco-Spanish Treaty," in *Dynastic Marriages 1612/1615,* ed. Margaret McGowan (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 12-13.

Though the theory of dynastic deterrence does not deny outright the relationship between dynastic marriage and alliances, clearly the former was an imperfect vehicle for the realization of the latter. Moreover, as a vehicle for peace (defined as the absence of war), dynastic marriage was of little assistance. However, on top of these intended consequences (imperfectly realized), we argue that the self-perpetuating network of dynastic marriages had an important unintended consequence that was only dimly understood by the participants themselves.[39] The unintended consequence was negative in nature and consisted of a network of dynastic marriages which restrained the conquest impulse between dynasties provided they were tied together by marriage[40] and embedded in a mutually intermarrying dynastic circle.

Dynastic and Nuclear Deterrence Compared

The mechanism underlying the suppression of the conquest motivation can best be understood through the lens of the theory of nuclear deterrence.[41] According to this theory, nuclear war can never be won and thus should never be fought. The reason nuclear war can never be won, is because mutual second-strike capability gives each side the instantaneous ability to destroy that which is most valuable to the other—their major population centers—a massive cost which means nuclear war would be akin to destruction of the enemy *and* suicide for the state, namely 'mutually assured destruction.'

---

[39] The relative lack of awareness by many historical actors of the underlying structural consequences of their own actions is familiar to us from frameworks such as Marxism and rational choice analysis, and thus does not invalidate the theory of dynastic deterrence.

[40] But the mechanism also obtains in the case of kinship relations. The closer and thicker the network of kinship ties between two dynasties, the more dynastic deterrence mechanisms were in operation.

[41] The following discussion draws heavily on the following classical works on nuclear strategy: Thomas Schelling, *Arms and Influence* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); Robert Jervis, *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy, Third Edition,* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003).

The side that loses a nuclear war has the capacity to inflict as much destruction on the winning side as the winning side can inflict on the losing side. This consequence attains regardless of the state of affairs of conventional warfare, and of the material gains that a state may be able to realize during the war. As the well-known quote from Bernard Brodie asserts:

> Thus far the chief purpose of our military establishment has been to win wars. From now on its chief purpose must be to avert them. It can have no other useful purpose.[42]

The possibility of merely fighting a nuclear war and suffering inestimably high costs to the most valuable assets of the state win or lose[43] is a powerful deterrent in restraining leaders from deploying nuclear weapons, and overrides any possible incentives and gains that could result from nuclear war. According to the theory of nuclear deterrence, the role of cities is crucial, as in modern times major population centers play a critical role in underpinning the economic life of states, so much so that threatening to destroy them instantaneously with nuclear weapons equates to effectively destroying the main source of value a state possesses. The high value of cities and the unacceptably high cost of losing them renders a country's cities functionally equivalent to a group of hostages which—while kept alive—can be used to coerce the other state to cooperate in refraining from launching a nuclear strike. Analytically deterrence theory weighs losses and gains, and judges the losses from nuclear war massively outweigh any possible gains, thus rendering it an irrational strategy.

The structural similarities between nuclear and dynastic deterrence are close, and the consequences of each—that there has been no nuclear war as yet in the nuclear age,

---

[42] Bernard Brodie, "Implications for Military Policy," in *The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order,* ed. Bernard Brodie. (New Haven: Yale Institute of International Studies, 1946), p. 62.
[43] In the language of nuclear strategy, the ability to destroy the most valued assets of another state is termed 'denial by punishment.'

185

and that there were no wars in early modern Europe where a monarch aimed to conquer the state of another monarch *in toto* where the conditions of dynastic deterrence held— are also analogous. In early modern Europe, the custom of dynastic intermarriage created a structure equivalent to an exchange of hostages where the dynastic bride and her entourage constituted a group of valuable hostages whose very presence in the court of a possible adversary functioned as an effective deterrent against any conquest attempt being made on the state receiving the bride.[44] The parental family of the dynastic bride also constituted a set of hostages in a partial sense, as any attempt by a monarch to conquer and destroy the birth family of his bride would result in the destruction of his own marriage and extended family. When two ruling dynasties have only exchanged one bride between them, the correspondence between nuclear and dynastic deterrence is partial, as the hostages held by the two parties are not equivalent. Nonetheless, a single dynastic marriage functions in a manner analogous to a deterrence mechanism due to the fact that destruction of one dynasty by another is akin to self-destruction because it will necessitate the possibility of filicide or parricide by one or the other dynasty. And filicide and parricide have been considered to be especially heinous forms of homicide across history, let alone for Christian morality.

---

[44] This also explains the curious phenomenon of why rival dynasties would intermarry, and often intermarry using the practice of the double marriage. Rival dynasties intermarrying is counterintuitive in a sense, as it might be expected that rival dynasties would attempt to partition themselves from each other, rather than open each other to mutual dynastic claims through intermarriage. When two rival dynasties intermarry, and given the not unlikely prospect of a return to conflict even between two intermarried dynasties, there must be assumed to be advantages for both parties arising from dynastic marriages even after a return to enmity. In this regard, the structure of double marriages is well suited as a means for rival dynasties to stake rival claims on the inheritance of the other safely, as reciprocity provides each dynasty with a hostage rather than only one. Such advantages, and the prestige of royal marriages, rendered them far preferable to morganatic marriages for ruling dynasties.

The structure of mutual deterrence typical of nuclear strategy is mirrored even more exactly in cases where a pair of dynastic brides was exchanged by two dynasties. This was sometimes done more or less simultaneously, as in the double marriage of Louis XIII of France and Prince Philip of Spain in 1612/1615 where hostages were exchanged at once.[45] At other times the exchange took place over several generations—such as during the seventeenth century when the French Bourbons and Spanish Habsburgs exchanged brides over two generations, with Louis XIII and Louis XIV taking wives from the Spanish Habsburgs, and Philip IV and Charles II taking wives from the French ruling family (though Charles II wed a daughter of the Orleans cadet branch of the Bourbon dynasty due to Louis XIV having no legitimate female offspring). Though we can infer that the effectiveness of dynastic deterrence was stronger in such cases as this where daughters were simultaneously exchanged between two dynasties, sufficient evidence of greater strength does not exist[46] as cases of partial exchange and successive exchange were also efficacious in bringing about the general pattern of dynastic deterrence. The pattern of restraint from conquest held in all dynastic dyads where the two dynasties shared a marriage tie, and where the monarchs in question had legitimate offspring.

---

[45] Two other consequential double marriages took place in successive generations of Habsburgs. The first was the double marriage whereby the respective sons and daughters of the Habsburg Maximilian I, and the Trastámara Ferdinand II, wed according to an agreement brokered in 1495-96. This momentous double marriage would set the stage for consolidated Habsburg control of the Spanish Empire and the Holy Roman Empire under Charles V. In the next generation, the sons and daughters of the Habsburg Philip I King of Castile, and the Jagiellon Vladislaus II, King of Hungary, would lead expand the Habsburg patrimony under Ferdinand I to unify the Imperial crown and the powerful kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary. For more on the first of these double marriages, see Bethany Aran, "Voyages from Burgundy to Castile: Cultural conflict and dynastic transitions, 1502-06," in *Early Modern Dynastic Marriages and Cultural Transfer, ed.* Joan-Lluís Palos and Magdalena Sánchez (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016), pp. 91-114.
[46] Inference is necessary here as no wars of conquest arose in the period we examine either in the simultaneous or successive forms of dynastic marriage exchange.

Why Dynastic Brides Made Valuable Hostages

We should also ask why the dynastic bride was considered to be of such value.

Here we note the double importance of dynastic brides, both for her consanguineous

(birth) and affine (adopted) families. From the perspective of dynastic politics, the bride

is valuable to her consanguineous family insofar as she is their principal means to erect a

dynastic claim to her adopted country through her children. Thus the dynastic bride is

more valuable for her consanguineous family before she gives birth to an heir, after

which point the heir comes to take on primary importance over the mother. However,

dynastic brides also were secondarily valuable in three additional ways. First, she was

valuable as a diplomatic agent directly advocating for policies favorable to her

consanguineous family in her adopted court.[47] Secondly, as a mother she was valuable as

a vehicle for the transmission of an orientation friendly to the maternal family in her

children. And thirdly, the bride was also occasionally influential as a regent in her own

right, one of the most famous examples being Mariana of Austria for most of the life of

her severely physically and intellectually impaired son, Charles II. As Raffensperger

notes, "the goal of dynastic marriage was not only to seal an alliance, but to establish a

base of power inside another kingdom."[48] For all these reasons, a bride living in a foreign

court was of immense value to her consanguineous family. Conversely, the bride is

---

[47] Frequently, a bride would also be a valuable source of surveillance in her adopted court, expected to send back reports of developments to her birth family from time to time. However, at times daughters were expected to intercede in the political affairs of their adopted court. As Kaiser writes of the case of Marie-Antoinette, "Maria Theresa did on occasion ask her daughter to intercede on Austria's behalf, once writing to Mercy that the fate of the entire alliance depended on such interventions…[but eventually] Vienna concluded that she could most effectively intervene by influencing the choice of ministers and other high officials." Kaiser, "Who's Afraid of Marie-Antoinette?," p. 254.

[48] Raffensperger, *Reimagining Europe,* p. 62.

valuable for her affine family as the future mother of their own dynastic heir, but nonetheless poses a problem for her adopted family due to the ambiguous nature of her dynastic loyalty.[49] Given this ambiguity, the status of brides in their adopted court might seem fraught, and more dynastic brides might be expected to have become victims of court intrigue and even purges. An important explanation for why they rarely fell victim to such victimization was not only the marital bond, but also the greater value of foreign brides as living hostages trapped in their adopted courts. Insofar as brides generally held immense value for their consanguineous families and their dynastic ambitions, brides' value for their affine family was far greater alive than dead.

It is revealing that, in early modern Europe dynasties tended to intermarry most frequently with other dynasties in the same proximate region as the territory over which they ruled. As Schönpflug has noted, "the marriage circles of the majority of royal houses…had a strong regional focus, and *voisinage* was a frequent argument in marriage negotiations and treaties."[50] This pattern can be conjectured to have arisen due to the efficacy of dynastic marriage in not only serving as a vehicle for dynastic aggrandizement, but also as a tool for deterrence. Obviously, deterrence was most necessary (and also most effective) between polities that bordered each other geographically, due to the frequently antagonistic nature of relations between neighboring dynasties and the proximity of threat involved. Dynastic marriages with neighboring dynasties both opened the possibility of acquiring contiguous territories via inheritance, and also enabled protection via deterrence against threatening neighbors.

---

[49] Moreover, if the bride was unable to conceive, she quickly became an impediment to the dynastic ambitions of the affine family, and another wife would often be taken.

[50] Daniel Schönpflug, "One European Family? A Quantitative Approach to Royal Marriage Circles 1700-1918," in *Royal Kinship Anglo-German Family Networks 1815-1918,* ed. Karina Urbach (Munich: K.G. Saur, 2008), p. 31.

Exceptions to the Conquest Taboo

Atypical Dynastic Rulers: Charles XII & Frederick II

We now turn to anomalous cases and examine in more detail why rulers who sought to conquer in early modern Europe departed from the expectations of dynastic deterrence. Between the Westphalian settlement and the beginning of the French Revolution, the only wars in Europe where monarchs explicitly aimed at conquering a sovereign entity *in toto* were the Second Northern War (where Charles X invaded and occupied the Poland-Lithuania),[51] the Great Northern War, (where the young Charles XII invaded the Poland-Lithuania and Russia in the midst of a war),[52] and the Seven Years' War, (where Frederick the Great in 1756 overran and occupied Saxony for a time).[53] These exceptional cases where conquest attempts took place are instructive, and help to better understand the mechanisms that supported conquest-desistance.

---

[51] Robert Frost, *After the Deluge: Poland-Lithuania and the Second Northern War 1655-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

[52] Derek McKay, and H. M. Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815,* (London: Longman, 1983), pp. 81-4.

[53] The Glorious Revolution of 1688, as it was a maritime invasion of England by Dutch forces led by the Stadtholder William of Orange, also possessed some of the characteristics of an invasion aimed at capturing the sovereignty of another state. However, insofar as it was framed as a revolution led by English nobles and was driven by William's desire to shift England's foreign policy to an anti-French stance, it does not fully conform to the category of 'conquest.' Ferdinand's military campaign during the Bohemian Revolt also displays aspects of the conquest-motive, although here Ferdinand was himself elected King of Bohemia prior to the rebellion of the Bohemian estates, so this case was just as much (if not more so) the suppression of a rebellion as it was a 'conquest.' As we shall see, the conquest attempts made by Charles XII and Frederick the Great, though they fall under the category of wars of conquest, were nonetheless waged by dynastic rulers who were unconstrained to a remarkable extent by dynastic aims due to idiosyncrasies of their character and upbringing. The unsuccessful attempt at conquest made by the Sublime Porte against the Austrian Habsburgs (and their allies) culminating with the Siege of Vienna in 1683, was a conflict between a monarch of the sphere of the former Christendom and the Islamic world, and was therefore a situation where the mechanism of dynastic deterrence was not operative.

The constraint on the conquest motivation does not hold in cases when the monarch is either unmarried, does not have legitimate offspring or is unmotivated by dynastic goals. The conquest taboo naturally does not hold in the case of republican rulers, such as Napoleon Bonaparte. In this context, it is instructive that both Charles XII and Frederick II (two early modern monarchs who attempted to conquer) were unusual in terms of both their own marital status, lack of offspring and lack of dynastic ambition. Both men were childless, freeing them, when constructing their strategic designs, from concerns of the marriage needs of their offspring. But additionally the marital status of both men was unusual insofar as Charles XII was unmarried and had little interest in a dynastic union (preferring to dream of a union based on true love)[54] and moreover he expressed during his campaigns of the Great Northern War the feeling that he was "married 'to the army' for the duration of the war."[55] Frederick the Great, on the other hand, was married but was quite likely homosexual,[56] and he held an intense and lasting antipathy toward his spouse, Elisabeth Christine of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel-Bevern. In these cases, dynastic instincts were deeply recessed or non-existent. We now examine some of the mechanisms that led to such monarchs having a profoundly a-dynastic outlook.

Raison d'état over Dynastic Goals

Both Charles XII and Frederick the Great were notable in their degree of identification with their state, rather than prioritizing the interest of the dynasty to which

---

[54] Hatton, *Charles XII of Sweden,* p. 91.
[55] Ibid., p. 209.
[56] Tim Blanning, *Frederick the Great* (London: Allen Lane, 2015), p. 51.

191

they belonged. The eighteenth century was the era when there first emerged European

monarchic rulers who could conceptualize their goals primarily in terms of raison d'état,

rather than being oriented solely to dynastic goals.

Charles XII, in his maturity, was to a very great extent concerned with

consolidation of the military power of Sweden, almost to the exclusion of dynastic

considerations. In a letter written while in exile to his sister, Ulrika Eleonora, he writes

that all the efforts of Sweden's rulers should aim for increasing Sweden's prestige in

Europe. In it, he voices his belief that "such respect won't come till we are stronger in the

military sense and display our willingness to use the sword in our own defense."[57] About

marriage, he writes: "I have neither the time nor the opportunity for marriage. Even when

I come home, there are too many things to be done to permit me to think of a speedy

marriage."[58]

Similarly, in Frederick II we see a ruler who prioritized the state over the dynasty.

In part owing to the growing popularity of the 'balance of power' as a framework for

foreign policy, this approach must also have followed from his estrangement from his

father (and thus with dynastic considerations). As he writes in his political testament of

1752, "the interest of the State is the only consideration that should decide the counsel of

a Prince."[59] This is in marked contrast with the political testament of his father, Frederick

William, who (despite his militarism) was still clearly thinking in dynastic terms when he

exhorted his son and successor "not to start any unjust wars and not to be an

---

[57] Hatton, *Charles XII of Sweden*, p. 375.
[58] Ibid., p. 376.
[59] Frederick II, "Political Testament 1752," in *The Habsburg and Hohenzollern Dynasties in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* ed. C.A. Macartney (New York: Walker and Company, 1970), p. 336.

aggressor…"[60] The framework of just wars, as we have seen, is a quintessential dynastic trope, whereas raison d'état does not consider the relations between dynasties to be an important factor in guiding foreign policy decisions.[61]

Militaristic Court Culture

Exposing a future monarch to a heavily militarized court culture during youth could lead to them favoring highly bellicose strategies in their adulthood. Both of these exceptional monarchs had been born into court environments exceptional among the royal courts of early modern Europe for their intense militarism and repudiation of the dynastic ethos. As Markus Völkel notes of the origins of this militarized Hohenzollern court in the early eighteenth century:

> Anyone familiar with Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm in his youth…could not but have expected an anti-court policy on his succession, but few could have foreseen its radicalism. After the new King Friedrich Wilhelm I had resolutely transformed the old administration into a cabinet government entirely dependent on himself, while retaining the former regime's best members, he turned his attention to his father's court. No other Baroque court underwent such extensive changes. Few courtiers were spared dismissal and total loss of salary; those who were permitted to remain served for a paltry salary, performing entirely different duties.[62]

It was this militarized court that Frederick the Great would inherit upon his accession, and which he would build into an even more streamlined martial system. Similarly, the Swedish court in which Charles XII came of age was highly militarized to

---

[60] Frederick William, "Political Testament," in *The Habsburg and Hohenzollern Dynasties in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* ed. C.A. Macartney, (New York: Walker and Company, 1970), p. 320.

[61] The contrast with a highly dynastically oriented monarch, such as Maria Theresa, is marked. In her own political testament, she writes, of the motivation behind the many organizational reforms she undertook, that these were done for the sake of "consolidating the Monarchy and preserving it for my successors." This is a quintessentially dynastic outlook, in stark contrast to the statism of Charles XII and Frederick II. Cf. Maria Theresa, "Political Testament," in *The Habsburg and Hohenzollern Dynasties in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* ed. C.A. Macartney (New York: Walker and Company, 1970), p. 131.

[62] Markus Völkel, "The Hohenzollern Court 1535-1740," in *The Princely Courts of Europe 1500-1750,* ed. John Adamson (London: Seven Dials, 2000), p. 225.

an extent unusual for the era. As Persson observes, "the military ethos of the Swedish court was perhaps its most dominant characteristic."[63] Most of the male courtiers would customarily go on to a career in the army after serving at court for a time, and a part of the court always followed the Swedish monarch on his frequent campaigns during a period when Sweden was almost continuously at war.[64] Both Charles XII and Frederick II were exceptional in terms of being unconstrained by a dynastic worldview, and their highly realpolitik *weltanschauung* was conditioned by an upbringing in a militaristic court and ingrained acceptance of *raison d'état.* They did not think in dynastic terms, were only loosely embedded in constraining dynastic kinship ties and thus had little to lose from aiming to conquer.

Elective Monarchies as a Limit Case

We should also note two other exceptions to the dynastic conquest taboo in early modern Europe. Firstly, we should note that elective monarchies were not fully subject to the mechanism of dynastic restraint, due to the fact that the mechanism of election is analytically distinct from that of hereditary succession, and in its pure form an elective monarchy tends to inhibit the concentration of monarchical power within ruling dynasties.

In the absence of hereditary succession—and the inapplicability of offspring as an effective restraint—the only effectual aspect of dynastic deterrence is the dynastic marriage tie itself. However, as monarchs who had acceded to the throne through election

---

[63] Fabian Persson, "The Courts of the Vasas and Palatines," in *The Princely Courts of Europe 1500-1750,* ed. John Adamson (London: Seven Dials, 2000), p. 290.
[64] Persson, "The Courts of the Vasas and Palatines," p. 291.

held less prestige in the hierarchy of European rulers than those who had acceded through

birth (especially when not of royal blood), elective rulers often had difficultly in securing

marital unions with heiresses of the most powerful dynasties.[65]

Given that dynastic deterrence only operates where ruling dynasties share direct

marriage ties and are oriented to the successful preservation of their dynastic prestige, the

marriages of elective monarchs often failed to provide an effective mechanism through

which dynastic deterrence could operate. The saving grace, for elective monarchies of the

early modern period—especially in the case of the Holy Roman Empire but also the

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at times—was that they often functioned as *de facto*

hereditary monarchies rather than as pure examples of the elective type.[66] Indeed, as we

---

[65] This was because royal dynasties in the early modern period generally eschewed unions with lesser ranking dynasties for their daughters. As Schönpflug notes, the sovereign dynasties of Europe "aspired to marry into houses of comparable or higher rank." This was true in the case of Stanisław II August, the last elective monarch of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, who was originally from a noble but not royal family, and even after ascending the throne he never married. Bethlen Gábor, the elective king of Hungary, could not secure a desired marital union with a Habsburg archduchess, presumably as his lineage and elective status did not furnish him with sufficient prestige for such a union. See Schönpflug, "One European Family?," p. 27.

[66] This was due to a number of reasons. Elective rulers often attempted to install their offspring as their heirs, giving play to the impulse to monopolize resources within the family unit, but this inevitably circumvented the elective mechanism. Nonetheless the frequency with which such attempts at monopolization were accepted was due in large part to the fact that, during the early modern period, hereditary succession was considered a source of stability for a state, and moreover being ruled by a ruler from a powerful (preferably royal) dynasty was viewed as an asset, rather than a shortcoming. As an example of this reasoning, we might look to debates in England about the merits and demerits of elective monarchies, which played themselves out during the instability of the seventeenth century. As Nenner recounts of the main basis for hostility to accepting England as an elective monarchy:
"If we are to make sense of this passionate resistance to the possibility of an elective crown, we need to understand that for many a rule of election was a guaranteed route to chaos…they imagined a political world which at the death of every king would carry the recurrent threat of an interregnum…Brady…advanced the sharper and more frightening image of 'anarchy and confusion.'"
Howard Nenner, *The Right to be King: The Succession to the Crown of England, 1603-1714,* (London: Macmillan, 1995), p. 125.
Moreover, the requirement for candidates in elective monarchies such as the Holy Roman Empire to be of royal kin, and the scarcity of qualified male candidates, meant that in practice the sons of the previous king possessed a very strong advantage (akin to an incumbent advantage) when contesting imperial elections. For instance, the marriage circles of the Empire were regulated by *Fürstenprivatrecht,* or the 'private law of princes,' which forbade marriages between ruling families and houses not represented in the Reich. Cf. Schönpflug, "One European Family?," p. 28. In the Empire, this translated into a tendency for imperial elections to follow the lines of hereditary succession, especially after the fifteenth century. As Wilson

see in Chapter Four, as long as elective monarchies were functioning as hereditary monarchies in practice, the mechanism of dynastic deterrence was almost as effective in constraining the conquest impulse as it was in hereditary monarchies.

Acceptability of Conquest Across the Civilizational Divide

We should also note another partial exception to the dynastic conquest taboo, namely that the military interactions of rulers across civilizational divides—such as those between Western Christendom and the Ottoman Empire or between Western Christendom and the Russian Empire—were often characterized by conquest. As Nef notes, "it was only in the east of Europe that older conceptions of military campaigning [involving the conquest motivation] persisted."[67] The most famous example, in the period we are examining, was the Ottoman attack and siege of Habsburg Vienna in 1683, which would have been rendered immoral if there had existed dynastic ties between them. But in the absence of such dynastic ties, Vienna was seen by Kara Mustafa, the Ottoman Grand Vizier, as a wealthy but weak capital ripe for conquest by the soldiers of the Sublime Porte.[68]

The acceptability of conquest across civilizations was due partly to the absence in these relations of an overarching web of normative rules governing behavior equivalent to the imperative of dynastic coexistence that regulated relations between Christian

---

notes, "nobles and the population generally preferred sons to follow fathers as this was interpreted as a sign of divine grace…of the 24 German kings between 800 and 1254, 22 came from four families, with sons following fathers 12 times." Peter H. Wilson, *The Holy Roman Empire* (London: Allen Lane, 2016), p. 302.
[67] Nef, *War and Human Progress,* p. 156.
[68] John Stoye, *The Siege of Vienna* (New York: Pegasus Books, 2006), p. 23.

monarchs.[69] To take an example, in classical Islamic thought, it was taken that no

permanent peace may be established between an Islamic and non-Islamic ruler, and on

the side of Christian theology, it was taken that the seizure of the lands of Muslims was

justified in situations where they violated the natural law.[70] Needless to say, these

theological justifications were often taken by Christian monarchs as permission to wage

wars of conquest on the lands of the infidel, and vice versa.

A further reason for the persistence of wars of conquest across civilizational

divides, which allows us to see the underlying operation of dynastic deterrence even in

these cases, is that dynastic marriages across religious lines seldom took place, and thus

the network of dynastic marriage ties did not exist to facilitate the emergence of a

conquest taboo regulating these interactions. Furthermore, Schönpflug relates that

dynastic unions between Catholic and Orthodox royal houses was rare, and these

confessions straddled the contentious border between the emerging Russian Empire and

the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, where the conquest taboo was not strongly

established.[71]

The Decline of Offensive Dynastic Wars

The decline in the duration and magnitude of wars into the early modern era

mirrors the concomitant decline of offensive wars driven by competing dynastic claims, a

phenomenon driven by the thickening network of dynastic marriages and kinship that

---

[69] Naturally, the imperative of dynastic coexistence was particularly strong between Christian rulers of the same confession, and decreased in strength between rulers of different confessional allegiances.
[70] Edward Keene, *International Political Thought: A historical introduction* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), p. 94.
[71] Schönpflug, "One European Family?," p. 30.

connected the ruling dynasties of Europe. In earlier times, when the kinship network between dynasties was not so dense, and where ruling dynasties were more diverse, dynastic marriages were often used offensively as a means for dynasties to gain a foothold in the line of succession or inheritance of another dynasty so they could use this as a pretext to stake a legal claim at a later date.[72]

However, two important transformations took place in the transition to early modern Europe, which led to a diminution of the intensity of dynastic wars. The first of these transformations, as we have seen, was the gradual decrease in the number of distinct dynasties ruling European kingdoms over time.[73] The second transformation, which followed on logically from the first, is the gradual increase in frequency of dynastic marriage between these ruling dynasties. As the number of ruling dynasties declined, (and assuming a preference between ruling dynasties for royal matches), the resulting increased frequency of marriages between dynasties increased the density of the kinship network, creating a dense thicket of interlocking dynastic claims and counter-claims which could be deployed to claim the territory of the other.

We can observe the tightening network of dynastic kinship ties in the pattern of repeated intermarriage between core European ruling dynasties also during the *ancien régime.* Examining marriage data from 1600-1800, we find that the Spanish Habsburgs and French Bourbons pursued a strategy of repeated intermarriage during the seventeenth century with two monarchs in each country taking dynastic wives from the other (in the

---

[72] For this reason, dynastic marriages in the Middle Ages acted to destabilize relations between monarchs, as evidenced by the Hundred Years' War waged between the Valois and Plantagenet dynasties during the fifteenth century for control of succession to the French throne.

[73] In 1300 there were eleven dynasties ruling the sixteen kingdoms of Europe, whereas in the fifteenth century eight dynasties ruled these kingdoms, and by the year 1610 there were only five dynasties that together ruled all of these kingdoms. These dynasties were Capet-Bourbon, Stuart, Habsburg, Vasa, and Oldenburg. Wolf, "The Family of Dynasties in Medieval Europe," p. 188.

case of Spain, one of these was with the Bourbon Orléans cadet line). In the same century, the Spanish and Austrian Habsburgs repeatedly intermarried, with two monarchs each taking wives from the other. The Austrian Habsburgs additionally married repeatedly into the Wittelsbach dynasty. During the eighteenth century, the two monarchs from the Spanish Bourbons took wives from the House of Bourbon-Parma, whereas the Austrian Habsburgs took wives from both the powerful ruling houses of electorates in the Empire, and twice with the Spanish/Parma branches of the Bourbon dynasty.

In such a circumstance, why was it that dynastic conflict counter-intuitively became less rather than more severe during this period? The counter-intuitive result was due to the dense network of interlocking relations and claims itself, and the expanding nexus of retaliatory dynastic claims and counter-claims that could be triggered by the pursuit of any succession claim. The greater number of royal dynasties in the Middle Ages, and the relatively sparse marital relations between them, meant that the cost of dynastic revisionism (military aggression aimed at making a dynastic claim in another kingdom) was relatively low. However, as the web of European dynastic relations became increasingly interconnected through repeated dynastic marriages, the cost of dynastic revisionism increases, as all monarchies became more vulnerable to an escalating cycle of retaliatory succession claims from multiple directions.

If monarch a has a (however tenuous) dynastic claim to the throne of another kingdom without the senior member b of the ruling dynasty in that kingdom holding a reciprocal claim, the cost for monarch a of invading kingdom b to claim that crown is low as their own dynastic title is not at stake. However, if both a and b have reciprocal claims to each other's crowns, then the systemic cost of initiating dynastic aggression

increases due to the multidirectional (not unidirectional) claims involved and the threat

that each faces. Just as state support for a revolution in another country can have the

effect of rendering the state more vulnerable to similar claims due to the contagious

nature of revolutions, it must have been understood by early modern rulers that waging

offensive wars of succession could cause blowback and increase the vulnerability to

succession claims on their own inheritances.

The decreasing number of ruling dynasties together with the increasing density of

kinship ties between them is the long-term historical pattern that explains the decrease in

offensive dynastic wars by the outset of the early modern period. As Parker explains, "in

the sixteenth century wars tended to be fought for dynastic rights…whereas in the

seventeenth they more often concerned the control of adjacent territory."[74] Whereas at the

close of the Middle Ages war was still fought to secure dynastic succession of whole

kingdoms—such as with Philip II's military attempts to make good his dynastic rights to

the English throne via his marriage to Mary I—the dynastic claims of the seventeenth

century were either limited in scope, or defensive with the aim of preventing a competing

dynastic claim. During the early modern period, as the cost of dynastic revisionism

increased, dynastic rulers became more status quo oriented in the pursuit of their dynastic

objectives, and fought status quo wars to prevent dynastic revisionism from emerging.

If we examine the archetypical wars of the late Middle Ages, we find wars such as

the Castilian War of Succession (1474-1479) fought mainly between Portugal and Castile

for succession to the throne of Castile. This war involved a Portuguese invasion of

Castile to press the claim of Afonso V and his Castilian wife, Joanna, against the rival

---

[74] Geoffrey Parker, "Dynastic War," in *The Cambridge History of Warfare,* ed. Geoffrey Parker
(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 162.

claim of Isabella and her husband, Ferdinand of Aragon.[75] The Habsburg-Valois Wars

(intertwined with the Italian Wars 1494-1559), were instigated by the Valois Charles VIII

when he invaded Italy in 1494 in order to convert a distant dynastic claim to Naples,

which he successfully captured, but not before arousing formidable opposition from the

Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I and Ferdinand of Aragon, as well as in Italy.[76] These

late fifteenth century and early sixteenth century wars were offensive succession wars,

insofar as both were initiated with invasions by rulers of one kingdom to enforce dynastic

claims to another, though some of these quickly morphed into broader regional conflicts

involving multiple protagonists and subsidiary conflicts. The nature of these conflicts was

primarily offensive, being prompted by the desire to press a dynastic succession claim in

another polity.

By the time of the reign of Louis XIV in the late seventeenth century, dynastic

wars were not so much offensive or regional, but rather limited and defensive in nature.

In the War of Devolution, as we have seen, Louis claimed parts of the Spanish

Netherlands for his wife, Maria Theresa of Spain, but the claims were limited in nature. It

was, as Lynn recounts: "a walkover by mighty France against feeble Spain [and]..saw

some skirmishes but no great field battle; instead it was a war of seizures and sieges."[77]

---

[75] Chris Cook and Philp Broadhead, *The Longman Handbook of Early Modern Europe 1453-1763* (Essex: Pearson, 2001), pp. 117-118; J. H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain 1469-1716* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2002), Chapter 1. This war was part civil war and part succession war, with Castile fighting for Castile to ally itself with Portuguese concerns, and Aragon aiming to orient Castile to the Mediterranean concerns of the Aragonese.
[76] For more on the Habsburg-Valois Wars, see Jeremy Black, "Habsburg-Valois Wars," in *Europe 1452-1789, Volume 3,* ed. Jonathan Dewald (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2004).
[77] John A. Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV 1667-1714* (Essex: Pearson, 1999), pp. 107-108.

Given the relative strength of Louis' army at the time, it is surprising that he did not annex more territory than he did.[78]

The War of Spanish Succession, one of the classic dynastic struggles of the early modern period and Louis XIV's swansong on the international stage, also exemplifies the status quo nature of the dynastic wars of the period. The origins of the War of Spanish Succession were in the contested will of the childless Charles II of Spain wherein he fixed the succession of Spain on his grand-nephew, the Bourbon Philip, Duke of Anjou (also the grandson of Louis XIV).[79] In the event, Louis' acceptance of the will of Charles (in contravention of the secret partition treaty he had already signed with William) and his unwillingness to exclude his grandson Philip from the French line of succession was the fateful decision that precipitated war. However, the proximate spark for the fighting to begin was the blocking move of Emperor Leopold I intended to protect what he saw to be his legitimate dynastic inheritance of Milan. Eventually the Grand Alliance, formed by the rulers of Holy Roman Empire, England, and the Dutch Republic, fought Bourbon France and Spain to prevent any chance of a union of the crowns of France and Spain.[80]

---

[78] Louis' Wars of the Reunions also involved claims based on the treaties of Westphalia and Nijmegen, (though these claims were not dynastic in nature), and involved annexations of a number of towns and cities along France's eastern border from the Spanish Monarchy and Holy Roman Empire, most notably Strasbourg and Luxembourg. The reunions were limited in nature, and entailed the annexation of cities rather than entire dynastically held domains. For more on this, see Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV 1667-1714,* chapter 5.

[79] The will, which superseded a previous secret agreement between William III and Louis to partition Spain upon Charles' death, posed a difficult conundrum for Louis. He realized that the succession of his grandson to the throne of Spain would likely lead to war with the Holy Roman Empire under Leopold as well as England, (as the Austrian Habsburgs also claimed rights to the Spanish throne), but upholding the secret partition treaty would also risk war, only with Spain, whose people desired the will of Charles II to be executed and for Philip to the crowned. Mark Thomson, "Louis XIV and the Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 4 (1954): pp. 111-134.

[80] Luard, *The Balance of Power: The System of International Relations 1648-1815,* p. 152. The vital fear motivating the leaders of the Grand Alliance was that the dynastic status quo of Western Europe would be broken, with the union of Bourbon France and Spain placing untenable pressures on the surrounding polities.

The nature of dynastic warfare had transformed between the early sixteenth century and the eighteenth century, with dynastic claims in the interim becoming both preventive, and limited in nature. Importantly, by the time of the War of the Spanish Succession, according to Nef, the nature of the warfare of the era had become limited in nature, and "commanders of victorious armies had ceased to aim at the annihilation of defeated army…they expected the enemy's troops to get away."[81] Despite some caveats, Lynn has also accepted the occurrence of a shift toward controlled war during the early modern period. Though he notes the frequency of international conflict in Europe did not decrease, nonetheless he does acknowledge that regimes increasingly "fought not to destroy one another but simply for limited territorial or economic gain."[82]

The reason this long-term shift in the nature of dynastic war has been ignored is partly because it was hidden. It was hidden by the upsurge in confessional conflict that arose in the mid-sixteenth century due to the reformation and continued until the Westphalian settlement, a brief period of intense and destructive conflict that obscured the *longue durée* internal transformation of dynastic wars.[83]

We can see the ameliorative effect of the thickening network of European dynastic intermarriages when we compare the record of dynastic wars of the intervals 1494-1648 and 1648-1789. We fix these intervals both due to their relative parity, and the fact that their extremities are bookended by important conflicts representing important

[81] John Nef, *War and Human Progress* (New York: Norton, 1968), p. 156.
[82] Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV 1667-1714,* pp. 362-363.
[83] Nonetheless, it should be remembered that even the archetypical case of confessional conflict, the Thirty Years' War, was sparked by dynastic issues, namely the deposition of Emperor Ferdinand II by the Bohemian estates as King of Bohemia and the Emperor's military efforts to regain his Bohemian title.

turning points in the history of European warfare.[84] When comparing these two periods, we find a notable diminution in the number of attempted and successful offensive dynastic wars between the two historical periods.

Historical Period	
1494-1648	1648-1789
Charles VIII (France), Naples 1494	Charles X (Sweden), Poland 1655
Louis XII (France), Milan 1499	Charles XII (Sweden), Poland 1701
League of Cambrai, Venice 1508	Frederick II (Prussia), Saxony 1756
Francis I (France), Turin 1536	
James IV (Scotland), England 1513	
Phillip II (Spain), England 1588	
Spain, Lower Palatinate 1622	
Swedish Empire, Pomerania 1630	

Table 2: Invasions of Sovereign Territories during the Late Middle Ages & Early Modern eras

During the period 1494-1648, we see no fewer than eight attempted conquests of self-ruling polities. However, in the latter period of 1648-1789, we only see three attempted conquests of self-ruling polities, with Charles XII's invasion of Poland-Lithuania taking place in the midst of an unpredictable war.[85] The decrease in attempted

---

[84] The first period, which combines late medieval dynastic conflicts as well as religious conflicts, is opened by the Habsburg-Valois Wars (1494-1559) which were fought to assert or defend classical dynastic goals, and encompass the era of religious conflicts initiated by the Schmalkaldic Wars (1546-7, 1552) and ended by the Thirty Years' War. The second period begins after the conclusion of the Westphalian settlement, and ends with the outset of the French Revolutionary Wars.

[85] It should be noted that a self-ruling polity is a polity with its own sovereign ruler, whatever the form of government, and is not merely the province of a larger polity. And as we have already noted, conquest attempts in the midst of war are less aberrations from conquest desistance due to the unpredictability and nonlinearity of warfare, and the comparatively weaker hold during warfare of norms held tightly during peacetime.

conquests during the latter period, though attributable partially to the *modus vivendi*

between confessional groups made possible by the Westphalian settlement,[86] is

nonetheless to a large extent due to the long-term transformation of dynastic warfare

concomitant to the increasing density of kinship relations between European royal

dynasties. The increasingly absolute nature of warfare between European monarchs in the

overseas territories, in large part due to outsized the role of joint-stock enterprises there

such as the Dutch East India Company, and the frequent change of sovereignty that

accompanied such intense conflict,[87] underlines the anomalous state of affairs that existed

in early modern Europe during the period 1648-1789.

---

[86] The reason we cannot attribute this longue durée shift entirely to the confessional modus vivendi, is
because if true it should have entirely eliminated conflict between states with different confessional
allegiances. This the Peace of Augsburg and Westphalian did not accomplish. For instance, the three
definite conquest attempts during the latter period we examine took place across the Protestant-Catholic
confessional divide. However, the motivating logics animating these military actions, was not primarily of
a confessional nature.
[87] The different nature of conflict drew in part from the fact that the priorities of such joint-stock enterprises
diverged significantly from the dynastic priorities of European dynastic politics, and involved above all the
pursuit of economic prosperity and the uninhibited pursuit of wealth. On this point, see J. H. Shennan,
International Relations in Europe, 1689-1789 (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 3.

CHAPTER FOUR

EXPLAINING COMPOSITE STATE LONGEVITY

Now we have examined some representative cases of early death composite states

to gain a better insight into disintegrative forces, we must examine two archetypical late

survival composite states: the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Holy Roman

Empire. When we examine cases of late surviving composite polities and ask what best

explains their longevity, we consider two sets of historical facts. Firstly, we examine

historical moments of existential crisis when state collapse was most imperiled. Based on

the serious threat to composite state survival posed by external military intervention, we

here examine conquest attempts that almost succeeded. Secondly, we examine the final

dissolution of the composite polity, and ask what triggered eventual state death. As the

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Holy Roman Empire were the two composite

polities that survived for the longest duration until the epochal transformations of the

French Revolution,[1] we examine these two polities in more depth to establish how they

were able to ward-off state death for so long.

Holdovers from the feudal era, both of these polities—besides being the last

composite states to survive from the dawn of the post-Westphalian period—were also

elective monarchies for much of the early modern period.[2] The Holy Roman Empire is

---

[1] We should note that other composite polities that seem late surviving do not rival these two cases for a number of reasons. The personal union between Great Britain (later the United Kingdom) and the Kingdom of Hanover was resurrected after being dissolved during the Napoleonic Wars, but it was established in 1714 with the Hanoverian succession, quite late in the period under examination. The Austro-Hungarian Empire, often cited as a quintessential example of a composite state, was only established in 1867.
[2] The elective principle of the Holy Roman Empire coalesced around the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when the expression 'Prince Elector' started to gain currency, and the practice of elections was formalized with the Golden Bull of 1356, which fixed the form and practices of the electoral college of the Empire.

particularly important for our study as the only true example of a secondary composite state in *ancien régime* Europe. Moreover, the dissolution processes of both of these composite states exemplify the remaining two pathways to composite state death: conquest (or partition) in the case of Poland-Lithuania, and disestablishment in the case of the Reich. When examining the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Holy Roman Empire (a relatively pure elective monarchy and *de facto* hereditary elective monarchy, respectively), we find that dynastic deterrence was an important preventive factor that facilitated longevity as long as the rulers of these dynasties maintained the practice of *de facto* hereditary succession, and in such manner they were successful in deterring conquest attempts. In addition, when initial occupation was successful but conquest impossible (as occurred twice with attacks on the Commonwealth), we find the illegitimacy of brute conquest acted as a strong impediment to the completion of territorial conquest.[3]

After Frederick III's election in 1440, the Holy Roman Empire came to function as a de facto dynastic monarchy whereby successive members of the Austrian Habsburg dynasty (often sons but sometimes siblings of the sitting emperor) were elected to succeed the Imperial throne. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was closer to the ideal-type of an elective monarchy, (the ideal-type of an elective monarchy is independent of dynastic succession), but nonetheless also functioned as a quasi-dynastic monarchy for significant stretches of its history. After the death of the last Jagiellon king (the childless Sigismund Augustus on 7 July 1572) the recently united Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was forced to solve the problem of succession to the Polish throne, and in 1573 its Sejm (assembly) arrived at the decision to select kings via elective principle through a process of trial and error. In contrast to the electoral college of the Empire, which allowed only a small group of Prince Electors the right to vote, the elections for the Commonwealth were open to all noblemen present, and the king was not allowed the right to designate or choose a successor. The Commonwealth was ruled by consecutive members of the same dynasty between 1587-1668 (the Vasas) and 1698-1763 (the Wettins), and as we shall see, this relatively 'pure' elective nature of the throne of the Commonwealth lent itself to large degree of instability whereas the Empire was to a significant extent protected by the *de facto* dynastic and hereditary nature of its crown. For more on these cases, see Harold Nicolson, *Kings, Courts and Monarchy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1962), p. 178. Peter Wilson, *The Holy Roman Empire* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2016), Chapter 7. Almut Bues, "The Formation of the Polish-Lithuanian Monarchy in the Sixteenth Century," in *The Polish-Lithuanian Monarchy in European Context, c.1500-1795,* ed. Richard Butterwick (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 68-9.
[3] The role of powerful allies and protectors was an additional supportive factor preventing the completion of early modern conquest.

When we examine the eventual demise of these two composite polities, we discover that the designs of a predatory ruler uninhibited by dynastic norms alongside the weakening of the conquest taboo during the Napoleonic Wars was sufficient to sound the death knell to these political forms. The most severe near-death crises faced by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth involved two partially successful military conquests (by the Swedish kings Charles X and Charles XII) that did not achieve absorption of the Commonwealth into Sweden due to domestic Polish resistance and strategic miscalculation. Ultimately the non-dynastic Commonwealth was unable to protect itself from demise in the face of rapacious and non-dynastically oriented rulers (here Frederick II and Catherine the Great), and weakening norms against conquest. The Holy Roman Empire, due to its quasi-dynastic monarchy, saw the Habsburgs deploy dynastic marriages successfully to co-opt monarchies within and surrounding the Reich into a zone of dynastic suzerainty where conquest was not considered appropriate. These regional dynastic kinship relations protected the Habsburgs from conquest attempts until the continental wars set off by Republican France under the command of the non-dynastic ruler, Napoleon Bonaparte. The contrast between these two composite polities (with diverging succession norms) exemplifies the mechanism of dynastic deterrence in operation, and shows the protective role of dynastic marriages for composite states governed by *de facto* hereditary succession principles.

The Survival of Existential Crisis

Poland-Lithuania and the 1655 Invasion of Charles X

Elective Monarchy as an Anomaly

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth exemplifies an important anomalous case for the study of dynasticism and war in *ancien régime* Europe. Not only was it one of the longest surviving elective monarchies, but the Commonwealth was invaded twice (by the Swedish kings Charles X and Charles XII) and sunk into a deep state of dependence on powerful neighbors during the eighteenth century. Here we can observe the difficulties an ideal-typical elective monarchy faced when competing in a milieu where its neighbors were mostly hereditary monarchies.

In contrast to hereditary monarchies which could weave a network of dynastic kinship ties acting as a first line of defense against covetous neighbors, the elective nature of the Commonwealth left it mostly without a long-term ruling dynasty and could not deploy such strategies. Instead, without interlocking dynastic ties with its neighbors, the Commonwealth was vulnerable to occasional conquest attempts and thus depended for its survival on its size and difficulty of conquest, the military protection of patrons, and the dynastic desistance from conquest. While dynastic norms and the disdain of brute conquest remained strong within Europe, would-be conquerors found it difficult to convert their occupation of the Commonwealth into permanent annexation. Due to the weakening of these dynastic norms, the long-term survival of the Commonwealth was increasingly threatened, and eventually it was partitioned out of existence in the late 1700s.

The Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth, as a relatively pure elective monarchy, was inherently quite unstable, despite its surprisingly long-life. In this regard, despite

being a late surviving composite state, it exhibits markedly diverging tendencies from the

Holy Roman Empire. As Anderson has noted:

> [E]ach successive royal election provoked party conflicts and personal intrigues which often led to civil war, as well as pressure and even forcible intervention from abroad on behalf of competing candidates. The kings of Poland, often foreigners, their hands ties by promises made to the greater nobility at their accession, had to submit to continuous scrutiny and control by the same nobles. Any effort to increase their powers, most of all any suggestion that the Crown might once more become hereditary, at once aroused the most violent opposition.[4]

The weakness of an elective monarchy in a system of hereditary monarchies—due

to its inability to secure stable dynastic alliances—is a better explanation for the long-

term weakness of Poland-Lithuania than the buffer state argument sometimes given in IR

scholarship. The buffer state argument posits that the geographical location of Poland as a

state interposed between fierce rivals (such as Russia, Austria and Prussia) was the key

factor that led to its congenital weakness. However, this view does not account for

variations in the Commonwealth's security even given its constant geographical position.

Even if it is accepted that the Commonwealth declined in strength precipitously around

the same time as the rise of Russia, nonetheless Poland was threatened even before the

rise of the Russian Empire by the rivalry between the Austrian Habsburgs and the

Sublime Porte, which occupied parts of nearby Hungary. Yet the Commonwealth

experienced periods of strength even during this period. The constitutional structure and

its limitations, with less weakness during periods of *de facto* hereditary dynastic

---

[4] M. S. Anderson, *Europe in the Eighteenth Century 1713-1783, Third Edition* (London: Longman, 1987), p. 164.

succession, is a factor that better accounts for variations in Poland-Lithuania's overall

security and military capabilities than geographical location.[5]

Given the Commonwealth did not have the luxury of stable cross-generational

dynastic alliances to provide it with deterrence effects, the primary reason it survived for

so long must be that its survival was in some part a consequence of factors external to

itself, rather than of internal factors. Therefore, to an extent we must see the longevity of

Poland-Lithuania as *epiphenomenal* whereas longevity of the Holy Roman Empire was

not. Particularly after the restoration of Augustus II in 1709, the Commonwealth survived

primarily due to the patronage of another state, Russia, which guaranteed its sovereignty.

The 1655 Invasion

We proceed first by examining the existential crises that most threatened the

survival of Poland-Lithuania before we turn later in the chapter to the factors that

underlay its actual demise during the Polish partitions. The moments of maximal crisis

for the Commonwealth were undoubtedly the two invasions by Swedish kings, which

threatened the very survival of the state. Commonly known in Poland as the 'Deluge,' the

first of these invasions by Charles X of Sweden in 1655 had dynastic roots, insofar as it

can partially be traced to the dissolution of the composite monarchy uniting the Kingdom

of Sweden and the Commonwealth, which came into existence under Sigismund III Vasa

between 1592-1599, half a century earlier. After he was deposed from his Swedish throne

---

[5] The exemplary version of the buffer state argument is given by Tanisha Fazal, *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), Chapter 5.

in 1599 in a rebellion led by his uncle, Charles IX,[6] Sigismund never reconciled himself

to the loss of his Swedish crown, and the conflict between the two branches of the Vasa

dynasty would continue on and off until the peace of Oliva in 1660.[7]

In the early years of the seventeenth century, the competition between these two

dynastic branches would largely center around Livonia, and the Polish Vasas would pay a

heavy price for their continued preoccupation with their Swedish inheritance when they

lost most of Livonia during the Thirty Years' War to Gustavus Adolphus with the

armistice of Altmark of 1629, simultaneously assisting the Brandenburg Hohenzollerns in

strengthening their grip on the dukedom of Prussia.[8] It is notable that, unlike the Spanish

and Austrian branches of the Habsburg dynasty—which frequently intermarried and

largely avoided direct conflict—the two Vasa branches maintained a relationship of

rivalry rather than condominium. The conflict between Sweden and the Commonwealth

under the Vasas is a case of an unusual analytical category: hostile composite polity

disintegration.[9] Besides the longstanding dynastic conflict, the expansionist and

militaristic orientation of successive Swedish monarchs was also an important factor in

creating the conditions for the invasion of 1655.

---

[6] The forces driving the rebellion were largely confessional (Sigismund was Catholic whereas the population of the Kingdom was largely Protestant), but the Swedish nobles had also opposed his father, John III, and his absentee rule (as his court was based in Kraków) did not endear him to his Swedish subjects. Paul Lockhart, *Sweden in the Seventeenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), p. 11.
[7] Jablonowski, H., (1970), "Poland–Lithuania 1609–48," in J.P. Cooper (ed.), *The New Cambridge Modern History Vol. IV,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 598
[8] Ibid., p. 600
[9] The dissolution of the Sweden-Poland-Lithuania composite state falls under this category due to the dynastically contested nature of the rebellion that deposed Sigismund. Such a circumstance leads to the danger of subsequent attempts at coercive reunification by one of the rival claimants. In this regard, Luard has correctly noted that "a major motive for Sweden in her war with Poland in 1655 was the desire to destroy a potential claimant to the Swedish throne at a time when the Poles were already embroiled in conflict elsewhere." Evan Luard, *War in International Society* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), p. 158.

Be that as it may, the proximate drivers of the invasion lay in the vulnerability felt by Charles X upon his accession to the Swedish throne in 1654. There were three reasons for this vulnerability, two dynastic and one power political. Firstly, Charles' predecessor, Queen Christina, had abdicated the throne childless, and thus Charles' dynastic legitimacy was insecure, to the extent that his succession had been opposed by the Privy Council before Christina utilized divisions within the nobility to gain acceptance of her cousin as heir to the throne.[10] Secondly, the steadfast refusal of John II Casimir (himself a son of Sigismund III) to renounce his hereditary claim to Sweden upon his election to the Polish throne in 1648 meant that Charles X felt an additional source of pressure on his dynastic legitimacy. Finally, in the face of the ineffectiveness of the Polish military in ensuring the defense of Poland-Lithuania in the face of incursions from the East by Muscovite and Cossack forces,[11] the situation in the Commonwealth was seen by Charles and his council as a security crisis for the Swedes, with Russian territorial gains in Poland posing a serious threat to the eastern territories of the Swedish Empire.[12] The invasion of the Commonwealth by Charles X was thus over-determined by both dynastic and power politics, and the fact that the dynastic rulers of Sweden and the Commonwealth were descended from a dissolved composite monarchy meant that dynastic deterrence was disabled in this case.[13]

---

[10] Jerker Rosén, (1961), "Scandinavia and the Baltic," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Vol. V,* ed F.L. Carsten (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 521.

[11] This situation was also a consequence of what was perceived by the nobility to be an increasing divergence between the interests of the Commonwealth (seen to be the defense of the home territory), and those of the monarchy (which was preoccupied with foreign interventions, such as the pursuit of the Vasa's dynastic claims in Livonia). Robert Frost, *After the Deluge: Poland-Lithuania and the Second Northern War 1655-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 17.

[12] Paul Lockhart, *Sweden in the Seventeenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004), p. 95.

[13] This is due to its characteristic as in many ways an intra-dynastic, rather than an inter-dynastic struggle.

Nonetheless, it is instructive that the first impulse of Charles X was to attempt to ally with Poland-Lithuania against Russia. However, the price that Charles set John Casimir for an alliance was the renunciation of the latter's claim on the Swedish throne and *de jure* recognition of Swedish rule in Livonia.[14] John Casimir refused to accept this condition, and this meant these two polities saw each other as illegitimate pretenders, and this in turn opened up the use of invasion as a legitimate means to be used against a rogue 'internal' province. The decision of John Casimir to refuse to renounce his claim to the Swedish throne (and thereby jeopardize the Swedish alliance) was taken as a devastating mistake by the Polish nobility, which saw an alliance with Sweden as essential to the Commonwealth's survival. This hostility toward John Casimir on the part of the nobility has been argued to underpin the capitulation of the Polish-Lithuanian forces to the Swedish invasion, though this has not been conclusively proven.[15]

Although the 1655 Swedish invasion was shaped by the dynastic context and driven in part by the military collapse of Poland-Lithuania in the face of invading Russian forces,[16] the speed with which the nobility bandwagoned and sided with the Swedish king was an indication of a much deeper malaise within the polity of the Commonwealth. The divergence which the nobility perceived between their own interests and those of the monarch, due to the preoccupation of the Vasas with their Swedish claims, led to what Frost calls an ominous "feeling…that the monarchy's concerns were different from those of the Commonwealth."[17] At the same time as yet the king commanded insufficient loyalty from the nobility to be able to guarantee the safety of the Commonwealth alone,

---

[14] Ibid., p. 95; Frost, *After the Deluge,* p. 39.
[15] Frost, *After the Deluge,* pp. 34-35.
[16] By the end of 1654, they had captured Smolensk and the following summer they controlled large swaths of Lithuania. Lockhart, *Sweden in the Seventeenth Century,* p. 95.
[17] Frost, *After the Deluge,* p. 17.

the monarchy was dependent on the *szlachta* militarily and politically due to the absence of a standing army, a fatal combination.

In the face of the shock of the military collapse of 1655, the Diet should have implemented reforms to curtail their own power and strengthen the monarchy to create a more robust military force. However, reform proposals as gained circulation between 1656 and 1662 were ultimately rejected, and the power of the nobility through the *liberum veto,* or the practice via which the vote of one deputy was sufficient to break up the parliament, or *Sejm,* was enhanced at the cost of crippling the Diet as an effective parliamentary body.[18] Rather than establishing a more robust system to face external threats, the *Sejm* further curtailed the power of the monarch, and in the process crippled the defensive capabilities of the Commonwealth. After repelling the occupation of Charles X with the assistance of surrounding powers, this was the degraded condition in which the Commonwealth subsisted more or less until the invasion of Charles XII in 1701. The relatively emergent and unsettled pattern of political interactions in the Baltic region also added to the instability of politics in Northern Europe.[19]

Charles X had succeeded in occupying Poland-Lithuania due to the degraded state of its military capability brought about by the unusual elective nature of the Polish throne and the great power this gave to the nobility at the expense of the monarchy. However, military weakness of the Commonwealth was not the only salient factor that allowed these invasions to take place—it was rather an efficient cause but not a permissive cause. For there were many other militarily defenseless small states and duchies in Europe that

---

[18] Robert Frost, (1986), "Initium Calamitatis Regni? John Casimir and Monarchical Power in Poland-Lithuania, 1648-68," *European History Quarterly,* 16 (1986): p. 193; Frost, *After the Deluge,* p. 14.
[19] Frost, *After the Deluge,* p. 13. Even the much-lauded victory of John III Sobieski over the Turks during the siege of Vienna in 1683 has been argued to represent a lesser victory than its reputation suggests, due to the militarily backward condition of the Sublime Porte at the time.

by this measure should have been invaded and annexed but were not. The background factors that made possible these two invasions, despite the existence of dynastic deterrence and norms inveighing against conquest during this period, must be reexamined.

The Failure of Dynastic Deterrence

Both Swedish invasions were embedded in larger conflicts that threatened the security of Sweden: in the case of the invasion of 1655 the joint Muscovite and Cossack invasion (or the Russo-Polish War) that had come atop a simmering six-year-old Cossack revolt; in the case of the 1701 invasion the tripartite predatory offensive by Denmark, Saxony, and Russia against Sweden led by a newly crowned and inexperienced Charles XII. In both contexts, the threat to Sweden was considered to be existential, and both invasions of the Commonwealth were argued (regardless of the merits of the case) to be defensive and militarily necessary. The limited failure of dynastic deterrence here can be put down to two factors. Firstly, we have the fact that the conflict between Sweden and the Commonwealth combined elements of an inter- and intra-dynastic conflict, and dynastic deterrence was weak to non-existent within dynasties. Secondly, during the 1655 invasion, a damaging divide between the monarch and the nobility undermined the willingness of nobility to come to the defense of the Commonwealth in the face of the powerful Swedish expeditionary force, and this rapid collapse of military resistance encouraged a greater Swedish incursion than was originally planned.

The Muscovite war had also exacerbated latent tensions between Poland and Lithuania, due to the greater losses borne by the latter from the fighting, which weakened

216

their resolve to defend the greater Commonwealth.[20] Thus it was not surprising that Lithuania was first to submit to Sweden and swear allegiance to the Swedish king. The willingness to surrender on the part of some of the Commonwealth's troops during the invasion was a consequence both of the insufficient commitment to the defense of the polity exhibited by sections of the nobility, as well as a general sense that the Commonwealth was in no shape to defend itself against a fully fledged attack.[21]

However, it was the background dynastic context, which was the main factor permitting the Swedish invasions to take place. The 1655 invasion came against the background of years of internecine conflict between two branches of the Vasa dynasty, each of which disputed the dynastic legitimacy of the other. In this regard, the Swedish invasion of 1655 displayed elements of a civil war as much as it possessed aspects of inter-dynastic conflict. Nonetheless, even here the influence of dynastic ties reveals itself, as Charles X first attempted to forge an alliance with John Casimir against Muscovy, and it was only after this these overtures failed that an invasion was launched. The 1701 invasion by Charles was equally framed by the dynastic context. Rather than annex the Commonwealth for itself, the goal of Charles XII was to install a puppet monarch favorable to Sweden on the Polish-Lithuanian throne. This latter case shows that the conventions of dynastic politics still shaped the pathway through which power political goals could be pursued.

The existence of weak dynastic ties between Charles X and John Casimir, (both were descended from Gustav I, though Charles X maternally) as also between Charles

---

[20] Ibid., pp. 43-49.
[21] Ibid., p. 46.

XII and Augustus II (they were cousins on their mother's side),[22] does not directly contradict the pattern of dynastic deterrence, as the kinship relation in neither case was via marriage, nor double marriage. It does show the limits of weaker forms of dynastic kinship to prevent war, especially when the ties are between two branches of the same dynasty. Here, the third mechanism of intermarriage expectations well accounts for why these invasions were not in fact totally counterintuitive, as the expectation of dynastic intermarriage did not exist between the two Vasa branches, furthermore the two Vasa branches saw each other's head as an illegitimate dynastic pretender.

In the case of the 1701 invasion, the dynastic relations between the ruling Wettin dynasty of Saxony and the Swedish Palatinate-Zweibrücken dynasty had already broken down, due to the invasion of Sweden hatched in secret by Augustus II and his two co-conspirators. The expectations held by Charles XII for future amicable dynastic relations with the Danish Oldenburgs as well as with the Wettins were at a low ebb. In this context, it is unsurprising that Charles XII would have viewed his battle with Augustus II to be an existential one. Moreover, the fact of the non-linearity of conflict, meaning that the unfolding of military interactions during war are characterized by uncertainty and unintended consequences arising from a plethora of feedback effects, meant that the norms operative during peacetime have less force during times of war. As Beyerchen has noted, positive amplifying feedback is especially evident during war, making severe losses exponentially more likely after an initial defeat than they would be at the outset of hostilities.[23] The inclination of Charles XII to push his advantage as far as it could

---

[22] R. M. Hatton, *Charles XII of Sweden* (New York: Weybright and Talley, 1986), p. 103.
[23] Alan Beyerchen, "Clausewitz, Nonlinearity, and the Unpredictability of War," *International Security* 17, no. 3 (1992/1993): pp. 59-90.

possibly go was no doubt exacerbated by his youth—as he was not yet at this time old enough to marry or have children, let alone to have adopted a dynastic worldview.

As we elaborated previously, dynastic deterrence is operative only when a dynastic ruler is married with children, or has clearly adopted the worldview of dynastic politics. Charles XII, at the time he decided to continue and wage a war of conquest against Poland-Lithuania, possessed none of the attributes necessary to be oriented toward dynastic goals, and was locked in a conflict formation where the expectations of future dynastic intermarriage were low. It is little surprise, then, that he was unconstrained by mechanisms of dynastic deterrence.
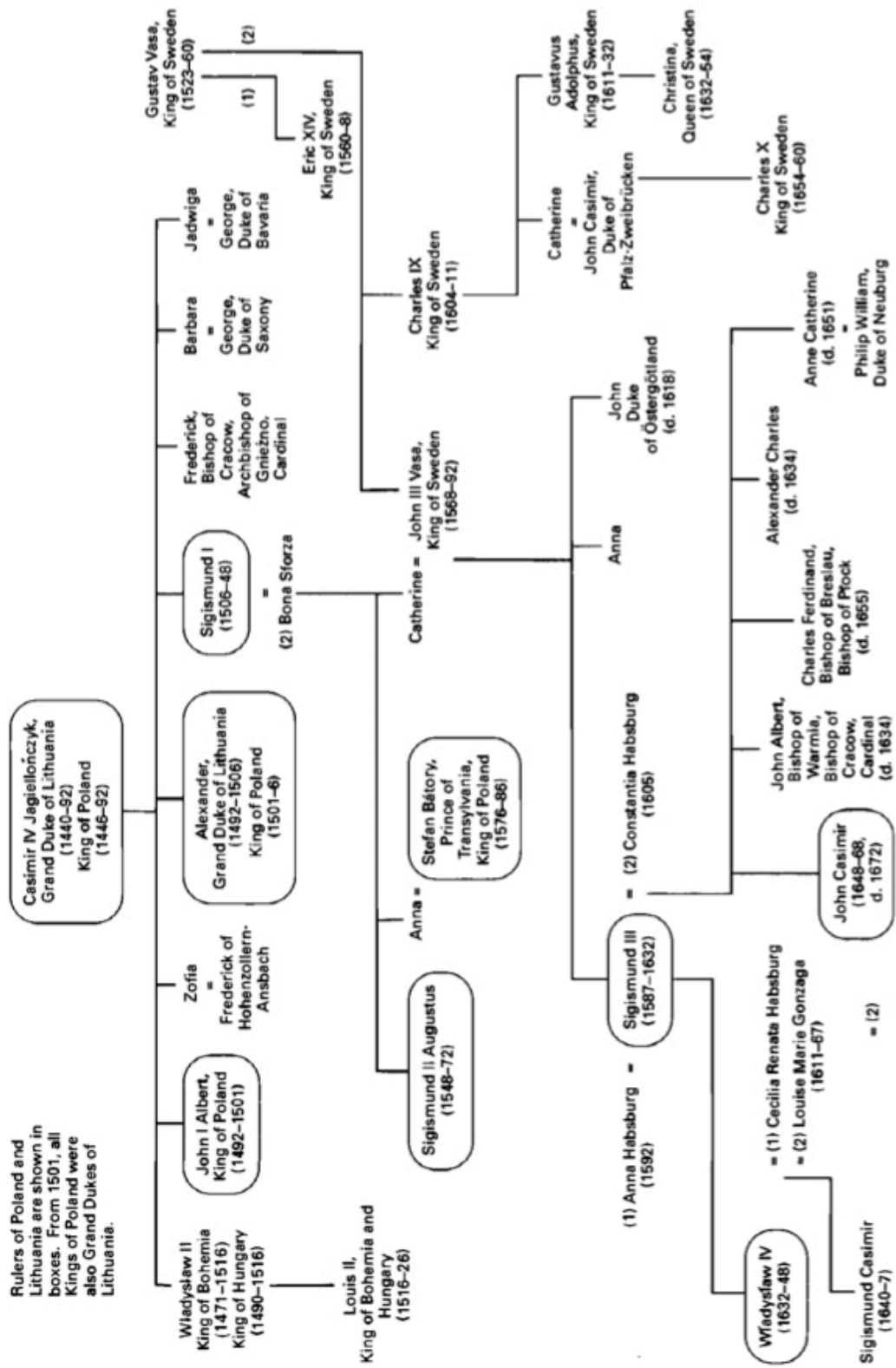
Casimir IV Jagiellończyk, Grand Duke of Lithuania (1440–92) King of Poland (1446–92)

Władysław II King of Bohemia (1471–1516) King of Hungary (1490–1516)

John I Albert, King of Poland (1492–1501)

Zofia = Frederick of Hohenzollern-Ansbach

Alexander, Grand Duke of Lithuania (1492–1506) King of Poland (1501–6)

Sigismund I (1506–48) = (2) Bona Sforza

Frederick, Bishop of Cracow, Archbishop of Gniezno, Cardinal

Barbara = George, Duke of Saxony

Jadwiga = George, Duke of Bavaria

Gustav Vasa, King of Sweden (1523–60)

(1) Eric XIV, King of Sweden (1560–8)

(2)

Louis II, King of Bohemia and Hungary (1516–26)

Anna = Stefan Bátory, Prince of Transylvania, King of Poland (1576–86)

Sigismund II Augustus (1548–72)

Catherine = John III Vasa, King of Sweden (1568–92)

Charles IX King of Sweden (1604–11)

Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden (1611–32)

Christina, Queen of Sweden (1632–54)

Catherine = John Casimir, Duke of Pfalz-Zweibrücken

Charles X King of Sweden (1654–60)

John Duke of Östergötland (d. 1618)

Anna

(1) Anna Habsburg (1592)

Sigismund III (1587–1632)

= (2) Constantia Habsburg (1605)

= (1) Cecilia Renata Habsburg
= (2) Louise Marie Gonzaga (1611–67)

John Albert, Bishop of Warmia, Bishop of Cracow, Cardinal (d. 1634)

Charles Ferdinand, Bishop of Breslau, Bishop of Płock (d. 1655)

Alexander Charles (d. 1634)

Anne Catherine (d. 1651) = Philip William, Duke of Neuburg

John Casimir (1648–68, d. 1672)

Władysław IV (1632–48)

= (2)

Sigismund Casimir (1640–7)

Table 3: The Jagiellonian and Vasa dynasties, from Frost (1993).

220

The Emergence of Balancing During Occupation

It has been argued that balance of power considerations, first forming during this period, were behind the shifting dynamics of war that followed the initial invasion of the Commonwealth and its partial occupation. Certainly, after the initial invasion, more unvarnished military dynamics came into play, as they often do in conditions of conflict. Even without rising external opposition to the Swedish occupation of the Commonwealth, several factors served to retard the gains of the Swedes with the progress of time. The territory of Poland-Lithuania is flat and hard to control, especially with an insufficiently large army. Indeed, the army of Charles X was from the beginning insufficient to indefinitely occupy the parts of the Commonwealth they held, and was stretched to the limit by the task of occupation. In this regard, the composite nature of the Commonwealth—which gave to it its expansive terrain—was well suited if not for defense in depth (as the concept had yet to be invented), then at least for swallowing up the efforts of ambitious invaders in the graveyard of fruitless occupations. Furthermore, Charles, who had at the outset of the occupation pledged to uphold the traditional liberties of the nobility and regularly call the diet, but subsequently violated this pledge, rapidly squandered the goodwill of the people.

Resistance to the Swedish occupation first appeared in November of 1655.[24] By April 1656 most of the Poles had turned against the Swedish occupation, and Charles, rather than attempt to maintain control over the whole of the Commonwealth, decided to

---

[24] Frost, *After the Deluge,* p. 53.

concentrate his efforts on securing control of Livonia and Royal Prussia.[25] It has been argued that an expanding Swedish threat triggered the intervention of surrounding powers on the side of the Commonwealth, but it should be remembered that the medieval origins of the balance of power lie in its function as assisting less powerful polities defend themselves against the predatory behavior of the more powerful. Brandenburg, which initially had allied itself with Sweden, defected and joined the Commonwealth in return for recognition of its possession of Ducal Prussia.[26] The Dutch did likewise, and the Emperor Leopold also came to the aid of the Commonwealth in 1657. When Denmark declared war on Sweden in 1657, hoping to take advantage of the Swedes preoccupation with their troubled occupation, the Swedish position became overextended.[27] By this time, Charles was already withdrawing his Swedish occupation army into Pomerania.[28]

While the military dynamic certainly took on a life of its own once the occupation had begun, consideration of dynastic factors is important for understanding why the Swedish occupations following these two invasions was left 'incomplete' without formal annexation. The strong distaste of dynastic politics for unprovoked aggression was an important factor that activated balancing behavior on the part of rulers on the periphery of Poland-Lithuania, and the resistance to legitimizing Swedish possession of the Commonwealth assisted it to gain allies against Sweden. As Lockhart notes:

> Gustav Adolf had been a hero; Karl Gustav was an unprincipled aggressor. The wars against Poland and Denmark had alienated nearly all of Sweden's potential allies and enraged her traditional enemies.[29]

---

[25] Frost, Robert, *After the Deluge,* pp. 68-69.
[26] Lockhart, *Sweden in the Seventeenth Century*, pp. 96-97.
[27] Rosén, "Scandinavia and the Baltic," pp. 521-522.
[28] Lockhart, *Sweden in the Seventeenth Century,* p. 97.
[29] Ibid., p. 99. As we have already outlined in Chapter One, the balance of power originated (some would say, *re-emerged*) in the early modern period as an essential mechanism to protect legal claims from being extinguished and prevent small and powerless states from being swallowed up militarily by more powerful

After Charles X retreated to Pomerania and then turned his attention to subjugating Denmark, the forces aligned against him were too strong. By 1659 the Swedish forces were in retreat in Prussia, and were trapped in Denmark with no obvious means of escape. It was only the death of Charles on the 23rd of February, 1660, and the accession of a five year old king, that Sweden was released from its predicament, with the regency government eager to negotiate peace.[30] Given the aversion to legitimizing conquest in Europe, it is unsurprising that the Peace of Oliva (May 1660) negotiated in the aftermath of the Second Northern War, was conservative. The peace re-established the *status quo ante bellum* of 1655 but recognized Swedish claims to Livonia while John Casimir finally agreed to renounce the Polish Vasas' claim to the Swedish throne.[31]

Poland-Lithuania and the 1701 Invasion of Charles XII

Charles XII's invasion of Poland-Lithuania also took place in the context of an ongoing war, the Great Northern War (1700-1721), which began with the formation of a threefold alliance between Denmark's Frederick IV, Saxony's Augustus II (who was also king of the Commonwealth in a personal union), and Peter of Russia. The allies all wished to acquire vulnerable parts of the scattered Swedish Empire which they felt to be

neighbors. As the early modern period progressed, the balance of power progressively came to proscribe not small states being annexed, but large states growing too large. In other words, the balance of power became preoccupied not with protecting small states, but with checking the expansion of predatory large states. In this regard, the defection of various monarchs from being allies of the Swedes to joining the side of the Commonwealth exemplified classic balancing behavior, and was propelled not merely by the fact of Swedish aggression, but by the absence of a strong legal claim buttressing Charles' invasion of the Commonwealth.

[30] Lockhart, *Sweden in the Seventeenth Century,* p. 100.
[31] Ibid.

rightfully theirs: the Danes intended to annex the Holstein-Gottorp lands and perhaps

regain some parts of southern Sweden; the Saxons wished to regain Livonia on behalf of

Poland, as well as the port of Riga; and the Russians eyed lands in Ingria which Sweden

had earlier seized from them in 1617.[32] The alliance planned to attack Sweden on three

fronts with a view to quickly subduing an enemy they saw to be weak and led by an

inexperienced teenage king only recently ascended to the throne. However, as well

encapsulated by McKay and Scott, "unfortunately for the allies, their young

inexperienced victim turned out to be a military genius with a far superior army."[33]

Invasion and the Unpredictable Course of War

The military dynamic took an unpredictable course as might have been expected

once the three-pronged attack of Denmark, Saxony, and Russia was underway. With the

assistance of the English and Dutch navy, Charles first repelled the Dutch attack by

threatening Copenhagen and forcing Frederick IV to sue for peace. Then, Charles' army

soundly routed Peter's army at Ingria in November of 1700, and rather than pursue

Peter's army quickly to force a peace, he turned—in what has traditionally been

interpreted as a strategic mistake—south to invade the Commonwealth.[34] In doing so,

Charles intention was to defeat Augustus and the Saxons first before turning to Russia.

Though Charles and the Swedes felt that Tsar Peter was the greater enemy, it was decided

that leaving Augustus' Saxon army in the Commonwealth undefeated would cause

---

[32] Derek McKay and H.M. Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815* (London: Longman, 1983), p. 80.
[33] Ibid., p. 82
[34] Ibid.

problems and possibly leave open a renewal of the alliance between Augustus and Peter at a later time.[35]

Charles' plan, therefore, was to invade Poland-Lithuania and force the dethronement of Augustus as king of Poland, replacing him with a Swedish-friendly candidate, thereby ending the dangerous dynastic union between the Commonwealth and Saxony and effectively turning the Commonwealth into a puppet state.[36] This strategy was strongly criticized by Frederick II, who later wrote:

> The method Charles pursued in the Polish war was certainly very defective. The conquest of Poland, which is everywhere an open country without fortresses, is a thing of no difficulty, but to hold Poland…is very precarious. The more easily conquered, the more difficult it is for a conqueror to fix and maintain himself.[37]

Soon, Charles' Swedish army overran the Commonwealth, whose troops collapsed as a military power in battles including Warsaw (1705), Fraustadt (1706) and Kalisz (1706). This collapse astonished contemporary observers, alerting them to the sad state of the Commonwealth's military.[38] The goal of installing a puppet ruler rather than attempting to govern the Commonwealth directly was an evolution from the earlier strategy of Charles X and reflected an accommodation with the difficulty of annexing territory without the pretext of a dynastic claim. It was also a function of the difficulty of occupying a vast land as the Commonwealth and ruling it directly. As Hatton notes, "the

---

[35] R. M. Hatton, (1970), "Charles XII and the Great Northern War," in *The New Cambridge Modern History, Volume VI,* ed. *J. S. Bromley* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 656.

[36] McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815,* p. 82. It has also been suggested that Charles was open to more moderate solutions that did not entail the dethronement of Augustus, provided that the Commonwealth would agree to secure Sweden's flank when Charles' army pushed further into Russia. But in any case, the Polish Diet could not agree internally to a course of action. On this point, see Hatton, *Charles XII of Sweden,* p. 190.

[37] Frederick II, *Frederick the Great on the Art of War* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1999), p. 347.

[38] Robert Frost, *The Northern Wars: War, State and Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558-1721* (Essex: Longman, 2000), p. 244

country was geographically too vast for…the Swedish army to control it by military means."[39]

After a number of years of military operations in the Commonwealth consisting of skirmishes between Charles and Augustus as they tried to outmaneuver each other on Polish territory, Charles was finally successful in dethroning Augustus and installing Stanisław Leszczyński on the Polish throne in 1705 as a Swedish puppet.[40] After occupying the Commonwealth, Charles turned to Saxony, which he invaded in 1706, coercing Augustus to recognize the loss of his Polish crown in September of the same year.[41] However, Charles' intervention in Poland-Lithuania had allowed Tsar Peter vital breathing space to increase and improve his army, as well as to found St Petersburg on the Neva River.[42] Meanwhile, the situation in the Commonwealth deteriorated due to Leszczyński (the Swedish backed puppet) being unable to consolidate native support for his rule.

The Russian Defeat of Sweden

Charles had been 'unable to conciliate or crush his enemies,' and the majority of the *szlachta* withheld support for Leszczyński due to their exclusion from offices and privileges being distributed by the new king.[43] Charles' Polish policy was harsh and absolutist, with little attempt to cloak Swedish coercive influence over, and contempt for, Polish institutions and legal norms.[44] On the other hand, Tsar Peter's Polish policy

---

[39] Hatton, *Charles XII of Sweden,* p. 188
[40] McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815,* p. 82.
[41] Ibid., p. 82.
[42] Jeremy Black, *The Rise of the European Powers 1679-1793* (London: Edward Arnold, 1990), p. 22.
[43] Frost, *The Northern Wars*, p. 268.
[44] Ibid., p. 269.

showed more signs of gaining local acceptance than that of Charles, due to greater

consideration for the preferences of his ally Augustus, who still commanded a significant

section of the army of the Commonwealth.[45] The Russian policy of allowing greater

autonomy on the part of their Polish allies, in contrast to Charles' constant interference,

led to influential Polish nobles refraining from assisting Charles in his campaign against

Russia at the critical moment in 1708-9.[46]

When in 1708 Charles impetuously invaded Russia, Peter's army had been

significantly strengthened from modernization efforts, and after a detour through the

Ukraine, the Swedish forces met the Russian army at Poltava on the 8th of July 1709. At

Poltava the Swedish army was routed by the Russians in a devastating defeat, losing

about 10,000 men. The defeat was exacerbated when most of the remaining army

surrendered to their Russian pursuers three days later.[47] This astonishing sequence of

events forced Charles to flee into exile in Turkey, and the Swedish position in the eastern

Baltic collapsed. After full confirmation of the total nature of Charles' defeat to Peter,

Augustus re-entered Poland in August 1709 with 11,000 men and support for

Leszczyński collapsed as Russian troops poured in from the East. Peter reassured the

Poles that their traditional laws and liberties would be restored, and Augustus was

restored to the Polish-Lithuanian throne in the Diet of February-April 1710.[48] The Wettin

restoration ushered in a long era of Polish-Lithuanian political dependence on Russia,

---

[45] Ibid., p. 269.
[46] Ibid., p. 270.
[47] Black, *The Rise of the European Powers 1679-1793,* p. 23.
[48] Jerzy Lukowski, *Liberty's Folly: The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the eighteenth century, 1697-1795* (London: Routledge, 1991), p. 140.

symbolized by the acceptance by the Diet of the right of Russia to intervene inside the Commonwealth on behalf of the Orthodox population.[49]

The strategic mistakes of Charles in bringing about his defeat at the hands of the Russians in 1709 have been much discussed. High among the purported errors include neglecting to chase down the Russian army and forcing terms after routing them at Narva in 1700, as well as his congenital impetuousness which led to spectacular tactical victories but also contributed to an inadequate attention to supply-lines and inattentiveness to the limitations of Sweden's army during the Russian campaign.[50] His unwillingness to negotiate and accept peace offers, such as his rejection of Peter's offer to restore most of Russia's conquests in return for St Petersburg on the eve of the Russian invasion, has also been cited as an error. Whatever the strategic limitations of Charles' prosecution of his war against Russia, his eschewal of a conventional dynastic approach of maintaining firm alliances with other ruling dynasties—a function it would seem of his youth upon accession and inadequate socialization into dynastic norms due to military responsibilities—prevented him from seeing the value of a dynastic approach. As Hatton notes of this unwillingness of Charles to play the dynastic game:

> There is…a sense in which one can speak of Sweden as forfeiting international goodwill in a competitive age by too 'selfish' a policy: she did not want, or could not afford, the ties of firm alliances and lost the…advantages which such alliances might have brought.[51]

Dynastic Norms Condemning Conquest

When we wish to understand the factors that prevented conversion of the Swedish occupation into a more stable set of arrangements, we start by pointing to the role of

---

[49]Ibid., p. 141.
[50] Frost, *The Northern Wars*, p. 278.
[51] Hatton, *Charles XII of Sweden*, p. 516.

strategic errors. The extreme tactical impetuousness that Charles XII displayed was closely related to the absence of a dynastic dimension to his strategic approach. Both Charles' fearlessness in the face of superior materiel, and his disregard of conventional diplomatic methods, arose from his disdain for tradition and also point to a problematic lack of prudence that could have tempered his risk-taking. In the absence of such prudence, it was inevitable that sooner or later Charles's expansionist wartime policy would have faced an insurmountable adversary. A lone wolf monarch fighting for regional hegemony with little help from dynastic allies in a dynastic world was bound to fail, especially when considering that Charles' Sweden did not alone possess the resources (human or materiel) to sustain the commitments of a great power.

Beyond the limitations of Charles' strategic approach, the crucial background factor that prevented Sweden from annexing, or attempting to annex Poland-Lithuania, was the still widely accepted norm of dynastic inheritance right which cut against the recognition of possession arising from brute military conquest. Even if Charles X or Charles XII had succeeded in occupying Poland-Lithuania for a longer period, it is doubtful, given the diplomatic norms of the period in terms of practice, that any claim by Sweden to annex Poland-Lithuania would have been accepted in the ensuing peace negotiations. Osiander has written of the practical distaste of dynastic rulers in the early modern period to acquiesce the conquests claimed by rulers during the Thirty Years' War, such as France and Sweden:

> France and Sweden did seek to introduce change into the system, in the shape of territorial adjustments to be made in their favor. These territorial gains were supposed to serve as a 'satisfaction' or indemnity for services rendered to their German allies. But although the territories that they coveted were already under their military control, their wish to appropriate them permanently faced stiff opposition. The opposition to the French and Swedish demands took strength from the fact that the two crowns had no *tituli legitimae possessionis,* that is legal titles, to the territories in question. Those actors

229

who did were not easily convinced of the need to part with them. Interestingly, the right of conquest was admitted in theory as a means of legitimizing territorial change. But, contrary to the popular perception of the period, it was universally rejected in practice.[52]

It is probable that an attempt by Sweden to annex the Commonwealth would not have been recognized by the other dynastic rulers of the period, and the strong voices objecting to foreigners holding the Polish throne even prior to Augustus' restoration indicates the difficulty that would have accompanied any attempt by Charles to stand for election himself.[53] These practical and normative barriers explain why Charles' strategy for the Commonwealth centered around installation of a Swedish puppet on the Polish-Lithuanian throne rather than outright annexation.

Elective Monarchy as Allowing Invasions

One characteristic of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth rendered it susceptible to invasion by neighboring rulers. The elective and largely non-dynastic nature of the Commonwealth meant its monarchs had difficulty in deploying dynastic marriage ties as a forward layer of diplomatic influence and protection against the predatory impulses of neighboring rulers. Given that each monarchical election contained the possibility of a dynastic change, reputational effects flowing from normatively unacceptable behavior did not easily deter rulers from invading the Commonwealth. Even if the explanation for the unfinished nature of Swedish occupations of the Commonwealth rests in part on strategic errors, the fact that the Commonwealth could be invaded at all on a massive scale was in part a consequence of the permissive role of its constitutional structure as an elective monarchy.

---

[52] Andreas Osiander, *The States System of Europe, 1640-1990* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 49.
[53] Lukowski, *Liberty's Folly*, p. 141.

The case of the Commonwealth can be seen as an elective monarchy that survived beyond a point when it was in control of its own fate in a threatening constellation of hereditary monarchies. It should be remembered that the underdeveloped nature of nationalism and the lack of non-interference norms for monarchical elections rendered elective monarchies of the *ancien régime* inherently susceptible to outside interference. Additionally, the security of the Commonwealth was further compromised by its geographical location at the Eastern edge of the zone of Christendom, making it the logical target of the predatory impulses of rising Orthodox and Islamic powers such as Russia and the Sublime Porte. This is significant, as the interactions between the sphere of Christendom and its other, were fraught and relatively unconstrained by the conquest taboo. It is therefore unsurprising that the Commonwealth was one of the first European states to be erased from the political map, due in part to the actions of a ruler outside the historical bounds of Christendom (Russia's Catherine the Great) acting in collusion with another ruler relatively unconstrained by dynastic norms (Frederick II) to swallow it whole.[54]

Crisis in Poland-Lithuania and Competing Expectations

The Swedish invasion of 1655 was the closest that Poland-Lithuania came to sovereign extinction during the *ancien régime.* The manner in which the invasion came about and the attempted conquest failed is instructive for the study of composite state survival. Though direct invasion is usually foreclosed when two dynasties are closely related, we saw here that the relations between two branches of the same dynasty were

---

[54] It was Maria Theresa and Austria that was the less willing participant in the partitions. This is hardly surprising, given Maria Theresa's dynastic orientation.

sometimes fraught by conflict, especially when the two branches had broken apart under contentious circumstances and claimed legitimacy over the other. However, the dynastic ties between Sweden and the Commonwealth were operative in driving Charles X to initially seek an alliance with John Casimir against the Russians, though the attempt failed due to John Casimir's unwillingness to give up his claim to the Swedish throne. The intransigence of Casimir in pursuing what seemed to most of the Polish nobility a claim impossible to realize, cost him greatly in terms of their support and likely contributed to the collapse of the Commonwealth's military defenses in the face of the Swedish advance.

The 1701 invasion of Charles XII was a threat not so much of the loss of sovereignty of the Polish-Lithuanian monarch as it was a threat to the independence of the monarchy. Three facts lead to the conclusion that this invasion was not a conclusive refutation of the operation of dynastic deterrence. Firstly, the invasion of the Commonwealth took place during an already heated conflict, a situation in which the constraining influence of conquest desistance is somewhat vitiated. Secondly, the invasion did not aim for annexation, as the goal of Charles was to consolidate a Swedish puppet on the Polish throne. Though the historical record does not provide evidence of the reasons behind Charles' choice of approach, undoubtedly the decision to install a puppet ruler was in some part due to what he would have known as the low chance of success of any annexation attempt. Finally, as we discussed in Chapter Three, Charles was an atypical example of the dynastic ruler relatively uncommitted to dynastic goals. The dynastic norm of conquest avoidance is disabled in cases where a ruler is not committed to such goals.

More broadly, the expectation of dynasticism that pure-type elective monarchies are at a disadvantage in an environment where dynastic states could weave a network of kinship relations to stabilize their sovereignty against external threats was given moderate support here. Poland-Lithuania was a relatively pure elective monarchy, only departing from its a-dynastic tendency on a number of occasions over its history, and though Charles was related to the sitting Polish king Augustus II at the time of the 1701 invasion, there would have been no expectation at the time that Augustus' dynastic house of Wettin would come to dominate the throne of the Commonwealth for several generations. In these circumstances, and given the exceptional circumstances active in this case, the dynastic approach would have expected Poland-Lithuania under Augustus to be moderately more vulnerable to invasion attempts than a normal hereditary monarchy.

When evaluating the expectations from realism, we look to the composite nature of the Commonwealth and ask whether the additional materiel provided by the composite domains were important in either giving it an enhanced defensive capability in military conflict, or in deterring military offensives from the outside. To be sure, the extensive territory of the Commonwealth made conquest difficult for a smaller power such as Sweden, due to the sheer logistical difficulty of occupying the entirety of the Commonwealth and the effectiveness of defense in depth resistance strategies in the case of partial occupations such as occurred in these cases. However, the military incapacity of the Commonwealth in the face of external invasion was pronounced, and the constitutional weakness of the central monarchy in amassing military power outweighed any numerical advantage that might have accrued from the composite domains. A larger and more populous power than Sweden would not have been hampered in occupying and

233

imposing its will on the Commonwealth in the same manner. Moreover, force deterrence was clearly inoperative in these two cases, as some of the most invasive and ambitious military invasions of the post-Westphalian period were launched against Poland-Lithuania by Sweden. For these reasons, the expectations from dynastic deterrence seem on firmer ground than those of early modern realism, when examining near-death events in the life of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the post-Westphalian period.

When applying the leadership learning approach to these cases of composite state near-death, the expectations this approach derives are not as they might seem at first glance. In fact three of the relevant rulers in the two invasions—the Swedish king Charles XII as well as John Casimir and Augustus II—all received a royal dynastic upbringing. John Casimir of the Polish Vasas came of age at a time when the Vasas ruled the Commonwealth as a *de facto* hereditary monarchy, and Augustus II had been raised in the ruling house of the Electorate of Saxony. Only Charles X, who had been raised as a member of the ruling house of the County Palatine of Zweibrücken (a small state of the Holy Roman Empire), was deprived of the education of what would have been considered royalty. Though he was later elevated to become Swedish monarch due to succession failure after the reign of Queen Christina, we would expect Charles X to have been least inculcated in dynastic norms than his counterparts. This was likely partially at play in his decision to invade the Commonwealth. Yet John Casimir as the second son of Sigismund III—meaning he was not granted the full rigorous education given to his elder brother—and Augustus II as the second son of his father, John George III Elector of Saxony, were hardly in a significantly superior position with regards to inter-generational leadership learning. Furthermore, Charles XII, who we might expect to have been most

inculcated in dynastic norms and learning, acceded to the throne at the tender age of fifteen, and was forced into a life or death war a mere three years later.

Given that all of the main protagonists during the two invasions were somewhat handicapped in terms of leadership learning, clearly diverging expectations cannot be derived, but it is noteworthy that the dynastic norm-breaking Swedish invasions were both undertaken by dynastic rulers deprived of what would be considered a complete course of rigorous training for a life of rulership. Furthermore, insofar as a well-rounded dynastic education might have counseled against the wisdom of radically aggressive moves without sufficient support from allies, it is suggestive that Charles XII had been forced to the throne at an age before he could have gained a good appreciation of the pitfalls of strategic improvisation. As the strategic overextension of both Charles X and XII could have resulted in greatly deleterious consequences for their state, the role of leadership learning is seen here in its absence, as permitting hasty and unwise decisions where its presence may have constrained these rulers from making such mistakes.

The Holy Roman Empire and the War of the Austrian Succession

In contrast to Poland-Lithuania, the Holy Roman Empire—due to its blend of an elective constitution with hereditary succession superimposed above it—was a polity that successfully ameliorated the weakness of the elective mechanism through the strengths afforded by dynastic marriage and hereditary succession. The structure of the Reich as a secondary composite state with dynastic ties between the monarchic core and the peripheral domains also exercised an important supporting role. As such the Empire was

effectively able to protect itself from the predation of neighboring kingdoms, despite being subject to similar external pressures as Poland-Lithuania. In particular, the greater control over the monarchic center arising from a small selectorate—due to an electoral college composed of less than ten prince-electors compared with the larger selectorate of the Polish-Lithuanian nobility—and the dynastic marriage ties that connected the ruling Habsburg dynasty with ruling dynasties inside and outside the Empire, provided it with a dynastic buffer-zone where invasion was unthinkable, in addition to giving surrounding states a stake in its survival. The essence of the Habsburg survival strategy involved co-opting surrounding dynasties by making them stakeholders in the survival of the Empire through interwoven kinship ties.

Let us first examine the dynastic mechanisms of the Reich in operation so as to better understand the manner in which they protected the Empire from conquest attempts. Though the Empire was also endangered by severe existential threats during the period in question 1648-1789, none was more severe than the threat to Vienna during the War of the Austrian Succession.[55] The Habsburgs successfully parried this threat via the deterrent effect of dynastic ties. However, we see in this case, as well as in the Seven Years War, the emergence of a destructive systemic influence in the person of Frederick II, a leader unconstrained by dynastic norms, who due to his willingness to invade countries even without strong dynastic claims loosened the adherence of contemporary monarchs to these norms. In the limited success of the Holy Roman Empire in parrying these existential threats, we observe in action the dynastic desistance from conquest and

---

[55] The other severe existential crisis faced by the Reich, was the siege of Vienna of 1683. However, as this pitted the Habsburgs and their allies against the Sublime Porte (not part of the same civilizational sphere of Christendom), the dynamics of that siege are not relevant for our current study.

its empirical manifestation in the buffer zone of dynastic kinship ties that protected the Empire from invasion.

Frederick II and the Origins of the War

Though the possibility of a conflict over the outcome of the Austrian succession was opened decades earlier with the heirless emperor, Charles VI, needing to gain acceptance for the Pragmatic Sanction via his revision of Salic Law (allowing females to succeed to the throne in Habsburg possessions such as the Archduchy of Austria, the Kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary, etc), the War of the Austrian Succession was immediately precipitated by the new young ruler of Prussia, Frederick II, when he invaded the Austrian province of Silesia.[56] Two months after Charles' death in October of 1740, Frederick II, who had recently acceded to the Prussian throne in May of the same year, invaded Silesia, and initiated a war that would push the Habsburgs to the brink of losing their grip over their hereditary domains.

The aims of Frederick in the invasion were an admixture of various motives: territorial, strategic and dynastic. Insofar as Frederick desired to expand Prussia's exposed position to make it more defensible, and also gain a wealthy territory well placed to divide the Elector of Saxony from his holdings in Saxony and his Polish-Lithuanian throne, his aims were territorial. Strategically, he felt the timing to be optimal as it would preempt what was felt to be imminent attempts by Saxony and Bavaria to also make

---

[56] The Pragmatic Sanction had been accepted by all the Diets of the Central European provinces of the Habsburgs between 1720-1723, and as it was clear that the Habsburg monarchy would have to be inherited by Charles' eldest daughter Maria Theresa, Habsburg diplomacy thenceforth aimed toward and succeeded in obtaining guarantees to respect the Pragmatic Sanction from the other major powers of Europe by 1735. Spain gave its assent in the Treaty of Vienna of 1725, Russia by alliance with the Emperor in 1726, Britain in 1731, and France in 1735. On this, see Anderson, *Europe in the Eighteenth Century 1713-1783,* pp. 288-289.

territorial gains in the wake of the accession of the youthful Maria Theresa. As Frederick

wrote, in October of 1740, just before executing his famed invasion:

> The superiority of our troops over those of our neighbors, the promptitude with which we
> can act, and, in sum, the advantage which we possess over our neighbors, is complete,
> and gives us, in an unforeseen occasion such as this, an infinite superiority over all other
> European Powers. If we wait to act until Saxony and Bavaria have made the first hostile
> moves, we shall be unable to prevent Saxony from enlarging her territory, which,
> however, is entirely contrary to our interests, and in that case we have no good pretext.[57]

However, he had to orient his choice at least minimally to dynasticism in his

choice of Silesia over other possible targets of predation, as he felt the claims of the

House of Brandenburg over Silesia to be the strongest. Nonetheless, the claim he made

on Silesia was very tenuous, and was made only to maintain the veneer of dynastic

legality.[58]

Though the Silesian invasion would not be the most egregious infringement of

dynastic morality that Frederick would commit, nonetheless it was his first offense and

the beginning of his attack on dynastic norms that would accelerate with the invasion of

Saxony less than two decades later, and culminate with the first Partition of Poland.

Shortly after Frederick's death, the entire system of European dynasticism would face its

nadir during the Napoleonic Wars. Still, compared to later actions, the invasion of Silesia

was distantly moored in dynastic convention, and Silesia was only a small territorial

---

[57] Frederick II, "Ideas on Political Projects to be Formed in Connection with the Death of the Emperor, (1740)," in *The Habsburg and Hohenzollern Dynasties in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* ed. C.A. Macartney (New York: Walker and Company, 1970), p. 327.

[58] Though Louis XIV had made some tenuous dynastic claims, particularly in the War of Devolution and the Reunions, the brazenness with which Frederick set about to expand his territorial holdings, was breathtaking. The most problematic part of the dynastic claim made on Silesia by Frederick on behalf of the Hohenzollerns, was that it had lapsed. As Macaulay notes:
"It is certain that, whoever might originally have been in the right, Prussia had submitted. Prince after prince of the House of Brandenburg had acquiesced in the existing agreement. Nay, the Court of Berlin had recently been allied with that of Vienna, and had guaranteed the integrity of the Austrian states. Is it not perfectly clear that, if antiquated claims are to be set up against recent treaties and long possession, the world can never be at peace for a day? The laws of all nations have wisely established a time of limitation, after which titles, however illegitimate in their origin, cannot be questioned." Thomas Babington Macaulay, *An Essay on Frederic the Great* (New York: Maynard Merrill, 1893), p. 29.

holding of the Habsburg dynasty. This war, then, still conforms with the structure of wars of the dynastic period, namely the war of limited territorial gain.

Frederick's Non-Dynastic Outlook

With scant legal justification and a deft sense of strategic timing, Frederick invaded a relatively defenseless Silesia—defended by only 6000 men and no artillery at a time when Austrian defenses were concentrated on Hungary and its Italian possessions — and proceeded to successfully annex the province.[59] As Silesia was only a province and not a sovereign territory (and thus the invasion not one of conquest) dynastic deterrence was inoperative. After occupying the province, Frederick offered Maria Theresa a guarantee for all other German Habsburg holdings, monetary compensation, and a vote for her husband Francis in the forthcoming imperial election, in return for cession of the province. The young archduchess refused the terms offered by Frederick, making war inevitable, and at the same time putting paid to Frederick's hopes to acquire Silesia without a war.[60]

It has been charged that: "few events in history show more clearly the way in which its course can be changed by the arbitrary and unpredictable effects of an individual personality."[61] However, the personality of Frederick did not arise in a vacuum. Rather, we must see Frederick as the product of an upbringing that was uniquely suited to creating a non-dynastically oriented monarch who would frequently transgress dynastic norms in his foreign policy. As we have already noted, Frederick was married

---

[59] Anderson, *Europe in the Eighteenth Century 1713-1783*, p. 290.
[60] Ibid., p. 290
[61] M. S. Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession 1740-1748* (London: Longman, 1995), p. 68.

but was quite likely homosexual, and he seems to have had little interest in intimate

relations with his spouse, who was chosen for him against his will by his willful father,

Frederick William. The troubled relationship Frederick had with his authoritarian father

was, beside his sexual orientation, perhaps the most significant factor in inculcating the

young prince to an anti-dynastic worldview. Frederick William was deeply authoritarian

as well as militaristic, and any differences in temperament between father and son were

exacerbated by the former's outright brutal approach to his paternal duties. As narrated

by Blanning:

> In the case of Frederick William and Frederick, the natural tensions of the latter's teenage
> years went way beyond what was normal to reach physical violence and climaxed with a
> near-filicide. It was a sustained campaign to break Frederick's will and turn him into a
> subservient instrument.[62]

Whether as a means of subconsciously resisting the hated father, or a consequence

of his disinterest in family matters more generally, by the time of his accession Frederick

had come to hold a profoundly non-dynastic worldview that consisted of putting the

welfare of the state above that of self or dynasty, a perspective which contrasted

markedly with many of the other dynastic rulers of the time. Whereas Frederick William

had deeply revered the imperial office of the Emperor, and counseled his successor never

to enter into an alliance against it, Frederick was enamored of such views, and it has been

said that his "insistence on the subordination of self to country became the most

celebrated leitmotiv of Frederick's political discourse."[63] In contrast, the most

dynastically oriented ruler among Frederick's contemporaries, his antithesis Maria

---

[62] Tim Blanning, *Frederick the Great* (London: Allen Lane, 2015), p. 34.
[63] Blanning, *Frederick the Great*, p. 119.

Theresa, "was taught that sovereigns must rule their peoples as branches of one Christian family."[64]

Charles Albert's March on Vienna

Thus Frederick's disdain for dynastic norms was deep seated and unusual in the context of the time, even granting the strength of such norms was dissipating. It was no surprise that Frederick's invasion and occupation of Silesia, and the refusal of the youthful Maria Theresa to accept Frederick's terms of cession, led quickly to war. The financial weakness of Austria meant that Maria Theresa was heavily dependent on external assistance, in particular from Great Britain. On the side of Austria's enemies, Prussia was joined by the French under Maréchal Belle-Isle (intent on dealing a severe blow to his old Habsburg rival), and by May of 1741 Bavaria and Spain also joined the forces ranged against Austria under the Treaty of Nymphenburg.[65]

The situation of Austria began to look increasingly precarious, as the power of France at the time was still formidable despite financial drains incurred during the rule of Louis XIV, and the intention of Charles Albert, Elector of Bavaria, to assert his tenuous claim to all of the Habsburg hereditary lands placed further pressure on the position of Maria Theresa. Maria Theresa herself could not seek election to the imperial throne as only a male could be elected Emperor, so she sought the election of her husband, Francis Stephen, the Duke of Lorraine. Though the archduchess was able to obtain pledges of support from the ruler of Hesse-Kassel and Augustus the Elector of Saxony, this would

---

[64] W. F. Reddaway, *Frederick the Great and the Rise of Prussia* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), p. 92.
[65] Anderson, *Europe in the Eighteenth Century 1713-1783*, p. 291.

come at a heavy financial cost, and Austria was defeated in the first battle of the war, at Mollwitz in April of 1740, and soon was threatened by a march on Vienna by the combined forces of Bavaria, France and Prussia.

Of the circumstances of Austria in the summer of 1741, Anderson has written that "never until the final collapse of 1918 was Habsburg power to be under such threat as during these months."[66] The War of the Austrian Succession would in this year bring the Habsburgs face to face with the gravest threat to its rule with the march on Vienna, and we infer that dynastic deterrence contributed to protecting the Habsburgs from this dire threat. Though this was not an example of dynastic deterrence in its purest form, namely a dynastic marriage, nonetheless the kinship tie of Charles Albert to the Habsburgs was close, as his spouse, Maria Amalia, was the second daughter of Emperor Joseph I, the uncle of Maria Theresa. Frederick II was urging Charles Albert to march on Vienna as a condition of his support in the imperial election, and the unwillingness of Maria Theresa to compromise on ceding Silesia to Frederick, and Frederick's unwillingness to accept monetary compensation to abandon his occupation of the province, meant the last chance to stop the advance on Vienna was lost.

Though there were certainly divisions and mutual mistrust among the allies arrayed against the Habsburgs, (the chief among them being their inability to trust Frederick due to his invasion of Silesia having confirmed his unreliability and selfishness),[67] nonetheless their combined strength was formidable, and Belle-Isle sensed

---

[66] Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession 1740-1748*, p. 80.
[67] This point is extremely important. It was due to Frederick having broken the implicit dynastic norm against wanton conquest in Europe that his fellow rulers found him to be untrustworthy. As Fleury wrote of Frederick, "he is false in everything, even in his efforts to please. I doubt whether he is a reliable ally, for his only principle is his own interest. He wants to rule and have his own way without any concerted action

the early and complete defeat of Austria.[68] Given the strong perceived advantage of the

offense, military deterrence was certainly not operative at this pivotal moment. Anderson

writes that the attack on Vienna "would probably have succeeded; and there were clear

indications that the Bavarian elector was by no means unwelcome as ruler to many of his

potential subjects."[69] During September and October, hasty preparations were made for a

siege in Vienna, and Maria Theresa attempted to buy off some of the enemies arrayed

against her through various enticements.

The Protective Role of Dynastic Ties

These diplomatic attempts generally have conventionally been understood as

having failed, but the contact Maria Theresa made with the Empress Wilhelmine Amalia,

the mother-in-law of Charles Albert (and spouse of Holy Roman Emperor Joseph I) in an

effort to convince the Bavarian Elector to renounce his claims against the main Habsburg

territories,[70] may actually in part have been successful. This we can infer from

Frederick's account of the period, when he notes that Charles Albert conveyed to him a

letter from the empress Amelia, an exhortation for "him to come to an accommodation

with the queen of Hungary, by the month of December…"[71] The decision of Charles

Albert to pass a message to Frederick from his mother-in-law appealing for a settlement

indicates the Bavarian Elector was acting at least in part as an emissary on behalf of the

Habsburgs. The strong pull of dynastic kinship that the appeal from his mother-in-law

---

with us, and all Europe detests him." Quoted in Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession 1740-1748,* pp. 81-82.

[68] Ibid., p. 83.

[69] Ibid., p. 85.

[70] Ibid., p. 84.

[71] Frederick II, *The History of My Own Times, Part I,* trans. Thomas Holcroft (London: G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1789), p. 161.

would have effected, together with the betrayal that conquering the ancestral territory of his spouse would have represented, must have weighed on him heavily, as can be inferred from the hesitation which overtook him when debating whether to advance on Vienna.[72]

In the event, despite the Franco-Bavarian army reaching perilously close to Vienna, the push was diverted at the last moment to a northward advance into Bohemia. What would have been the devastating capture of the Habsburg capital had been miraculously avoided. Frederick in his writings also implies that deceptive diplomacy by the Habsburgs was successful in convincing the opposing armies that they had somehow "all appointed a general rendezvous in Bohemia."[73]

The standard explanation of the aborted attack is that Charles Albert became fearful that his claim to the Bohemian crown would be dismissed were he not physically present in Bohemia.[74] However, we put forward that the kinship tie between Charles Albert via his Habsburg spouse, Maria Amalia, was just as important a factor in deterring the Bavarian Elector from advancing his claims. Indeed, these claims had originally been made for hereditary Habsburg territories, and Frederick was clearly still straining for the fight, thus making it all the more puzzling that Charles Albert would fail to press the offensive and seek first to consolidate his claim to the Bohemian crown.

The aborted attack on Vienna was a pivotal moment in the war, as it was the gravest threat that Maria Theresa would face to her dynastic possessions. Dynastic deterrence differs in its strength in varying cases, and in this case we postulate that the deterrent effect was not so strong as to altogether deter an invasion—Charles Albert's

---

[72] Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession 1740-1748,* p. 85.
[73] Frederick II, *The History of My Own Times, Part I,* p. 161.
[74] Anderson, *The War of the Austrian Succession 1740-1748*, p. 85.

spouse Maria Amalia and Maria Theresa were merely first cousins, an extended rather than conjugal family tie—though it did deter the ultimate advance upon Vienna, meaning the mechanism came into effect before the culmination of conquest.
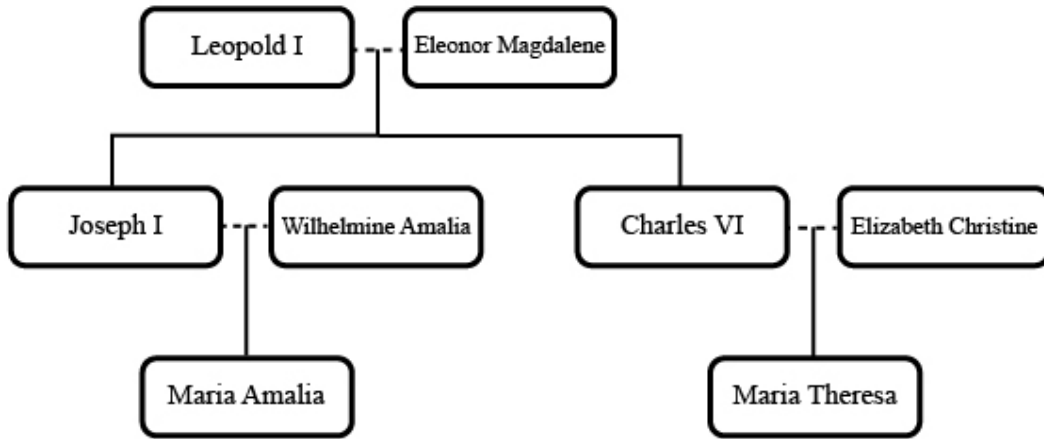

Table 4: The Dynastic Ties between Maria Amalia and Maria Theresa

The Outcome of the War

Though the Bohemian crown would be lost upon the fall of Prague in November of 1741 to the forces aligned with Charles Albert, and the Bavarian Elector's election as Holy Roman Emperor in January of 1742 represented a damaging loss of prestige for the Habsburg dynasty, the Austrian forces recovered momentum due to the assistance of the Hungarian army. As soon as he had been elected as Emperor, Charles Albert was once again on the defensive in a free-flowing series of engagements, and was driven from his own capital by the Austrian forces after Frederick suspended operations against Maria Theresa.[75] Gradually improving its position, Austrian forces retook Bohemia in 1743, and

---

[75] Anderson, *Europe in the Eighteenth Century 1713-1783,* p. 292.

after Charles Albert died prematurely in 1745, Maria Theresa was able to engineer the election of her husband, Francis, to the imperial throne.

The supreme crisis had been averted, and not only had the Habsburgs managed to retain control over their hereditary domains, but Maria Theresa had been able to regain the prestige of the imperial title through her husband. The crisis of the Habsburg dynasty represented by the War of the Austrian Succession was overcome in a manner that demonstrates the power of dynastic kinship ties to weaken the resolve of adversaries to conquer the territories of rival dynasties with which they are closely related. The kinship ties between Charles Albert and the Habsburg dynasty, represented a critical mechanism through which his original desire to press his claim to Habsburg hereditary possessions was weakened and ultimately diverted.

The survival of the Habsburg dynasty in the face of aggressive moves by Frederick II and his allies signifies the victory of dynastic mechanisms over purely military calculations. The War of Austrian Succession itself, though catalyzed by a ruler who thought less in dynastic terms than most of his contemporaries, was at least cloaked in the language of dynasticism, insofar as Frederick framed his occupation of Silesia in dynastic terms, no matter how questionable, and Charles Albert's participation was also anchored by his desire to claim Habsburg territories he believed (fancifully) belonged to the Wittelsbach dynasty.

The role of dynastic ties and dynastic deterrence in parrying the most dangerous threat faced by the Habsburg dynasty during the Franco-Bavarian march on Vienna was more efficacious than that of alternate postulated explanations. Noteworthy is the structure of the Reich as a secondary composite state, as the Bavarian Elector was

technically the ruler of a territory of the Reich, and though the decentralized structure of the Empire has often been held as a weakness, the protective role of dynastic ties between the dynastic core and peripheral dynastic domains played a significant role in preventing the overthrow of the monarchical center by a peripheral dynasty. The part domestic/international nature of this war is also evident due to this secondary composite structure and the relative permeability of 'domestic' politics in the Empire to external intervention, but overshadowing the differences between these two spheres is the homogeneity of interactive dynamics on the level of dynasty-dynasty relations.

The role of military deterrence can be doubted as having swayed Charles Albert's calculations, as various contemporaneous accounts from the French side mention the Franco-Bavarian army as holding a significant advantage over the Habsburg forces. Such observations have clout, as French observations that their side held the advantage are tantamount to an admission of error, given the advantage was not pressed home and the opportunity to inflict a decisive defeat over the Habsburgs lost. Leadership learning is not a salient factor in this case, except for the role of Frederick II in setting the war in motion, as both Charles Albert and Maria Theresa were the scions of old and prestigious dynasties atop the European aristocratic hierarchy. In fact, if we observe that Maria Theresa was female and for this reason given a far inferior education by her father Charles VI than would normally be reserved for a male heir apparent, then both her accomplishments as a Habsburg ruler in war, and sagaciousness in governing her domains seem to cut against the approach of leadership learning which might expect such a ruler to be severely handicapped and incompetent in his/her exercise of rule. Thus, the case of the survival of the Habsburgs and the Holy Roman Empire during the War of the

Austrian Succession gives qualified support to the efficacious role of dynasticism in aiding the survival of the Reich, while failing to support alternate expectations from competing approaches.

Late-Survival Composite State Death

The Partitions of Poland-Lithuania

We turn now to examine the ultimate demise of late surviving composite polities as a means to understand the unique concatenation of factors that penetrated the defenses of these polities, leading them to succumb after surviving earlier crises. In earlier sections of the present chapter, we have seen that composite polities such as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Holy Roman Empire managed to survive existential crisis primarily due to two factors. The primary threats these composite polities faced, in contrast to the cases of early dissolution, were invasions from the outside. Thus the aid of allies in rolling back an occupation as well as the general resistance to legitimizing conquest in Europe constituted an efficient set of causes for these polities being able to deter invasion and/or prevent annexation. In the case of the Holy Roman Empire, we saw that the severe threat to dynastic survival posed by the march on Vienna by the joint Bavarian-French force during the War of Austrian Succession, was evaded by the presence of dynastic kinship ties between the Bavarian Elector (who was leading the attack on Vienna) and the Habsburgs. The manner in which such a kinship tie led Charles Albert to desist from invading Vienna pointed to the existence of a network of dynastic

marriage and kinship ties surrounding the Habsburg patrimonial estates in a protective zone where conquest was considered an inappropriate means of foreign policy. In Chapter Three, we put forward these latent kinship ties as a background cause for the relative absence of conquest attempts in *ancien régime* Europe in the period 1648-1789.

The following cases of late composite state death provides additional strong evidence for the nature of the most serious existential threats faced by such composite states. By examining the actual manner in which these states died, we gain further insight into the forces to which they were always vulnerable. In both the case of Poland-Lithuania and the Holy Roman Empire, an external ruler unconstrained by dynastic norms was largely responsible for state collapse. Frederick II initiated the decades long process through which the Commonwealth would become extinct through his key role in the first Polish partition. Napoleon Bonaparte, the absolute leader of Republican France, was the elemental force which, through his military genius and disregard for dynastic practices, created a decisive military advantage for France, allowing it to defeat and reshape multiple European states, including the Holy Roman Empire. If it was powerful non-dynastically oriented leaders who precipitated state death in these cases, we can conclude from analogy that it would have been external threats from non-dynastic leaders that posed the greatest threat in earlier cases. Furthermore, as dynastic marriage and kinship ties constrain rulers through the force of these ties, we can conclude that it was dynastic deterrence and the latent network of dynastic marriage and kinship ties that, where such existed, protected them from an earlier demise.

However, dynastic deterrence mechanisms did not prevent wars from taking place altogether. Wars in early modern Europe between 1648-1789 were primarily limited wars

aimed at the consolidation of small territorial gains to demarcate and strengthen emerging territorial frontiers and boundaries. Besides wars for limited territorial gain, dynastic wars also frequently arose during succession crises, though as we noted these wars during the period we study, were oriented to defend the status quo and aimed to prevent the pooling of inheritances after succession breakdown, rather than acquisitive (i.e. aimed at enforcing a claim unilaterally over an entire patrimony via conquest). Early modern European war was certainly fiercely fought, and notwithstanding the relative absence of unprovoked conquest attempts, actions approaching conquest did occur during a war, such as we saw with the Swedish invasions of Poland-Lithuania.

Moreover, such deterrence mechanisms did not prevent conquest attempts in circumstances where dynastic kinship ties were weak or involved intra-dynastic conflict (i.e. the rivalry between the two branches of the Vasa dynasty). Additionally, we saw that true elective monarchies were vulnerable due to their inability to take advantage of cross-generational reputational effects and weakness when accumulating dynastic capital in the absence of hereditary succession. And dynastic rulers could in rare cases hold strikingly non-dynastic goals due to idiosyncratic factors in their upbringing or personality. This was certainly the case with Frederick II of Prussia, and he gradually accumulated a reputation for disruptive actions—such as the invasions of Silesia and Saxony—which were scandalous in their disregard for the logic of dynastic inheritance and claims. The final demise of Poland-Lithuania also owes much to the disruptive role of Frederick, as we shall see.

The First Partition of Poland

Despite its longevity, allowing it to survive well into the eighteenth century, Poland-Lithuania had been a shadow of its former self since at least 1709 with the restoration of the crown to Augustus—who had effectively become a puppet due to Russia's role in defeating the occupying forces of Sweden—and it was Russia's continued patronage which underlay the Commonwealth's survival despite it lacking an effective military force to ensure its own defense. The condition of weakness and dependency only worsened as the century wore on. As Schroeder writes:

> Other states, especially Russia, assembled armies on Polish soil, marched troops across it, and even conducted military campaigns in Polish territory. The climax was reached in the Seven Years' War. Poland, though neutral, was a principal theatre of the fighting and a virtual puppet of the belligerents, again especially Russia. Poles could no longer freely choose their own sovereign, preserve or alter their constitution, prevent neighboring powers from intervening in their internal affairs…or conduct their own foreign policy.[76]

Thus the longevity of Poland-Lithuania, as already noted, was to an important degree dependent on the willingness of external patrons to allow its survival as long as it posed them no threat. Continuing weakness of the Commonwealth became a state of affairs that powerful patrons, such as Russia and Austria, came to appreciate. As an example, Maria Theresa had in 1748 blocked the abolition of the *liberum veto,* which would have significantly strengthened the monarchy.[77]

In 1733 Augustus II had died, setting off a leadership contest in the *Sejm* where the two main contestants were Stanisław Leszczyński, who had previously been deposed by the Russians, and Augustus' son Frederick Augustus, the new elector of Saxony. Soon afterwards Leszczyński was elected king for the second time, Russia sent a military force of 30,000 men into the Commonwealth, and due to this intimidation Leszczyński fled the

---

[76] Paul Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 12.
[77] L. R. Lewitter, "Poland Under the Saxon Kings," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Vol. VII,* ed. J.O. Lindsay (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957), p. 388.

country. Subsequently Frederick Augustus was elected as King of Poland mostly by the clients of Lithuanian magnates, whose estates and privileges might have been endangered if they displeased the Russian Empress Anna.[78] These events set off the War of the Polish Succession, which extended for five years and pitted an Austro-Russian-Saxon alliance against French troops aiming for the restoration of Leszczyński, and at its conclusion Russian dominance over the Commonwealth was confirmed.

The Role of Wettin-Habsburg Dynastic Ties

Though Russian patronage was an important factor in ensuring the Commonwealth's survival until the first partition, even here the role of dynastic ties cannot be underestimated. A close dynastic kinship tie connected the ruling Wettin dynasty of Saxony and the Habsburg dynasty, for Augustus III was married to the Austrian archduchess Maria Josepha, daughter of Emperor Joseph I, elder sister of Maria Amalia (spouse of Charles Albert) and first cousin of Maria Theresa. An additional tie connected these two dynasties, as Maria Theresa's second surviving daughter, Maria Christina, was also married to Albert Casimir, a younger son of Augustus III. Analogously to the case of the War of the Austrian Succession, we would expect a dynastic tie of at least this strength to lead to the operation of deterrence effects to a measurable extent.

---

[78] J. H. Shennan, *International Relations in Europe, 1689-1789* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 38-9; Lewitter, "Poland Under the Saxon Kings," p. 380.
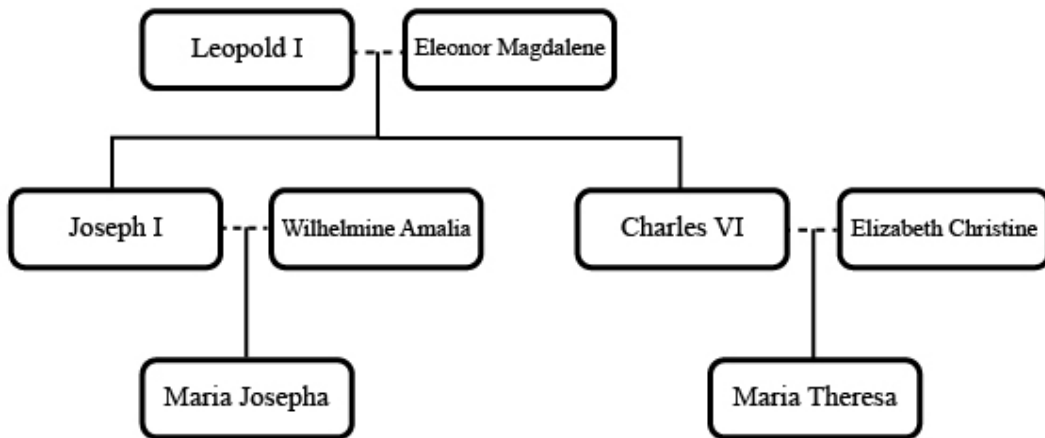
Table 5: The Dynastic Ties Between Maria Josepha and Maria Theresa

It is difficult to isolate the separate impact of the dynastic tie on Polish survival, due to the fact that Russian patronage was also protecting the Commonwealth from conquest during its period of dependency, and this rendered survival an overdetermined outcome. However, we can infer the deterrent strength of the dynastic tie compared with Russian patronage, as the Polish throne ceased to be held by the Wettin dynasty after Empress Catherine of Russia and Frederick II jointly engineered the election of Stanisław August Poniatowski to the Polish-Lithuanian throne after the death of Augustus III in 1763.

By this logic, we would expect that if Maria Theresa were to acquiesce to the violation of Polish-Lithuanian sovereignty, it would most likely occur after the Wettins no longer held the Polish-Lithuanian crown, when the Wettin-Habsburg dynastic tie was no longer active. As the new king Stanisław's family was of the Polish nobility and not tied by kinship to the Habsburgs, the Habsburgs would have no dynastic reasons to buttress the security of the Commonwealth under his rule. Indeed, the severe violation of

Polish-Lithuanian sovereignty in the form of the First Partition took place in 1772 after the accession of Stanisław II August, and Maria Theresa even participated, though with reluctance, in the territorial annexation. This shift in Maria Theresa's policy vis-à-vis the Commonwealth is well captured by Lewitter:

> Austria had no designs on Poland and, until Poniatowski's election, pursued the policy of counterbalancing the growing might of Prussia by supporting Poland's Saxon kings, to whom the Habsburgs were bound by dynastic ties. After 1764, Maria Theresa steered a middle course in the hope of maintaining the status quo; but Austria's occupation of Zips in 1769, though not inexcusable as a military precaution backed by a legal claim, announced her readiness to join in a partition and set an example that Catherine and Frederick were soon to follow.[79]

Viewing history through the dynastic lens allows us to explain an otherwise inexplicable fact, namely Maria Theresa's shift from a position protective of sovereignty in general, to one willing to acquiesce in its violation in the case of Poland-Lithuania. When we compare Maria Theresa's position vis-à-vis Saxony in the aftermath of the Seven Years War with her position with regards to the Commonwealth during the first partition, we see that in the first instance she was insistent on the restoration of Saxony to Augustus III (though Saxony was still partly occupied by the Prussian army) whereas she eventually acquiesced and even participated in the first partition of Poland-Lithuania.

Szabo notes that, in the concluding negotiations of the Seven Years War, the Habsburg Empress' secret instructions to her negotiator, Collenbach, "allowed him to relinquish Austrian claims to Glatz, and…posited the evacuation of Saxony and all other occupied territory as non-negotiable," and to emphasize her wishes with regard to Saxony, she "insisted that Saxony must be included as a formal signatory partner in the peace."[80] Though in the first case the Habsburg Empress certainly had good reason to

---

[79] L. R. Lewitter, "The Partitions of Poland: Part I," *History Today* 8, no. 12 (1958): p. 819.
[80] Franz Szabo, *The Seven Years War in Europe, 1756-1763* (London: Longman, 2008), pp. 421-2.

support restoration—as Frederick was her sworn rival and acquiescing to Prussian annexation of Saxony would dangerously destabilize the politics of the Empire—her acquiescence in the partition has always been considered somewhat puzzling given her overly moralistic worldview. It was all the more so because Austria had the most to lose from any partition, as it would weaken the Commonwealth (its traditional ally) and inevitably strengthen Prussia.[81]

However, if we refine the picture by noting that Maria Theresa's morality was one closely tethered to notions of dynastic honor, then her participation in the First Partition of Poland is no longer puzzling. The Habsburg Empress would most likely have been strictly opposed to any Polish partition during the lifetime of Augustus III, and might even have fought a war to prevent such an outcome. It was only with the accession of the dynastically unrelated Poniatowski to the Polish throne that a partition of Poland became imaginable for Maria Theresa.[82]

The Catalytic Role of Frederick

---

[81] Blanning, *Frederick the Great,* pp. 289.

[82] Another fact suggesting that dynastic ties imparted a measurable protective influence on a state is the urgency with which successive Polish-Lithuanian kings attempted to remake the Commonwealth from an elective monarchy to a hereditary one. Equally insistent was the opposition to such moves on the part of the Commonwealth's patrons. When Augustus III died in October of 1763 and his eldest son, Frederick Christian, had died only two months later, the Commonwealth had been plunged into crisis as the Poles were opposed to the notion of a regency for an infant foreign king. C. A. Macartney, *Maria Theresa and the House of Austria* (Mystic: Lawrence Verry, 1969), p. 140.

In these circumstances, as Butler and Maccoby note, "the Russian and Prussian courts in March 1764 made an…arrangement by which they ruled as out of the question the establishment of an hereditary and absolute monarchy…[which] would have put an end to foreign influence within the kingdom." Geoffrey Butler and Simon Maccoby, *The Development of International Law* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1928), p. 28. To be sure, hereditary monarchy was widely viewed as more stable than elective monarchy by *ancien régime* observers, but contemporary thought did not appreciate that stability was due partly to external factors such as dynastic ties as well as the internal dimension, and Polish-Lithuanian monarchs' preoccupation with reforming the elective monarchy could reflect an underlying awareness of the multiple advantages that hereditary succession offered for state security.

Nonetheless, the prime mover in instigating the partitions must be acknowledged to have been Frederick. The role of the dynastic shift with the 1764 election of Stanisław II August and the subsequent actions of Austria in occupying the area of Zips, were both permissive factors that signaled to Frederick that propitious conditions for attempting to acquire parts of Poland-Lithuania had arrived.

The Austrian occupation of Polish territory was initiated by accident. Poniatowski had in February 1769 asked the Austrians to occupy the Zips province, where some of his opponents had taken refuge. The Austrians agreed to this, though they noted that Zips was technically Hungarian territory pledged to Poland in 1412, and since then under Polish administration. Kaunitz had, in agreeing to Poniatowski's request, assured diplomats in Vienna that Austria had no intention of infringing Poland's occupational rights in the province.[83] However, in October 1769, a Hungarian bureaucrat, Joseph Török, concluded—intentionally or unintentionally—that Polish settlers had surreptitiously shifted the frontier, and recommended to Kaunitz that Austria could reclaim its former territory without threat of military confrontation.[84]

Though Kaunitz was not initially enthusiastic, Maria Theresa's son Joseph was amenable to reclaiming the 'lost' Hungarian land, and the Austrians began to push approximately twenty miles into the border in July of 1770, an action officially approved shortly thereafter by Maria Theresa, Joseph and the *Staatsrat*.[85] The basis of the

---

[83] Macartney, *Maria Theresa and the House of Austria,* p. 142.
[84] Jerzy Lukowski, *The Partitions of Poland 1772, 1793, 1795* (London: Longman, 1999), p. 57.
[85] Ibid., p. 57-8.

Habsburg claim to Zips was problematic, but the process of occupation created its own dynamic, and in the same year three more districts were occupied.[86]

This occupation created the pretext for Frederick II to float the notion of a partition of Poland-Lithuania to Catherine via her representative Count Solms in St Petersburg. Frederick had long held the hope of annexing a part of Polish territory—the part separating Pomerania from East Prussia—which would create an unbroken block of territory and allow Prussia to control Polish trade down the Vistula River.[87] The letter sent by Frederick was soon reciprocated by Catherine, who had until then held to the traditional Russian policy of undivided influence over the Commonwealth rather than partitioning its territory.[88] She had learnt of the Austrian occupation of Zips, and replied to Frederick (via the Prussian diplomat, Prince Henry), that the other powers should take some territory for themselves.[89]

Agreement in principle had been reached between Frederick and Catherine, and it would now be difficult for Austria to stand in the way. A clumsy intervention in the face of the united front of Prussia and Russia, namely Maria Theresa's assurance to the Prussian ambassador at Vienna in 1771 that she would never allow Austria to go to war, took matters beyond the point of no-return.[90] Soon thereafter a preliminary agreement on partition had been signed by Frederick and Catherine, and despite the vigorous opposition of Maria Theresa, the outcome was sealed when her son Joseph and trusted advisor

---

[86] L. R. Lewitter, "The Partitions of Poland," in *The New Cambridge Modern History Vol. VIII,* ed. Elliot Goodwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), p. 338.
[87] Blanning, *Frederick the Great,* pp. 286-7.
[88] Lewitter, "The Partitions of Poland," p. 338.
[89] Blanning, *Frederick the Great,* p. 291.
[90] Ibid., p. 292. Whether intended or unintended, this signaled to Prussia and Russia a decreased commitment of Austria to guaranteeing the security of Poland-Lithuania.

Kaunitz stated their agreement with the need for partition.[91] It is recounted that for Maria Theresa, realizing that her son had been won over to Frederick's unabashed *realpolitik* methods "made her sick with shame."[92]

If we view the preferences of the three key monarchs involved in the Polish Partition—Frederick II, Catherine of Russia and Maria Theresa—it is clear that Frederick was the most strongly desirous of the partition. This is based on the fact that he had already recorded his wish to acquire Polish Prussia in his Political Testament of 1752.[93] The Empress Catherine had been largely content to retain Russian suzerainty over the Commonwealth before being brought round by Frederick to seeing the advantages of partition, and Maria Theresa was generally opposed to partition, though her policy shifted from one of violent resistance to unwilling acquiescence. This signifies the significant role played by Frederick in catalyzing the First Partition.

---

[91] Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848,* p. 16.
[92] Edward Crankshaw, *Maria Theresa* (New York: The Viking Press, 1969), p. 283. This signified a break in the steadfastly dynastic orientation of Habsburg foreign policy, and it would be Joseph II who would represent this break.
[93] Frederick II, "Political Testament (1752)," p. 343.

Map 3: The Partitions of Poland, from Ward et al., (1924).
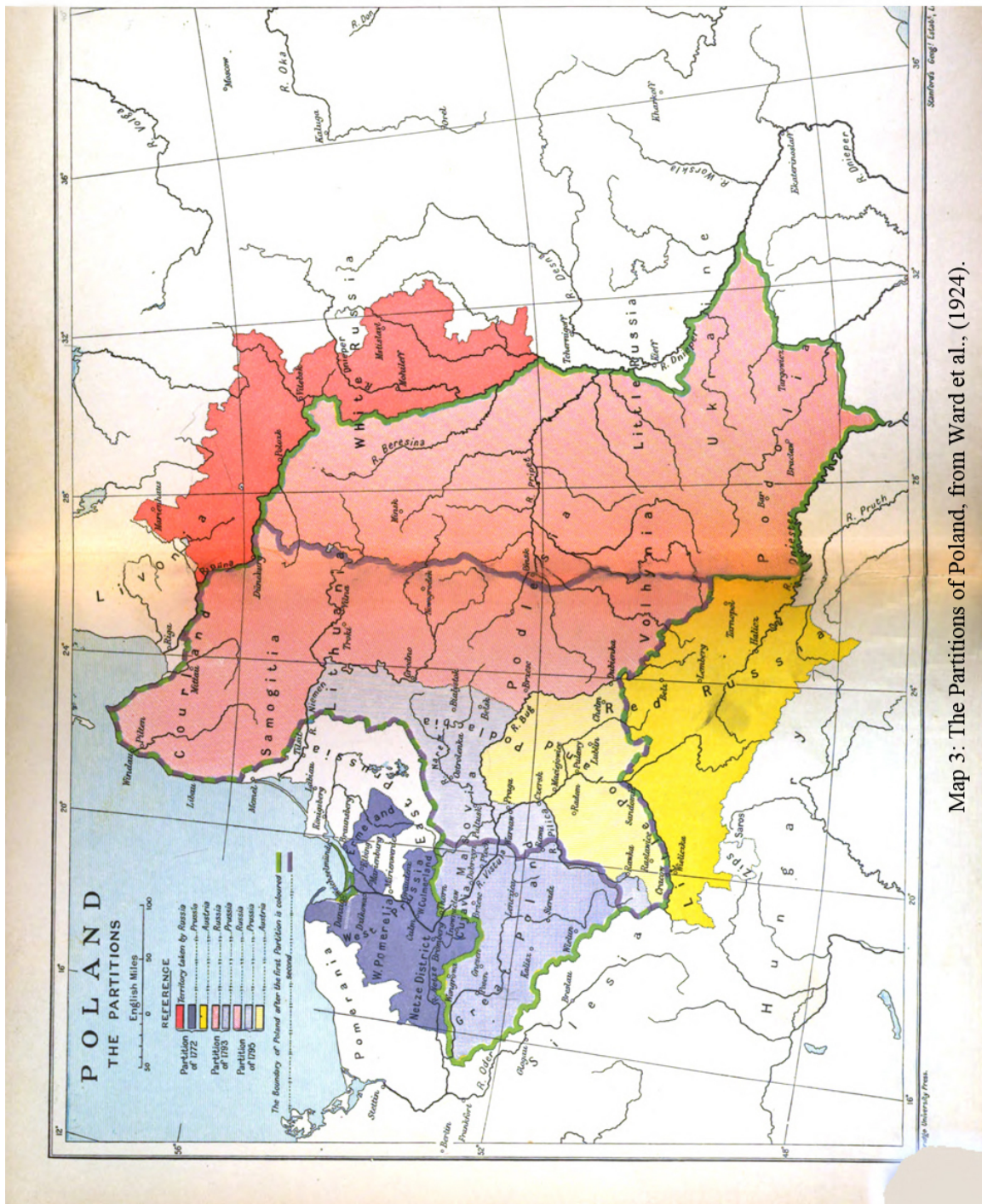
Causes and Alternative Explanations

Though the Austrian occupation of Zips in 1769 was likely not meant to presage a full-blown annexation effort on the part of Austria, it nonetheless signaled to Frederick and Catherine that Maria Theresa (or her son Joseph) might be amenable to such an annexation. Such a conclusion would, however, probably not have been drawn by them if the Commonwealth's crown was still held by a close dynastic ally of the Habsburgs. Thus, the dynastic mechanism operated by both weakening Maria Theresa's implacable opposition to a partition, and also signaling to Frederick and Catherine that the dynastic tie between the Habsburgs and the Commonwealth had been broken and thus the security of the latter was especially vulnerable. But the dynastic shift in the Commonwealth (breaking the dynastic alliance between the Habsburgs and Wettins) and the willingness of Catherine to change the Russian policy of Polish suzerainty were merely permissive factors that removed the barriers to partition. The insistent goal of Frederick II to acquire Polish territory for Prussia was the critical driver and efficient cause of the first partition.

The principal role given to the balance of power as an *explanans* by some authors, therefore, cannot be seen as more than a background factor, as too much of the *explanandum* would remain unexplained. The imperative of 'balancing' can at best explain the manner in which the partition was executed, and the final apportionment of territory between the three powers, (i.e. the relative parity of gains). But the initial decision to pursue partition by Frederick and the timing of his moves cannot be sufficiently explained by the balance of power alone. Though balancing imperatives should have driven the formation of a Prussia-Austria front against Russia (given that

260

Russia had gained some major victories in the Russo-Turkish war and looked set to

expand their territory significantly), nonetheless such an alliance never emerged. As

Schroeder has noted, there existed a fundamental divergence in what Prussia and Austria

took a desirable balance to be: "[f]or Prussia it meant equality with Austria, for Austria

superiority over Prussia."[94] With such a divergence in perceptions, it was difficult for

Prussia and Austria to form the proposed temporary alliance[95] to prevent Russian

westward expansion, a move that might have prevented the partitions from taking place.

This is another way of saying that the prescriptions of balance of power theory are

often indeterminate, and rarely in early modern history did so-called balancing

imperatives lead states to draw up an agreement to partition another intermediate state as

a means to create or maintain the balance. It should also be remembered that there were

other strategies besides balancing, such as hiding, transcending and hedging, that were

sometimes employed during the early modern period and which these rulers might have

deployed when dealing with the problem of Poland-Lithuania.[96] Neither does the fact that

the rhetoric of the balance of power was employed by two of the three monarchs to

explain their actions prove more than the prevalent use of the 'balancing' trope to justify

foreign policies in the late eighteenth century. The concept of the balance had been

circulating widely since at least the late eighteenth century, but the degree to which it

actually drove decision-making in a world still strongly driven by dynastic imperatives, is

open to question. Now it was explicitly being claimed as the driver, but the acquisitive

---

[94] Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848,* p. 14.
[95] Frederick and Joseph II met in 1769 to discuss the possibility of joint action against Russia, and a temporary Austro-Russian alliance. These discussions would prove abortive. See Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848,* p. 13.
[96] On this point, see Paul Schroeder, "Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realist Theory," *International Security,* 19 no. 1 (1994): pp. 108-148.

impulse of the Prussian ruler was still to a large extent responsible for the device of territorial apportionment being accepted as a fair exchange for a curtailment of Russian suzerainty over Poland-Lithuania, and Habsburg hegemony over the Empire.[97]

In any case, the Treaty of Partition finally agreed upon by the three powers at St Petersburg on 5 August 1772, ostensibly due to the fact that Polish anarchy threatened the European peace,[98] left Russia with the largest share of territory, with 92,000 square kilometers, Austria with a slightly smaller portion (with 83,000 square kilometers), and Prussia with a smaller but strategically important share of Polish or West Prussia, (with 36,000 square kilometers).[99]

The manner in which Poland was divided up by the three powers, though unsurprising given the essentially defenseless state into which Poland-Lithuania had sunk since the restoration of Augustus II, was nonetheless shocking for Europe due to the way in which the partition broke with the existing custom of at least paying lip-service to dynastic claims when acquiring territory, and having taken place during the reign of a sitting king rather coinciding with a succession crisis. Wheaton in 1844 called the partition "the most flagrant violation of natural justice and international law which has occurred since Europe first emerged from barbarism,"[100] and Schroeder writes that, "Poland was…not even treated like a European state, but like colonial territory."[101]

---

[97] As was recognized by Vergennes in 1774, the use of the balance of power to justify the partition was a "perversion of the principle…[and was] based on the equality of their usurpations." Count of Vergennes in Lewitter, "The Partitions of Poland," p. 335. Similarly, it has been noted that the application of the balance of power to the Polish partition was a misnomer, as it confused "the equitability of the action with the equality of shares." Lewitter, "The Partitions of Poland," p. 335.

[98] Sharon Korman, *The Right of Conquest* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 75.

[99] Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848,* p. 17.

[100] Henry Wheaton, *History of the Law of Nations in Europe and America* (New York: Gould Banks & Co., 1845), p. 269.

[101] Schroeder, *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848,* p. 18.

The Second and Third Partitions

With the first partition complete, having been forced through the Polish-Lithuanian Diet with well-timed intimidation from Russian soldiers, the Poles attempted to create a more viable state and to this end they embarked on a program of reform. This period has been called "a burst of intense intellectual activity unequalled since the sixteenth century."[102] These reforms in the cultural and educational sphere, culminated in the 'Great Sejm' of 1788-1792, which built on the centralization measures of the preceding years and passed a new constitution on May 3, 1791. The most important of the changes wrought by the constitution were the abolition of the elective monarchy and the unanimity principle for passing legislation in the *Sejm,* as well as the establishment of the king as a hereditary and constitutional monarch.[103] These were the beginnings of the reforms necessary for strengthening the monarch and state, lifting it from the wholly weakened circumstances into which it had fallen. However, the budding renaissance of the Commonwealth was not to flower, and was soon trampled on by Catherine, who ordered Russian troops into Poland in 1793 to lend support to the reactionary segment of the nobility—the Targowica Confederacy—who were implacably opposed to the new constitution.

Though the structural opportunity for Catherine to act had been provided by a realignment of forces in Germany in 1790, with the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold II expressing his willingness to negotiate with the Turks and leaving Prussia unwilling to

---

[102] Lewitter, "The Partitions of Poland," p. 341.
[103] L. R. Lewitter, "The Partitions of Poland: Part II," *History Today* 9, no. 1 (1959): p. 32.

honor its alliance obligations to Poland,[104] the main catalyst for the partition is commonly

accepted to have been the threat posed by the nascent indigenous Polish reforms to

Russia's suzerainty in what remained of the country. The floodgates had been opened

with the first groundbreaking partition of Poland in 1772, and after the Commonwealth's

troops were overwhelmed in the Russian invasion of 1793, (meant to put a stop to the

reform process), Catherine soon opted to pursue another partition, with Prussia to be

compensated with a share of the territorial spoils.[105] It is noteworthy here that Catherine

ruled a state that had been only loosely integrated into the European system even at the

beginning of the eighteenth century, and in this sense it may have been that Catherine,

just as Frederick, was less constrained by the conservative norms of dynasticism due to

the structural location of Russia both inside and outside the European dynastic system.

The second partition was signed on 23 January 1793, and Poland was left a small area of

land under Russian protection, and the previous reforms resulting from the Great Sejm

were revoked. The partition was justified as having been necessary to thwart

revolution.[106]

In the aftermath of the first and second partitions, an insurrection rapidly began in

1794 led by General Tadeusz Kościuszko, who in the wake of the French Revolution had

hoped that an uprising of peasants would bring about a national awakening and liberate

the remnant of the Commonwealth from Russian and Prussian domination.[107] The

uprising, which drew its strongest support from the citizens of Warsaw, was doomed to

fail from the start, given the overwhelming advantage of force enjoyed by the Russians.

---

[104] Ibid., p. 34.
[105] Lukowski, *The Partitions of Poland 1772, 1793, 1795,* p. 151.
[106] Lewitter, "The Partitions of Poland," p. 353.
[107] Lewitter, "The Partitions of Poland: Part II," p. 38.

Though his forces fought valiantly and managed to mobilize an unexpectedly large number of men, Kościuszko was roundly defeated by Russia at the Battle of Maciejowice, and Catherine had decided in favor of a complete abolition of the Polish Kingdom and partition of the rump of its remaining territory. Being in the ascendant, Catherine dictated the terms of the partition to the Austrians, and the Prussians had no choice but to agree to terms. The final partition treaty was signed in St Petersburg on 24 October 1795, and on this day, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was permanently erased from the political map.[108]

It would only be resurrected in a renovated form in the aftermath of World War I. The decisive break that the partition and extinction of Poland-Lithuania represented both for the meaning of the balance of power and for Europe more generally, is well captured by the contemporary observer Friedrich von Gentz when he wrote of the partitions:

> [T]he division of Poland was the first event which by an *abuse of form* deranged the political balance of Europe, it was likewise one of the first which begot an *apathy of spirit,* and stupid insensibility to the general interest. The silence of France and England, the silence of all Europe, when a measure of so much importance was planned and executed, is almost as astonishing as the event itself.[109]

Though the partitions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth have been seen to be the inevitable consequence of state failure brought about by an inability of the monarchy to institute reforms to centralize authority against the powerful nobility, or a natural response of powerful regional rulers to shifting balance of power considerations, a more nuanced view is necessary. The dynastic context and weakness of the pure type elective monarchy was an important permissive factor that allowed the partitions to take place, especially after the election of Stanisław II August, a ruler without strong dynastic

---

[108] Lukowski, *The Partitions of Poland 1772, 1793, 1795,* pp. 175-9.
[109] Friedrich von Gentz, *Fragments upon the Balance of Power in Europe* (London: M. Peltier, 1808), pp. 89-90.

ties to any of the Commonwealth's traditional allies. This context significantly weakened the Habsburg commitment to provide military support for the defense of its longtime dynastic ally. In addition, Frederick II and his single-minded pursuit of territorial aggrandizement for Prussia to the exclusion of other considerations—an obsession that was initially out of step with dynastic practice but which eventually influenced many European rulers around him—was an important efficient factor driving the first partition. The first partition essentially created a vicious cycle where the negative precedent set at the outset was almost certain to be repeated. The first partition represented an important development where dynastic claims were not deployed even as a pretext to legitimize princely ambition. This departure from existing practice would prove to have destabilizing consequences in Europe, particularly when combined with the valorization of Frederick as a model for late eighteenth century rulers and the even more radical changes brought about by the French Revolution.

The Dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire

We now turn to the last late-survival composite polity within the purview of our study—the Holy Roman Empire—and examine its dissolution during the Napoleonic Wars. In the preceding pages, we saw that the dissolution of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was brought about by an interaction of two factors: the permissive factor of change in dynastic ties between the Commonwealth and one of its traditional allies, the Habsburg dynasty; and the efficient factor of the intervention of a non-dynastically oriented ruler—Frederick II—with no scruples for pursuing naked territorial

266

aggrandizement without constraint from dynastic norms. Though the factors that led to the dissolution of Poland-Lithuania were specific to it, we should note that in contrast many of the causes of the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire were not specific but general factors insofar as similar causes led to the defeat of many other *ancien régime* states during the Napoleonic Wars. Nonetheless we shall foreground the way in which they interacted with the particular circumstances of the Holy Roman Empire during the period leading to its demise.

The impact of Frederick II and the diffusion of his ideas about the goals of warfare, as well as the learning this induced in other monarchic leaders that followed him, would prove to play an important role in creating the conditions in which the wholesale conquest of states (including composite states) would become possible during the Napoleonic era.[110] The breakdown in the norms that constrained *ancien régime* warfare and limited conquest largely to the colonial world, would take place due to a number of factors, among them the destabilization of the *ancien régime* dynastic system that first took place in France with the French Revolution, and the opening this gave for a genuinely non-dynastic leader to take the reins of the nascent French Republic.

The Spread of Militarism

Though an analysis of the French Revolution is beyond the scope of this dissertation, nonetheless we will elaborate in skeletal form the way in which some of the

[110] Leadership learning in earlier times tended to be confined to within dynastic lineages when the means of cultural diffusion were not highly developed. However, the informational environment available to leaders changed significantly during the eighteenth century with the formation of a salon culture, a development that made possible the diffusion of information and ideas on a continental and even trans-continental scale with great rapidity. On the salon culture, see Mlada Bukovansky, *Legitimacy and Power Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp. 95-8.

innovations that Napoleon adopted were anticipated by developments in France predating

the revolution, and how these developments converged with the loosening of dynastic

norms brought by the revolution itself. It would be the space opened up by this

concatenation of events, as well as the emergence of the first strong non-dynastic leader

in Europe, that would catch monarchic leaders off-guard and give Napoleon a decisive

advantage in waging war while not being bound by the same self-imposed rules as were

his adversaries. It would ultimately be the inability of *ancien régime* monarchic rulers to

adapt to the new goals of war pursued by Napoleon, that would doom many of them—

including the Holy Roman Empire—to military defeat and subjugation.

Certain developments in France prior to the Revolution suggest that things were

moving in the direction of an emphasized role for national consciousness and militarism

regardless of the outcome of the Revolution. As Anderson notes, even before the

revolution took place:

> Already the feeling that national unity was an ultimate value and the belief that all
> Frenchmen were, or ought to be, bound together in some common citizenship, ideas to
> which the Revolution was to give an immense impetus, were rapidly gaining ground.
> France was becoming a *nation* or a *patrie* and ceasing to be a mere *royaume*.[111]

Similarly, Paret has written that: "The French Revolution coincided with a

revolution in war that had been under way through the last decades of the monarchy."[112]

This 'revolution' in war was, in broad strokes, one where the goals of war were to be

determined not by dynastic claims but by goals oriented toward the good of the state, and

together with this shift in focus there came an increasing tendency to emphasize the

---

[111] Anderson, *War and Society in Europe of the Old Regime 1618-1789,* pp. 200-201.
[112] Peter Paret, "Napoleon and the Revolution in War," in *Makers of Modern Strategy, ed.* Peter Paret
(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 124.

military over other institutions and extol it as an paragon for political development more broadly.

This tendency was taken to its furthest development in Prussia and Russia, (especially in the former), and Frederick II was a pivotal figure in not only propelling the evolution of the Prussian military, but also in reorganizing Prussia as a military-centric society. The widespread admiration of Prussia common at the time, and what was seen as its astonishing elevation to great power status during the second-half of the eighteenth century, meant that the approach of Frederick and its lessons—along with his disregard for dynastic norms and practices—would be widely diffused among political and military elites of the time.[113]

Though the increasing diffusion of such a militaristic vision during the late eighteenth century suggests that an ongoing weakening of dynastic forces was likely even without the Revolution, the ideological ferment brought on by the revolution (and congealing in the principle of nationalism) did not immediately replace the earlier contradiction between the dynastic system of the *ancien régime* and the raison d'état principle of power politics. This can be seen from the fact that dynastic competition would insinuate itself even into the wars that Napoleon waged against his monarchic rivals, as these wars were at least peripherally concerned with winning dynastic recognition for Napoleon and his family from his monarchical rivals. Furthermore, many of the states established after 1815 were dynastic in structure and resembled the *ancien régime* polities in terms of their internal religious and linguistic diversity.[114]

---

[113] Anderson, *War and Society in Europe of the Old Regime 1618-1789,* pp. 167-171.
[114] Jeremy Black, *Kings, Nobles and Commoners* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), p. 70.

The sociologically complex and diverse polity of the *ancien régime* factually survived the revolutionary era, even if the rhetoric of nationalism would gain increasing traction during the nineteenth century. Nor was it preordained that a leader like Napoleon would emerge to propel the Revolution in the direction of a continental war of conquest—in the process laying to waste the *ancien régime* system. The gap between Napoleon and the ablest of his colleagues in terms of the sheer will to dominate and destroy enemies, meant that had Napoleon somehow been killed or captured before France embarked on its path to continent wide warfare, the direction of French development would most likely have been significantly different. In such an event, some remnants of the *ancien régime* system might even have survived, as France would probably have had no choice but to aim for some kind of accommodation with the existing order rather than aiming to dominate and annihilate it entirely.[115]

Nonetheless, it is difficult to interpret history solely as the tale of what might have been. In actuality, the gradual decline of dynastic claims as the main axis of political competition—due to the precariousness of acquiring territory solely via inheritance—meant that undisguised territorial aggrandizement shorn of dynastic justifications, as well as the balance of power (even if it functioned at the time more as ideology than as reality), continued to gain a foothold throughout the latter half of the eighteenth century due to the audacity of Frederick II and others who followed in his footsteps, such as Joseph II. It was in this milieu of an emerging acceptance of power politics accompanied by a degree of ambivalence about its appropriateness, that the rulers of the *ancien régime*

---

[115] Paret, "Napoleon and the Revolution in War," p. 126.

were confronted with the military threat of Revolutionary France and the 'war of peoples against kings' that some of its ideologues had been advocating.[116]

The Dissolution of the Franco-Austrian Dynastic Alliance

The alliance between Bourbon France and Habsburg Austria made possible by the 'diplomatic revolution' of 1756 had been an important anchor for Habsburg foreign policy in the succeeding years, and this alliance was challenged by the opening years of the French Revolution, when the French monarchy was marginalized and then imprisoned by the Constituent Assembly. Though it has been rightly argued that this alliance exacerbated the emerging tension between the Austrians and the revolutionary regime in France, the manner in which it did so should be correctly understood.[117]

The Franco-Austrian alliance had been reinforced by dynastic marriage ties between the Bourbons and Habsburgs, most notably the union between Louis XIV and the Archduchess Marie Antoinette. Thus, when the Bourbon monarchy was in danger of being overthrown by the Revolution, the Habsburgs perceived the Revolutionary government as a threat, and as essentially illegitimate. In other words, the strategic interaction emerging between the two countries was actually played out between three parties: the Habsburg and Bourbon Courts—both allied, and the National Constituent Assembly, which was antagonistic to both of these monarchies. This was a situation similar in some ways to the legitimacy conflict that surrounded the two Vasa branches during the first decades of the seventeenth century, and which made their interaction

---

[116] McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815,* p. 280.
[117] Blanning, for instance, does not quite capture the complexity of the interaction between the monarchical forces and the republican government in his account of the origins of the wars if the 1790s. See, Tim Blanning, *The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars* (London: Longman, 1986), Chapter 2.

more volatile. The escalating estrangement between the Constituent Assembly and the two allied monarchies would provide the context in which republican France and dynastic Austria would drift closer to war. In this game, escalating coercive actions taken by the Assembly against the French royal family would mark critical junctures when the Austrian Habsburgs would be left with no choice but to come to the aid of their monarchical brethren.[118]

The Declaration of Pillnitz of 27 August 1791, made jointly by Emperor Leopold II and the King of Prussia, was a toothless but symbolic expression of solidarity with the French king, and though its call for action on behalf of the French monarchy was not heeded by the other dynastic monarchs, nonetheless it gave fuel to French fears that monarchical intervention to quash the revolution was close at hand.[119] There was an element of the security dilemma in all this, and as has been noted Pillnitz exemplified a growing gap between French and Austrian perceptions, a gap that would have explosive consequences, with the French coming to believe a counter-revolutionary attack was imminent, and Austria believing that France could be coerced into making concessions.[120] The monarchical leaders in turn were divided in how they felt they should respond to the threat from the French Revolution. Some were preoccupied with more pressing concerns in their sphere of influence, such as Catherine and Russia's concerns in Poland-Lithuania and the Ottoman Empire. Others, such as Britain, were relatively

---

[118] As Blanning notes, it is difficult to imagine Austria taking decisive steps to threaten France "if their hand had not been forced by the abortive escape-plan of the French royal family" and the subsequent retaliation to their attempted flight. Blanning, *The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars,* p. 86.
[119] McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815,* pp. 277-8. Though the declaration exemplified the inability of European monarchs to act in concert to defend their interests against the forces of anti-monarchy, it does capture the thin sense of solidarity that bound together the monarchical order as a whole in the face of republicanism.
[120] Ibid., p. 278.

indifferent until the more radical course taken by the Revolution in 1792 threatened them directly.[121] In any case, the situation remained tense but calm until the death of the Emperor Leopold II and accession of Francis II, which brought a significantly more bellicose cohort of advisors to power in Vienna, eclipsing the moderate voices of the old guard such as Kaunitz.[122] Given the Franco-Austrian alliance was one of the main sources of regional stability in the pre-revolutionary period, it would be symptomatic that when war broke out in April of 1792—with France declaring war on Austria—it would be between France and the Habsburgs, and that their enmity would drive the emerging bifurcation between France and Europe.

In the origins of the War of 1792, then, was the central dynamic that would accelerate during the evolution of the Revolutionary Wars of the 1790s into the Napoleonic wars of the next decade. The motives behind the declaration of war on the French side were a departure from the limited territorial goals of *ancien régime* warfare. The Legislative Assembly had come under the sway of the Brissotin faction, and fears of counter-revolution (fed by deep suspicion regarding the motives of Louis XVI and the Austrian Court) led the Assembly to effectively rule out compromise with any monarchic regime, including that of Austria. The die had been cast, and the coming war would be fought for the sake of preserving the Constitution and national sovereignty.[123] The ambivalence that other monarchical rulers felt towards the French Revolution was soon obviated by the evolution of the Franco-Austrian war and the first successes of the French army in the Rhineland and the Austrian Netherlands, as well as the more radical direction

---

[121] Ibid., p. 277, 282.
[122] Ibid., p. 279.
[123] Blanning, *The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars,* Chapter 4.

taken by the revolution after the execution of Louis XVI in January of 1793. France had declared war on Britain, Holland and Spain by March of 1793, and the unfolding of radical intentions by the revolutionaries to export their anti-monarchical system to all peoples who wished also to overthrow their oppressive regimes showed European monarchs that they would have to defeat the French Revolution. [124]

---

[124] McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815,* pp. 281-283.

Map 4: Territorial Changes of the Austrian Empire 1648-1795, from Ward et al., (1924).
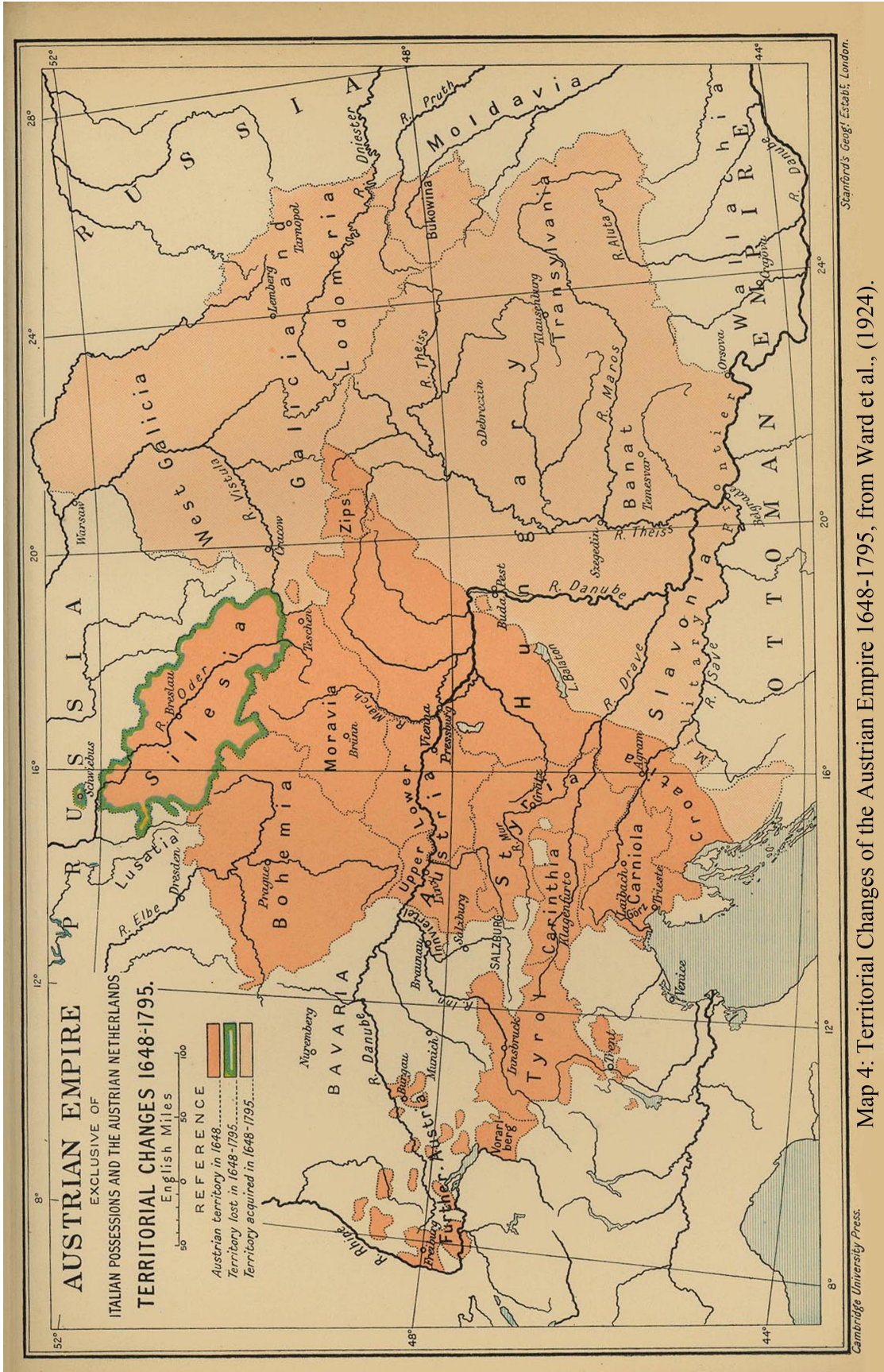
Ancien Régime Goals versus Napoleonic Goals

Though it is not our intention to provide a narrative account of the waves of military combat that convulsed the continent until the point where the Holy Roman Empire faced its final defeat, we should note the way in which the goals of the monarchical powers were still structured by the system of warfare that had developed prior to the revolution, namely as limited wars for territorial gain. Even the partition of Poland-Lithuania took place in stages such that the revolutionary nature and scandalous fact of the extinction of its sovereignty was felt with less force than might have been the case had the three partitions been condensed into a single moment. The disjuncture between the conservative goals formulated by the *ancien régime* and the far more radical goals formulated by the military leaders of the Revolution, was explicable given the general disdain of dynastic rulers for absolute wars in general and wars of conquest in particular, and yet this cautiousness would fatally undermine the ability of dynastic rulers to co-ordinate with each other to decisively defeat Revolutionary France.

For instance, Prussia as well as Russia became distracted in a competition to maneuver into a favorable position in anticipation of the final partition of Poland, and Britain became distracted in an effort to gain colonial territory from France. As McKay and Scott note, the belief on the part of the monarchic leaders that defeating the Revolution would not be overly difficult, led them to separately formulate their own "territorial objectives in the war against France, and these came to be more vigorously pursued than the aim of defeating the Revolution."[125] More fundamentally, the monarchic leaders were deeply ambivalent about whether they should appease the French

---

[125] McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815,* pp. 284-5.

revolutionary government, fight it in a series of wars for limited gains or fight it in a war of ultimate victory. This lack of clarity, undoubtedly conditioned by the fact that fighting a war of conquest was difficult to conceive for these rulers given the existing constraints of *ancien régime* warfare, would continue to make coordination difficult for the monarchies during the wars fought against revolutionary France.

On the other hand, while the *ancien régime* rulers became distracted and lacked coordination due to the disparate goals they hoped for in the war against France, the French forces would soon start to formulate an approach to warfare that was not only organizationally all-enveloping—due to the *levée en masse* (or universal conscription) which allowed them to draw on far greater reserves of manpower for their war effort— but was also totalizing in terms of its goals. The final stage of evolution of these changes took place under the leadership of Napoleon Bonaparte, who would draw upon the strategic ideas developed by dynastic leaders enamored of *realpolitik* views—most notably Frederick II—and concentrate them still further by conceiving of war as aimed toward the realization of a project of continental empire.

Napoleon had clearly studied the wars of Frederick, and was strongly influenced by the Prussian leader in his own philosophy of war. Frederick was an influence insofar as he condemned the wars of position and territorial aggrandizement typical of dynastic warfare, and instead advocated fighting war with the aim of forcing a swift and decisive outcome.[126] Napoleon would also adopt an approach deeply resistant to the dynastic warfare characteristic of the eighteenth century, and he would conclude in a striking

---

[126] David Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon* (New York: Scribner, 1966), pp. 492-494.

repudiation of existing conventions, that: "In war all that is useful is legitimate."[127]

Chandler characterizes Napoleon's overall philosophy of war in the following way:

> Once a state of hostilities existed between France and another power—whether war was formally declared or not was a matter of minor significance—the Emperor set out without delay or hesitation to destroy the enemy's field forces by all available means and thus break the national will to resist (or so he hoped). The means to the end were the shortest and sharpest methods available; all other considerations were to be considered secondary.[128]

The grand military goals of Napoleon were akin to those of Frederick, but Frederick was limited in the social technologies at his disposal to destroy his enemies, as the radical social transformations brought about by the Revolution were yet to come and did not allow him to, for instance, build military highways in Europe to enhance mobility by using massive manpower.[129] Thus Frederick's strategic imagination was limited by the dynastic paradigm whereas Napoleon was free to conceive of strategic possibilities on a far grander scale. The major territorial acquisitions of Frederick—Silesia (during wartime) and Poland-Lithuania (through negotiated partition)—were still relatively restricted, whereas Napoleon was able to pacify much of Europe due to the vastly greater destructive capabilities of his marauding armies.

However, the differences of strategic vision between Frederick and Napoleon were not solely due to the different military technologies each had access to, for despite his overall non-dynastic orientation, Frederick was nonetheless a leader raised in a dynastic milieu who remained tethered, *in extremis,* by a grudging acceptance of the dynastic system. In contrast, Napoleon was truly a product of the first European state to tear itself from the dynastic fabric that held together the aristocratic society of the old

---

[127] Napoleon, in Chandler, *The Campaigns of Napoleon,* p. 494.
[128] Ibid., p. 491.
[129] Gerhard Ritter, "Frederician Warfare," in *Frederick the Great: A profile,* ed. Peter Paret (London: Macmillan, 1972), p. 108.

regime, and he accordingly was able to think outside of its usual constraints. This point is well captured by Schroeder when he describes Napoleon metaphorically as the 'leader of a criminal enterprise' insofar as he was rapacious in his urge for constant expansion while lacking a positive normative vision (similar to criminal behavior's general lack of normative content), and seemingly without "any final aim or coherent overarching scheme of empire behind his imperialism."[130] Similarly, Lynn writes that "Napoleon had no clear conception of a peaceful and stable Europe, so he had no long-range policy at all."[131]

With such a thoroughgoing opportunist at the helm, it would prove difficult for other European leaders to arrive at stable compromises, and for this reason Schroeder argues that efforts to accommodate Napoleon (as other European rulers repeatedly attempted), were soon undermined by the constant state of insecurity engendered by Napoleon's policy. Any peace concluded with Napoleonic France was bound to fail. The wars, then, that Napoleon prosecuted would be qualitatively different from those of the *ancien régime*, as they would draw on and synthesize a society that had thrown off the yoke of the old aristocratic order, and were led by a ruler who was not himself a dynast and thus un-tethered by its rules and constraints. As Ferrero has noted of the transformation brought about by the Napoleonic Wars:

> Restricted warfare was one of the loftiest achievements of the eighteenth century. It belongs to the class of hot-house plants which can only thrive in an aristocratic and qualitative civilization. We are no longer capable of it. It is one of the fine things which we have lost as a result of the French Revolution.[132]

---

[130] Paul Schroeder, "Napoleon's Foreign Policy: A Criminal Enterprise," *The Journal of Military History* 54, no. 2 (1990): p. 155.

[131] John Lynn, "International Rivalry and Warfare," in *The Eighteenth Century,* ed. Tim Blanning (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 209.

[132] Guglielmo Ferrero, *Peace and War* (London: Macmillan, 1933), pp. 63-64.

Faced with the sociological changes that allowed France to mobilize greater resources for its war efforts as well as the unqualified opportunism of Napoleon, it was difficult for the monarchies to compete with Napoleon militarily, and perhaps sensing this, many of them attempted to appease Napoleonic France more than they resisted it. Schroeder, for instance, notes that "[b]etween 1800 and 1812 almost every government in Europe, and most statesmen in Europe, went much further in trying to appease Napoleon than Chamberlain did with Hitler."[133] The clash that characterized the chasm between the French Republic and the monarchies, was not one of two implacably opposed ideologies (as for instance capitalism versus communism) as much as it was the clash between a leader unconstrained by existing norms with a hunger to expand, and a system that held some forms of war as being legitimate forms of competition but took legitimately held sovereignty to be sacrosanct. The Napoleonic Wars, in other words, represented the clash between an expansionist non-dynastic leader, and a status quo system of interconnected dynasties desperately aiming to contain the spread of revolutionary ferment.

Historical Explanations for the Weakness of the Reich

In the face of a French army that was able to subjugate much that stood before it, we can see in hindsight that the Holy Roman Empire was in a similar position of weakness to that of the other monarchies. It would have been almost impossible, in the long run, to resist the irresistible onward march of the *grande armée.* Nonetheless, it was not the disparity in military power *per se* that endangered the monarchical regimes. For the emergence of an expansionist (or imperialistic) non-dynastic leader in a powerful

---

[133] Schroeder, "Napoleon's Foreign Policy," p. 152.

European country was the *sine qua non* for the dissolution not only of the Reich but also for the *ancien régime* system more generally. In this sense, the demise of the Holy Roman Empire is a special case of the failure of dynastic deterrence, the limit case of dynastic deterrence where a dynastic state is threatened by a non-dynastic state holding anti-dynastic goals.

This said, the efficient causes of the demise of individual old regime polities differed from case to case. For this reason, the specific factors underpinning the demise of the Holy Roman Empire are of more than passing interest. The standard explanations of the demise of the Empire have focused upon the following factors: modernization failure; centrifugal forces in the Empire; and an implacable rivalry between France and the Habsburgs. Each of these explanations have their limitations, but we should also add a final factor, the strategic decision of Francis II to disestablish the Empire in order to forestall the imminent loss of Habsburg dynastic dominance.

The argument for modernization failure as fatally hobbling the Empire takes it that the decentralized structure of the Empire left it fragmented and unable to adequately compete militarily against the increasing cohesion of France.[134] According to this view, barring modernization reforms creating a more centralized authority, the Reich's demise was inevitable. Simms makes a parallel point when he argues that the structure of the Empire meant it was not well equipped to play the game of power politics, and he writes that "the whole ethos of the *Reich* was so profoundly traditional and anti-modern that modernization was not merely problematic, but fundamentally antithetical to its

---

[134] Joachim Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire, Volume II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 559.

281

continued existence.[135] However, this view is anachronistic, as the Empire had evolved to fit not the later system dominated by Napoleonic France, but the pre-revolutionary old regime system, which was only partially anchored around the principle of power political competition.

Moreover, at least in the beginning, "the conflict between France and the Reich was not a conflict between a modern state and a relic of the past."[136] The Empire was, contrary to the prevalent view, far from a moribund traditional system incapable of change. Rulers such as Frederick II and Joseph II had been responsible for weakening dynastic values somewhat, and the limited reforms that took place in the Empire—such as the Prussian reforms and the failed centralizing agenda of 'Josephinism' pursued by Joseph II—even left some parts of the Empire more politically dynamic than France at the cusp of its revolution. That a revolution never took place in the Empire has been widely taken to indicate the resilience of the Reich,[137] but had a full-blown revolution taken place, far from initiating a series of revitalizing reforms the Empire would likely have faced an even earlier demise.

Another conventional explanation for the Reich's demise argues that the competition between Austria and Prussia within the Empire since the start of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1740 and Frederick's rise created a polarizing dynamic that prevented cooperation between the components of the Empire during the Revolutionary Wars.[138] The most cogent version of this argument asserts that it was the residual antagonism between these two rival polities that fatally retarded the creation of a unified

[135] Brendan Simms, *The Struggle for Mastery in Germany, 1779-1850* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1998), p. 74.
[136] Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire, Volume II*, p. 560.
[137] Peter H. Wilson, *The Holy Roman Empire* (London: Allen Lane, 2016), pp. 643-5.
[138] Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire, Volume II*, p. 559.

Imperial front to fight France, leaving Austria to fight France alone and exhausting it militarily in the process.

The pivotal moment, for this view, would be not the Austro-Prussian rapprochement of 1790 or the Imperial declaration of war on France in March of 1793, but the moment when Prussia chose to make a separate peace with France in April 1795.[139] However, it must be noted that the Prussian withdrawal from the war and conversion of Northern Germany into a neutrality zone (thus aiding France) was not driven primarily by the desire to demolish or dominate the Reich, but by military failure and dire financial circumstances. In fact, Prussian ministers were hoping the old order in Germany could be salvaged in some form, and the earlier rapprochement with Austria shows that the animus between these German rivals did not rule out all forms of cooperation.[140] Both Francis II and his principal adviser in foreign affairs, Franz Maria von Thugut, have been heavily criticized for a path of action that unnecessarily locked Austria into an unending war with France. However, this too has been interpreted as driven by a defensive intention to save the Reich, rather than to aggrandize Austria at all costs. Indeed, their determination to prevail due to the great threat posed by France can be seen as a more adequate perception of the danger involved than the Prussian decision to appease France.[141]

The coordination problems of the Reich, though they were damaging for the ability of the Empire to successfully mobilize for war and defend itself, were nonetheless an integral characteristic of the Reich's political structure, and it is difficult to imagine a

---

[139] Ibid., p. 646.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Whaley, *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire, Volume II,* p. 564.

counterfactual in which these coordination problems would have been successfully overcome. To an extent, it could be validly argued that even the limited coordination achieved by Austria and Prussia until 1795 was better than might have been expected given the structural limits. And as we have seen, it was the peculiar second-order structure of the Reich as a composite state with dynastic kinship ties internally as well as externally, that protected it in crisis moments of the past. Thus even if decentralization was a weakness in the face of the Napoleonic threat, the Reich might not have even existed to fight Napoleon were it not for this feature. Nonetheless, when Napoleon defeated the Second Coalition in 1801, this had given France a dominance that allowed it to reconstruct the Reich, and in the resulting reconstitution (the Imperial Recess of February 1803) the number of ecclesiastical princes and Imperial cities would be drastically consolidated.[142]

Francis II and the Dissolution of the Empire

The dynastic element would at this point reassert itself. Napoleon in May of 1804, crowned himself Napoleon I, Emperor of France. Francis, in order not to lose precedence to Napoleon in the event of the demise of the Empire, took for himself the title of hereditary emperor of Austria on August 11, 1804. The creation of this title would decrease the commitment of Francis to his Imperial crown, and in the process made more likely the Imperial dissolution that it was intended to hedge against. The Austrian defeat at Austerlitz in December of 1805 would further cement Napoleon's dominance, and he

---

[142] McKay and Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815,* p. 320.

proceeded to undertake a further reorganization of the smaller states of the Empire to create four French client states: Bavaria, Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt, and Württemberg.

The Confederation of the Rhine which consolidated these states under French control, and the dynastic marriages between the Bonaparte family and the German princely families, both indicated to Francis that his own hegemony over the Holy Roman Empire was about to end.[143] Napoleon was now self-consciously pursuing a dynastic strategy himself to consolidate control over his domains, in the process betraying his real motives as having had more to do with imperial conquest than the spread of republicanism. In this final act, the elective nature of the Reich would prove to be a severe vulnerability, as there was little preventing Napoleon from engineering his own election as Holy Roman Emperor. Rather than allow Napoleon to consolidate the Reich under his control—and perhaps even gain the Imperial crown—Francis abdicated and disestablished the Empire on 6 August 1806, and with this action the illustrious history of the Holy Roman Empire came to an end.

The final end of the Holy Roman Empire was conditioned by the collapse of the military capabilities of *ancien régime* rulers due to their inability to comprehend the non-dynastic goals that Napoleon had in mind when engaging them in war. The dynastic system, which through intermarriage and the system of mutual obligations it engendered, had managed to foster stability and deter the instability arising from conquests due to the delicately balanced system of dynastic ties. However, once the French Revolution had brought a non-dynastic ruler to lead one of the great powers—and a military genius at that—it would have required a leap of the imagination too great for dynastic rulers to

---

[143] Ibid., p. 320.

muster to anticipate and forestall the continental conquests that Napoleon desired. Absent such superhuman foresight, there would be nothing that could save the *ancien régime* system from collapse.

Francis II, though he had perceived the threat of Napoleon more clearly than many of the other monarchs of the time, was nonetheless unwilling to undertake the disruptive social and military reforms that would have made the Austrian military more competitive due to his innate conservatism. If he had not dissolved the Empire, the Reich would surely have come under the dominion of Napoleon, but might nonetheless have survived in some form. The Habsburg pride and sense of the Imperial title as a dynastic possession, would not allow Francis to let go of the Imperial crown. In this sense, disestablishment was a path that only a ruler seized by the pride that ran as a current through the value system of the old regime, could envisage. Though the Reich was heading toward a condition of subjugation, the path of disestablishment could not have been imagined by a republican ruler without the strong sense of possession that dynastic rulers held over the domains they ruled. Francis' intense unwillingness to surrender the Imperial crown had spurred him to a revolutionary decision that would steal a partial victory from the jaws of defeat.

Late Survival Composite State Death and Theoretical Expectations

In the two cases of late survival composite state death we examined, we found that the failure of dynastic deterrence where it had previously been operative, played an important role in bringing about terminal composite state death. In the case of Poland-Lithuania, though the Commonwealth had long sunk into an effective state of dependence

on the benevolence of its patrons—Russia and Austria—we can conjecture that the kinship relations that tied Augustus III to Maria Theresa would have stirred violent resistance to partition efforts on the part of the Habsburg Empress, had such moves taken place during Augustus' reign. Though the outcome of conquest was likely over-determined due to the severe imbalance between the Commonwealth's defenses and the military capacities of her more powerful neighbors, nonetheless it is significant that partition began only after the accession of Stanisław Poniatowski—a Polish noble with few kinship ties to European royalty—to the Polish throne. The timing of the partition suggests that dynastic deterrence could have been operative during the reign of Augustus III.

Nonetheless, the efficient cause of the First Partition, the ceaseless maneuverings of Frederick II to acquire more territory, also shows in a negative manner, the importance of dynastic deterrence. Frederick was, due to the idiosyncrasies of his childhood and sexuality, an atypical dynastic ruler with little attachment to dynastic objectives and norms, and thus was relatively free to act outside its strictures. Given that Frederick was the prime mover in the events leading up to the First Partition, the expectations of dynasticism accord closely with fact that the demise of the Commonwealth was initiated by a non-dynastically inclined ruler, as does the fact that the Commonwealth (as a non-dynastic state) would be particularly vulnerable to predation. Once the First Partition had taken place, and given that Joseph II and Catherine had in their respective ways come under the spell of Frederick and his realpolitik approach, it was almost a matter of course that the ongoing interaction between the three powers would reach its logical conclusion with the complete partitioning of the Commonwealth.

Poland-Lithuania had long been unable to ensure its own security, and the additional military capability provided by Lithuania was unable to reverse the state of dependence into which the Commonwealth had fallen. The problem in this case was weakness that lay on the level of constitutional structure obstructing the political reforms that could have created a powerful standing army in place of the fragmented forces of the Polish nobility. Lack of cohesion was a relevant factor in the congenital weakness of Poland-Lithuania, but it arose not from sociological diversity but from constitutionally determined limits placed on the authority of the monarchical center.

The demise of the Commonwealth, then, presents no surprise for the early modern realist perspective, though the survival of the Commonwealth so long after its collapse into dependence is somewhat counterintuitive—given this survival could not have been caused by force deterrence due to its widely known helplessness—and requires additional explanatory factors. The role of a residual conquest taboo that spilled over to structure even relations between rulers not tied by kinship might be one possibility we cannot explore further here. The leadership learning perspective is not directly relevant given that the partitions were largely externally driven events, but nonetheless events inside the Commonwealth demonstrate that rulers educated dynastically are not always the best qualified to undertake necessary reforms. Stanisław Poniatowski, a Polish noble whose sole qualification for ascending the throne was "that he had been Catherine's lover,"[144] nonetheless displayed a remarkable capacity for learning while king, and the proposed

---

[144] W. F. Reddaway, "The First Partition," in *The Cambridge History of Poland 1697-1935,* ed. W. F. Reddaway, J. H. Penson, O. Halecki, and R. Dyboski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), p. 92.

288

project of reform he initiated might have succeeded in revitalizing the Commonwealth had the country not ceased to exist.

When evaluating the ultimate demise of the Holy Roman Empire, the expectations from the approach of dynasticism are largely confirmed, as analogously to the Polish case, a non-dynastic or anti-dynastic ruler (Napoleon Bonaparte) was responsible for bringing the entire *ancien régime* system close to collapse due to his ability to pursue goals outside of the conservative (but stability inducing) parameters of dynasticism as a system. Though the causal factors underlying the Reich's military vulnerability against Napoleonic France were not unique to it as a composite state—as the response of all *ancien régime* states (composite and simple) evinced a collective inability to adapt to the radical departures of France—nonetheless the markedly decentralized structure of the Reich as a secondary composite state left it particularly vulnerable to external influence.

Prussia in deciding to seek neutrality during the Napoleonic Wars—forcing Austria to fight alone against France—was a relevant factor in weakening Austria's ability to withstand French military onslaughts, and this outcome cannot be separated from the Reich's structure as in part a supranational state. However, the fact that the military failure was not restricted to the Reich but afflicted also relatively centralized states of the *ancien régime*, suggests the critical weakness was not one of capability, but of both coordination and vision. This vitiates the explanatory power of early modern realism when understanding this case. The dynastic cohort of rulers could not conceive the real objectives of Napoleon, as they had never been faced with a leader with such radically anti-dynastic and absolutist ambitions as he had.

The French state under the rule of Napoleon serves as an important test case of many of the theoretical approaches we outlined. Napoleonic France confirms expectations from dynasticism that non-dynastic states are more prone to attempt conquest. This is amply shown by the expansionist goals of Napoleon's armies. Furthermore, Napoleon as a non-dynastic leader would be expected not to have been well steeped in the cross-generational learning that such systems can transmit. Indeed, his lack of strategic prudence by falling victim to the error of military overexpansion, and eventually arousing dissent and disloyalty among his populace, is ample proof of Napoleon's ignorance of the dangers of overestimating one's position. However, early modern realism seems limited in explaining the nature of the weakness of *ancien régime* rulers when facing France. The primary weakness of these dynastic rulers seems to have been one of limited vision and an inability to comprehend the true nature of Napoleon's methods and goals.

Finally, the pathway of composite state death by disestablishment we saw to be one uniquely associated with the dynastic state. Only the dynastic ruler who presumed to own the state he ruled could undertake such an arrogant action as to personally disestablish his state as Francis did, and only the state that saw itself as identical to a degree with the ruler would be subservient enough to follow through and implement such a proclamation. Though saving the Reich from domination by Napoleon and France, disestablishment of the Holy Roman Empire brought to an end an illustrious state that had done more than any other to midwife Europe's transition from the Renaissance to the early modern age, and which had anchored the European continent in a set of dynastic

practices that had remarkable resilience and socializing power over its children who were

brought up to view the world through its values and goals.

CHAPTER FIVE

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS AND PRELIMINARY ANSWERS

In this chapter, we outline some of the unanswered questions arising from this research requiring further study, questions that put together might be thought to constitute a research agenda for the study of dynasticism in the context of international relations. We also provide some preliminary answers to these questions, in lieu of a more developed analysis that will be pursued in future works.

Firstly, we point to the role of anomalous leaders, and the question of when such anomalous leaders—in this case dynastic leaders who reached adulthood without imbibing a genuinely dynastic outlook—arise and/or were able to play an outsized role in dynastic politics. As we alluded to, leadership learning played an important role in the study of composite state survival, but not quite in the way expected by the approach laid out in Chapter One.

In fact, leadership learning played a negligible and imprecise role in facilitating the survival of composite states through the postulated mechanisms, but it was perversely an important mechanism in composite state death—particularly of late survival composite states. Intergenerational learning within the dynastic line aided some rulers to avoid egregious errors, but a dynastic education could not prevent other dynastic rulers from failing to internalize the lessons stemming from the errors of their forefathers. Moreover, it seems likely that atypical dynastic rulers (and republican leaders) learnt lessons from each other across time and space about the possibilities of ignoring the norms and goals of dynasticism. Because such atypical rulers played an important role in the dissolution of

Poland-Lithuania and the Holy Roman Empire, their role cannot be ignored though it constitutes in many ways a contingent historical variable and is difficult to generalize.

Tim Blanning has written that Frederick turned his lust for power outwards whereas his father had confined his aggression to his son and his subjects.[1] In doing so and having waged multiple aggressive wars based only loosely or not at all on dynastic claims, Frederick diverted the developmental path of European politics and set it decisively on a trajectory where dynastic politics was rapidly eclipsed by power politics. Despite the logic of the balance of power and territoriality becoming an increasingly pressing concern of many monarchic rulers during the eighteenth century, nonetheless it was due to the decisive role of rulers (such as Frederick) who eschewed dynastic logic and brazenly pursued a power political logic that the historical dialectic evolved.

It still remains necessary to better understand the general conditions under which dynastic rulers emerged with only a weak grounding in dynastic norms, and perhaps more importantly, the nature of the inter-dynastic environment in which they could exercise an outsized influence. In the second half of the eighteenth century, an important set of factors converged to transform the practice of relations between European monarchical rulers. Despite the tentative steps made by the research laid out in the chapters above, opportunities exist to make major advances in our understanding of the following factors and their interaction.

Moreover, I would suggest that it was in part the opportunities opened up by these changes that were seized by non-dynastically anchored monarchs, and the destabilizing non-dynastic means and ends of these monarchs was applied to systemic interactions to

---

[1] Tim Blanning, *Frederick the Great* (London: Allen Lane, 2015), p. 118.

further weaken the dynastic fabric in the manner of a feedback loop. The French Revolution was a critically important historical event, but the factors below operated in partial autonomy to the regime transformations brought about by that revolution, though in a quirk of history would become intertwined with them due to the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte. Let me elaborate.

The overarching long-term historical processes encompassing these separate questions, corresponds to the gradual transformation of dynastic goals—such as dynastic inheritance, status and conquest desistance—into balance of power and economic imperatives, in short the quest for greater power and wealth. Gaining a better insight into this shift would be an important part of explaining how balance of power considerations came to dominate European strategic culture, and how the dynastic system as a whole declined. In accordance with our preliminary findings, balance of power imperatives should be understood as a historically contingent phenomenon and not an eternal fact.

The emergence of power politics and the balance of power as a dominant trope took place during the period we examine and occurred due to a confluence of the following factors: a) a conceptual shift of the meaning of 'balance' from balancing to protect the weak to balancing to resist the strong; b) a transformation of dynastic inheritance norms so that large dynastic territories could no longer be inherited un-partitioned by a single claimant; c) a transformation of the relationship between ruler and subject and the displacement of dynastic interest by raison d'état; d) a transformation of military strategy emanating from fierce rivalry in the colonies; and e) the exemplar of influential monarchs (i.e. Charles XII, Frederick II) who changed the way that other monarchs conceived of their strategic priorities. We examine each of these in order.

1) It should be remembered that the balance of power had a dual origin in European history, and its conceptual content was forged through a dialectical interaction of at least two tendencies. The full nature of the evolution of the concept of the balance of power during the Middle Ages and early modern period has yet to be understood, despite the volumes that have already been written on this question. The first and most widely known account is that it originated during the Renaissance on the Italian peninsula, where the relatively self-contained system that existed there consisted of "five major city-states who sought to prevent the domination of the peninsula by any one power."[2] The second, lesser-known strand, is that it emerged during the Middle Ages as a device and imperative to ensure the survival of the smallest states and preserve dynastic rights from being extinguished. It was only later, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that it became entrenched as a means to check the power of the most powerful monarchs, the outcome of the blending of practices in Italy with those of the more feudally grounded northern states.

The medieval notion of the 'feud' was a means to ensure collective action to punish wrongdoers and defend the 'right' cause, and this frequently operated as a device to protect the weaker members of a society. The prominent medievalist Otto Brunner noted that, "no less frequent than conflicts between an emperor and an imperial prince were those in which the subjects of a territory waged a feud against their territorial lord."[3] And during the medieval era—a period thoroughly legalistic in its worldview—the restitution of possessions (particularly territory) taken by force without legitimate right

---

[2] Moorhead Wright, Introduction to *Theory and Practice of the Balance of Power, 1486-1914,* ed. Moorhead Wright (London: Dent, 1975), p. ix.
[3] Otto Brunner, *Land and Lordship* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), p. 37.

constituted one of the principle drivers of a feud. In an age when the boundary between private war and public war was undeveloped, the feud waged by subjects against a lord unjustly infringing on their rights was one of the main means of self-help, preventing their legal property rights from being obliterated by the powerful. This private means of self-help was to gradually be incorporated into the meaning of the balance of power during the early modern period.

With the increasing institutionalization of the distinction between private and public war, and the significant expansion of some dynastic agglomerations (such as that of the Habsburgs) due to marriage strategy and dynastic inheritance—culminating in the early sixteenth century during the reign of Charles V with the continental pretensions of the Spanish Empire—the primary danger came to be felt as being from dominant powers rather than the extinction of private rights per se. This process was partly a consequence of the fragmentation of the hierarchical system of Christendom and the increasing autonomy of kings from the dictates of popes and emperors.[4] Thus, we find transitional statements such as the following published in 1720 by the Archbishop of Cambray, who ties together the threat of the powerful and the need to defend the weak: "Tis a duty…as natural for neighboring nations to concur for the common safety against one who grows

---

[4] Wight characterizes the transformation thus: "Medieval man had a customary loyalty to his immediate feudal superior, with whose authority he was in regular contact, and a customary religious obedience to the Church under the Pope, which governed every aspect of his life; but his loyalty to the King, whom he probably never saw and was seldom aware of, was weaker than either. In due course the King suppressed the feudal barons and challenged the Pope, becoming the protector and champion against oppression and disorder at home and against a corrupt and exacting ecclesiastical system whose headquarters was abroad." Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), p. 25.

too powerful, as it is for fellow-citizens to unite against an invader of the liberty of their country."[5]

It was the northward transmission of the concept of the balance of power (a journey that has yet to be fully traced by the history of political thought) with the demise of Christendom and the emergence of competitive relations between dynastic rulers that led to an expansion of the conceptual content of the balance of power and an evolution toward its modern meaning. Without the gradual evacuation of the medieval content of the balance of power as a means of protecting legal right, the modern meaning could not have emerged to be then taken up by early modern absolutist rulers. Even though it would be the role of leaders pursuing non-dynastic goals—such as Frederick II and Napoleon— that would prove decisive in creating a *realpolitik* system, the conceptual tools they used to frame their innovative goals needed to be invented before they could think them. In the manner of dialectical evolution laid out by Herbert Butterfield, it was the feudal origins of the balance of power trope that would prove critical in rendering it attractive for early modern rulers to use.

2) Around the turn of the eighteenth century, dynastic inheritance became insufficient as a means to acquire territory. The precise contours of this transition have yet to be properly enumerated, but at this point we do know that the secret partition treaties negotiated in 1698 and 1700 between Louis XIV and William III of England jointly as the most powerful monarchical rulers of their age, were an important milestone in this development. Though these secret partition treaties were never implemented, they were both innovative and deeply inimical to the dynastic system for two reasons. Firstly,

---

[5] Archbishop of Cambray, "Two Essays on the Balance of Europe," in *A Collection of Scarce and Valuable Tracts Vol. XIII,* ed. Sir Walter Scott (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1815), p. 768.

the notion of partition—implying divisible inheritance—cut against the right of primogeniture, which was prevalent at the time on the Continent, and which as an institution had empowered dynastic marriage as the primary means of maintaining and even accumulating territory. Secondly, and more importantly, the fact that the partition treaties included signatories who were not legal claimants to the territories disposed of, contradicted the deeply embedded notion of legal inheritance rights. Due to this fact, the treaty was not only repugnant to other rightful claimants of the Spanish succession, such as the Habsburg Emperor Leopold and the Spanish (who did not wish the Spanish Empire divided), but even in England "a good many people thought them immoral and blamed William for trying to dispose of lands that were not his own."[6]

As Shennan notes, it was the unique nature of the imminent Spanish succession crisis that drove the development of this new approach, as "the vastness of the Spanish empire made Louis realize that the traditional rules of dynastic inheritance could not be applied with any expectation of success" and would rather provide the basis for negotiations in which legitimate claimants would be expected to "acquire a share."[7] Whatever the reasons for the employment of such an approach, as soon as dynastic inheritance rights came to be seen as insufficient to guarantee acquisition—which is essentially what the secret partition treaties portended—it became necessary for dynastic monarchs to start thinking of means toward territorial acquisition via alternate channels besides dynastic marriage and dynastic inheritance. As long as inheritance was a guaranteed means of acquiring territory, it could be considered superior to brute force due

---

[6] Mark Thomson, "Self-determination and Collective Security as Factors in English and French Foreign Policy, 1689-1718," in *William III and Louis XIV,* ed. Ragnhild Hatton and J. S. Bromley (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1968), p. 276.
[7] J. H. Shennan, *International Relations in Europe 1689-1789* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 12.

to its significantly lower costs, but as the right of dynastic inheritance began to weaken,

military means naturally came to take on greater importance. It was in such a context that

brute conquest would be rehabilitated as a legitimate means of dynastic competition.

3) The discourse of enlightened absolutism—which emerged during the

eighteenth century from out of the nascent spheres of public discourse and political

thought—led to the growing power of concepts such as 'state' and 'nation' as organizing

frames to understand the obligations and goals of rulers. This development also

converged with the increasing bureaucratization of both the government and army, and

brought about a displacement of dynastic priorites in favor of the state-centric priorities

pursued by the nascent personnel of the civil service.[8]

As Blanning notes of the provenance of such concepts:

This did not spring ready armed from the heads of the revolutionaries in 1789 but had
been a long time in the making. Across western and central Europe, the two master nouns
of political discourse were 'state' and 'nation'…The alienation between monarchy and
nation had been underway at least since 1713, when Louis XIV prompted Clement XI to
issue the bull *Unigenitus* against the Jansenists. It became a chasm with the 'diplomatic
revolution' of 1756 and was made finally unbridgeable by the Austrian marriage of 1770.
Meanwhile, in Great Britain the Hanoverians were slowly, painfully but successfully
constructing a new alliance between dynasty and nation, while in Prussia an odd but
effective 'state patriotism' was promoted by Frederick the Great.[9]

Though a full analysis of the emergence of such concepts lies outside the scope of

this present study, these new modes shifted in important ways the manner in which

monarchical rulers thought about their interests, and brought to the fore raison d'état as

the organizing prism through which rulers should pursue their goals. It would finally be

the marriage of state and nation during the French Revolution and its aftermath that

---

[8] Stephen Kocs, "The Dynastic Constitution of Early Modern International Politics" (unpublished
manuscript, 2010), p. 20.
[9] T. C. W. Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,
2002), p. 4.

would consolidate the notion that a leader should pursue only actions aligned with the interests of the people as a whole. Actions framed solely by dynastic interests were gradually delegitimized.

4) The accelerating global competition for colonial expansion and resource appropriation outside Europe, and the relatively lawless nature of this competition when compared with the nature of dynastic competition within Europe, gave rise to a boomerang effect in which the tools of warfare in the periphery were gradually seen to be legitimate for use in the center, leading to a concomitant decline in respect for traditional rules and norms, such as those of dynastic inheritance. In particular, the manner in which the property rights of the original inhabitants of these lands were routinely alienated by European settlers, and the trade and resource extraction toward the realization of which colonial government was organized, led brought about two important consequences.

Firstly, it led to an expansion of the geographical arena in which competition between European monarchs played itself out. Though the European theater was still relatively autonomous from the colonial theater, there was inevitably a degree of spillover between the two, for instance as took place during the Seven Years War. Secondly, this expansion of perspective brought about a weakening of the hitherto exacting dynastic norms that had governed monarchical competition in Europe. If competition in the colonial arena was unconstrained by desistance from conquest, why should this norm continue to be rigorously upheld in Europe? In Europe, there took hold the idea that "a territorial and military balance in Europe was worth little unless it could be backed by a colonial and maritime one overseas, above all in America," and on the peripheries of Europe increasing military interactions led to the incorporation into the

European system of extra-European powers unconcerned with a rigorous adherence to dynastic norms, such as Russia.[10]

All of these *longue durée* transformations, only peripherally related to the question of the longevity of composite states, were nonetheless crucial factors molding the political context in which rulers such as Frederick II and Napoleon could conceive of transgressing dynastic norms and breaking down the parameters that had governed dynastic warfare in Europe at least since the Peace of Westphalia. To be sure, it was the groundbreaking actions of non-dynastically oriented European that played a critical role in the gradual desuetude of the conquest prohibition throughout the eighteenth century. The inter-generational learning process that encompassed the actions of king Charles XII of Sweden, a half century later Frederick the Great and another half century later Napoleon Bonaparte, all of whom with their progressive disregard for the dynastic limits of warfare facilitated a general weakening of this norm, was an important factor that made possible conquest attempts such as the 1756 Prussian invasion of Saxony and soon after this the extirpation of the sovereignty of Poland-Lithuania through multiple partitions.

Without access to the strategic example of the Swedish King, whose impetuous wars and battles Frederick studied closely, it is difficult to envisage the great Prussian ruler developing a strategic vision with so little reverence for dynasticism and such lust for territorial expansion. However, the influence was not one of a unilateral amplification. Frederick's expansive ambitions were also tempered by the failures of

---

[10] Jeremy Black, *The Rise of the European Powers 1679-1793* (London: Edward Arnold, 1990), pp. 168-9. On the effect of colonial expansion on the balance of power, see also M. S. Anderson, "Eighteenth-Century Theories of the Balance of Power," in *Studies in Diplomatic History,* ed. Ragnhild Hatton (London: Longman, 1970), pp. 183-198.

Charles XII, and particularly his defeat at Poltava. In his analysis Frederick applauds

Charles' ambition but views his desired conquest of Russia as being imprudent due to its

being unrealistic and ultimately impossible. He thus notes that:

> It is a rule of war that one must never make deep penetrations and that wars undertaken
> near to the frontiers always succeed more happily than those where the army is ventured
> too far…from its magazines into enemy territory, without protecting its rear and
> providing for its security.[11]

Though he excoriated Charles for having an imperfect understanding of strategic

principles and thus overextending his army during the push into Russia, Frederick

himself would ironically also lead Prussia into a dangerously overextended position in the

Seven Years War with his 1756 invasion and subsequent occupation of Saxony, an

invasion whose wisdom and morality had been doubted by his generals, and which

through its harsh treatment of the occupied populace led to significant revulsion and

resistance from the other principalities of the Empire.[12]

Having violated the unwritten constitution of the Empire (and dynasticism) which

prohibited the unprovoked conquest of one of its constituents by another, the Imperial

Diet in January of 1757 expelled Prussia from the Empire and declared war against it.[13]

After another four years of war, Prussia under Frederick was exhausted by the task of not

only defending Silesia and Saxony against successive onslaughts by the Franco-Imperial

army, but also faced the loss of Prussian Pomerania to the Russians. When Elizabeth of

Russia died on 5 January 1762, Prussia had been on the brink of total defeat, but her

unstable successor Peter III was a fanatical admirer of Frederick, and Peter's stunning

---

[11] Frederick II, *Frederick the Great on the Art of War* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1999), p. 350.
[12] Dennis E. Showalter, *The Wars of Frederick the Great* (London: Longman, 1996), p. 134, 146.
[13] Ibid., p. 146.

withdrawal from the war allowed Frederick to unexpectedly survive a withering war with Saxony restored in full to its ruler but Silesia remaining under the control of Prussia.[14]

The willingness of Charles XII to wage war with disregard for dynastic norms had paved the way for Frederick II to unashamedly adopt unprovoked conquest as a means of warfare, and the Prussian ruler's scandalous machinations to partition Poland undertaken with the willing participation of Catherine of Russia and the unwilling involvement of Maria Theresa, would in turn further normalize the practice of territorial annexation without regard for dynastic justifications. Though the role of iconoclastic rulers with scant regard for dynastic norms was of decisive importance in weakening the hold of the normative parameters of dynastic conflict, the conditions of emergence of iconoclastic leaders, and the specific conditions in which they could wield an outsized influence, are not well understood. The long-term processes outlined above which collectively loosened the system of dynastic practices and norms that had underpinned and stabilized the European system for centuries, was of decisive importance in creating a milieu in which the actions of deviant rulers could pass without massive censure and retaliation.

However, the opportunities opened up by these transformations could not exercise any influence over the course of events had they not been exploited by rulers who saw these opportunities and took them. In this sense, the role of individual rulers who disregarded the dictates of dynastic deterrence and were guided primarily by the emerging raison d'état framework was integral to initiating the final dissolution of late

---

[14] M. S. Anderson, *Europe in the Eighteenth Century 1713-1783* (*Third Edition,* London: Longman, 1987), pp. 301-2.

survival composite states such as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Holy

Roman Empire.[15]

---

[15] One might ask the counter-factual question of whether, even without these historical personages, some other like-minded leaders would have come along who would have pursued similar policies, and in such manner propel an inexorable logic of historical development? This philosophical question is outside the purview of this study, and involves contemplating the unknowable question of whether it is individuals who are merely the vehicles or conduits for unstoppable historical trends, or whether the character of individual leaders does in fact shape the direction of history and channel it in discernible pathways that would otherwise not have been taken.

CONCLUSION

IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In this conclusion, I reiterate the chief findings of the comparative historical analyses of earlier chapters while contextualizing dynastic deterrence as one response to the difficult problem of maintaining monarchical rule over composite states in early modern Europe. I also draw out some implications of our approach for three areas of international relations theory—alliances, deterrence and the democratic peace—and in doing so make some preliminary suggestions as to how the study of kinship ties and dynastic marriage in the *ancien régime* is relevant for our contemporary world.

Dynastic Deterrence and Preserving Rule in Early Modern Composite States

To talk of 'policy' in the context of the early modern monarchical state is to travel to a very different historical milieu where the practice of politics had a significantly different meaning from what we understand today. The French Revolution had not yet taken place, and the goals of government were more limited and 'negative' in nature when compared with the expansive 'positive' tasks that would attach themselves to state power with the birth of the modern state. This was due primarily to the relatively weak state capacity of early modern states. In this light, dynastic deterrence should be understood not merely as an unintended consequence of dynastic marriage practices, but also as a strategy meant to solve some of the intractable problems of political rule in the Baroque era. We illustrate the way in which dynastic marriage epitomized a powerful

answer to the problem of preserving indirect rule by juxtaposing it with the strategic injunctions Machiavelli draws for the ruler of mixed principalities.

The main task of the early modern state (and dynasty) was to expand its territorial holdings where this was possible, but to always preserve control over existing domains and survive the constant military contestation typical of the time. Dynastic continuity within a house was to be ensured as far as possible, and when it could not the throne was passed to a house that would best preserve the customary laws and rights of the domain. Wealth accumulation and taxation were necessary only to the extent that mercenaries and burgeoning standing armies had to be paid for. These are also the priorities that animate the theory of principalities constructed by Niccolò Machiavelli, and the strikingly 'negative' nature of early modern rule lends the works of Machiavelli an archaic character insofar as they deal predominantly with the task of preserving rule over those of other state functions. The contemporary distinction between foreign policy as self-help and domestic policy as the provision of public goods was not yet clear during this age, as domestic policy itself centered on self-preservation over and above distributive goals.

As a theorist preoccupied with the goal of preserving political rule in principalities and republics, Machiavelli had to assume that human collectivities were impermanent and subject to growth and decay. As he writes, "all things of men are in motion and cannot stay steady, they must either rise or fall…"[1] And against these ever-present centrifugal forces, Machiavelli adopts the role of the political physician whose task it is to help the ruler diagnose and eliminate the causes of early demise, in such way aiding the longevity of political rule wherever possible. Though Machiavelli as such does

---

[1] Niccolò Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy,* tr. Harvey Mansfield and Nathan Tarcov (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 23.

not identify dynastic deterrence as one of the means through which the rule of a prince

could be stabilized and preserved, it does fit neatly into his theoretical framework given

that it resolves one of the central problems he raises: the proper means through which

political rule could be preserved even in the absence of direct authority.

A degree of instability always afflicted the composite state, as a composite

structure necessarily involves indirect rule. When more than one royal title is held by a

single ruler—as in the case of personal unions—there existed the ever-present danger that

a pretender will emerge to usurp the crown of an absentee ruler in the peripheral domain.

Moreover, where rule is exercised via an assembly or parliament in the peripheral polity,

there is the parallel danger that the assembly will choose to divest the reigning monarch

of his crown and bestow it on another candidate. This is what may be termed the problem

of the absentee ruler, and is a subset of the problem of maintaining a composite state after

it has been enlarged through the acquisition of an additional polity. Machiavelli in *The

Prince* has discussed the problem of maintaining rule over a territory acquired by

conquest, but the problem of maintaining rule over a territory acquired not through

coercion but through consensual means—such as via inheritance and marriage—is

fundamentally similar in form.

In proposing a solution to the problem of the absentee ruler, Machiavelli notes

that:

> One of the best and most effective solutions is for the conqueror to go and live there. This
> makes the possession more secure and more permanent…for if one does do that, troubles
> can be detected when they are just beginning and effective measures can be taken
> quickly. But if one does not, the troubles are encountered when they have grown, and
> nothing can be done about them. Moreover, under direct rule, the country will not be
> exploited by your officials; the subjects will be content if they have direct access to the

ruler. Consequently, they will have more reason to be devoted to him if they intend to behave well, and to fear him if they do not.[2]

To reframe this problem in the context of the early modern composite state, we could say that the people of a territory can be more easily governed when a ruler is both geographically proximate and similar in terms of attributes to the people being ruled. In this regard, it should be noted that proxy rule in a peripheral polity by viceroys and governors was an inferior substitute for direct rule, given the tendency of such officials to lack significant ties with the local nobility, their inability to undertake truly autonomous decision-making, and their relative lack of prestige when compared with the kingly status. Moreover, when the governor was a junior member of the ruling dynasty, problems could emerge due to intra-dynastic rivalries.[3] However, the impulse to acquire territory, despite its pitfalls, was strong during the early modern period, due to the perceived advantage (in terms of both prestige and resources) accruing from such acquisitions. Put simply the intractable problem—in a historical milieu where expansion was seen to be highly desirable—was to maintain control over an expanding array of territorial acquisitions through indirect means given the practical impossibility of maintaining direct rule in a large composite realm.

As such, the decision to erase the composite structure of a state through amalgamation of the components parts was not one to be taken lightly. Where a composite state already existed, making indirect rule function within the existing structure was seen to be a less costly strategy than erasing the customary laws and rights

---

[2] Niccolò Machiavelli, The Prince, ed. Quentin Skinner and Russell Price (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 8.
[3] Though not as vicious as the competition between competing contenders for succession in polygynous societies as was generally the case outside Europe, nonetheless competition between members of the same dynasty could sometimes be severe, as was exemplified by competition between the different Vasa branches in Sweden and Poland-Lithuania outlined above in Chapter 4.

of peripheral domains and instituting direct rule by coercive means.[4] This preference for

maintaining an existing composite state attained especially where territories had been

acquired through inheritance rather than through military might. Bringing about the

'death' of a composite state via amalgamation and the imposition of direct rule was not a

high priority for the early modern ruler. When it came to the question of how indirect rule

could be consolidated, there were essentially only three strategies available in Baroque

Europe. Firstly, the peripheral throne could be left vacant and the composite entity ruled

remotely as a personal union with the cooperation of a regional assembly. Secondly, a

peripheral throne could be occupied by a hereditary dynasty with ties to the dynasty

ruling the monarchical center. And finally, a peripheral state could be ruled essentially as

a province, such as when a member of the ruling dynasty, generally a younger sibling of

the heir or the head of a cadet branch, was sent as a governor or viceroy in the peripheral

domain.[5] Rule by proxy or via assembly was the norm in most primary composite states,

whereas the second option was generally available only in the case of secondary

composite states, such as the Holy Roman Empire.

 In the context of the problem of the absentee ruler, rule in a peripheral territory by

a hereditary dynasty represented somewhat of a middle way between rule by assembly

and rule by proxy. Moreover, because it avoids the leadership vacuum and concomitant

---

[4] Machiavelli notes that non-coercive means of exercising control, such as establishing colonies in an annexed territory, is preferable to coercive means, as more enemies are fomented through the use of force. Similarly, the destruction of the laws and institutions of a polity is only necessary when it has previously become used to a free (meaning here republican) way of life. Where a polity is already a principality, he argues that destruction of the ruling family is sufficient to preserve rule. Machiavelli, *The Prince,* pp. 18-19.

[5] Fichtner notes that for Habsburgs, such as Charles V, a surplus of offspring was desired as they would provide a ready supply of royal governors and viceroys. Paula Sutter Fichtner, "Dynastic Marriage in Sixteenth-Century Habsburg Diplomacy and Statecraft," *The American Historical Review* 81, no. 2 (1976): p. 245.

instability that ensued from an absentee ruler, it had an important advantage over the other two strategies. However, the most important advantage of direct dynastic rule in the periphery was in all likelihood the deep loyalty that could be engendered through a web of kinship ties build up cross-generationally. Because the principal danger of allowing dynastic rule in a peripheral domain was that the provincial dynasty would adopt an independent policy radically at odds with the interests of the monarchical center, the construction of such a web of kinship ties between center and periphery—essentially embedding the periphery into a patron-client relationship with the center—was a masterful solution to the task of ensuring that dynastic clients could be kept loyal and within the orbit of the center. By providing marriage partners to the client dynasty, the patron lent some of its prestige to the client, and at the same time discouraged the client from seeking marital unions (and hence alliances) with dynasties outside the composite state.

To what extent did the mechanism of dynastic deterrence succeed in ensuring the preservation of composite states? Though dynastic deterrence is powerful in encapsulating the essence of early modern international relations, the question of the extent to which this mechanism succeeded in ensuring composite state longevity rests on whether its presence explains composite state survival in the face of existential threats, and its absence in hastening composite state death. In the cases of early composite state death by amalgamation—namely the demise of England-Scotland, England-Ireland, and Castile-Aragon—we saw that dynastic ties between the monarchic center and peripheral component polity were absent as there was no ruling dynasty in place in the peripheral domain. Similarly, in the one case of state death by secession—the dissolution of the

310

Iberian Union—there also did not exist dynastic ties between the monarchic center and peripheral unit, though dynastic ties between the Braganza claimants to the Portuguese throne and the English Stuarts were found to have been pivotal in giving succor to the secession effort during the Portuguese Restoration War.

In none of these cases did strong kinship ties exist between the monarchic center and the peripheral polity, in part because all of these states lacked an intermediate level of dynastic rule in component polities mediating the relation between sovereign and subject. Extrapolating from the role played by inside-outside dynastic ties in facilitating the secession of Portugal, a strong counterfactual argument can be made that kinship ties— were they to have existed between center and periphery—would have suppressed the impulse to amalgamate and/or secede in these varying cases. The presence of a dynastic patron in the peripheral polity would have precluded the need for amalgamation as there would have been a significantly attenuated threat of an independent foreign policy in the periphery, and similarly moves toward secession would have been significantly weakened.

When we examine the Holy Roman Empire in more detail, we find that though client dynasties in the periphery were discouraged from establishing ties with dynasties outside the state, the Habsburgs themselves sent marriage partners to foreign dynasties surrounding the Empire. Not only does this demonstrate the unequal nature of the relationship between center and periphery within the Empire, but it also exemplifies the Machiavellian dictum that a ruler should become "a protector of the neighboring minor powers."[6] In this regard, the Habsburgs through their web of kinship ties circumvented to

---

[6] Machiavelli, *The Prince,* p. 9.

an extent the weakness of 'star-shaped' networks as described by Nexon, namely their

vulnerability to cross-segment collaboration against the center.[7] Local intermediaries in

the early modern composite state were not all of a kind, and rule by a resident dynasty in

the electorates and principalities of the Empire were significantly more robust and

effective in their ability to garner loyalty within the peripheral polity than the typical

governor or viceroy. While such loyalty was forthcoming, the likelihood of cross-

segment collaboration emerging remained low. Moreover dynastic kinship ties with

foreign ruling houses brought an additional protective buffer zone to the state, due to

amicable dynastic relations that eviscerated the conquest impulse.

Given that kinship ties reinforced through marriage and the two-tiered structure of

the Holy Roman Empire were so successful in preserving its composite structure in the

face of the instability of indirect rule, why was this structure not more frequently

replicated elsewhere in Europe? Though dynastic intermarriage was widely practiced in

early modern Europe—a fact that affirms the usefulness that contemporary rulers saw in

the practice—the *sui generis* nature of the Reich's constitutional structure largely stems

from the prevalent belief that the basic structure of a polity was not a property to be

constructed *de novo* or manipulated through constitutional engineering. Rather, the

theorists and practitioners of the *ancien régime* predominantly believed that a constitution

was a cultural achievement that evolved painstakingly over time as the existing system of

conventions and customs faced intermittent challenges. A strong belief in the ability of

humans to create constitutional order would have to wait until the late eighteenth century

---

[7] Daniel Nexon, *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), Chapter 4.

to develop, spurred by the dual revolutions of America and France and the constitutional conventions that followed them.

It should be remembered that at the American founding, and notwithstanding criticisms they leveled at the Holy Roman Empire for its 'nerveless' structure marked by its inability to adequately order ordinary subjects,[8] the structure of the Reich did nonetheless serve as an important source of insights. Indeed, the institution of the electoral college was borrowed directly from the Reich, and when we search for models among the states of Europe it must be acknowledged that the two-tiered federal structure devised for the United States at its founding more closely mirrored that of the Reich than it did any other European state of the time. In offering an answer to the problem of preserving indirect rule in the early modern composite state via a network of kinship ties between dynastic rule in the center and periphery, dynastic deterrence as a strategy as also the constitutional structure of the Holy Roman Empire as a whole provided an effective solution that proved remarkably resilient and long-lasting when compared with other composite states of the *ancien régime*.

Implications for International Relations Theory

It is to the great detriment of international relations theory that the *ancien régime* era is so seldom the object of close empirical examination. Despite a number of exceptions—most notably in the work of Martin Wight—the era following the Peace of

---

[8] Alexander Hamilton *et al., The Federalist with Letters of "Brutus,"* ed. Terence Ball (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 84-89.

Westphalia has been largely neglected by international relations scholarship.[9] Though the changing nature of empirical reality in different historical eras requires the development of diverse analytical tools to conceptualize different realities, nonetheless the desuetude of scholarly efforts to unravel the deep structure of early modern dynastic relations means that we weaken our ability to comprehend the past, and the discipline as a whole becomes subject to knowledge loss. Although social science theories rarely attempt to encompass all of the knowledge content of their predecessors contrary to Popperian and Lakatosian assumptions, beyond this there is often a loss in knowledge content when newer objects of study surpass older ones, and the gradual decline of scholarly interest in the *ancien régime* is a good example of such knowledge loss.[10] In the spirit of recovering some of the undiscovered insights available to us from examining the *ancien régime,* I will draw out some of the most relevant implications from the preceding chapters for some central questions in international relations theory.

Alliances

Firstly, let us examine the topic of alliances and the difficulty of applying alliance concepts to the practice of statecraft in early modern Europe. When seen as embedded in a network of kinship and marriage ties, the stickiness and long-lasting nature of many

---

[9] Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1946). Other important attempts by international relations scholarship to analyze the early modern period include: John Gerald Ruggie, "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity," in *Neorealism and its Critics,* ed. Robert Keohane (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 131-157; Christian Reus-Smit, *The Moral Purpose of the State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Paul Schroeder, "Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realist Theory," *International Security,* 19, no. 1 (1994): pp. 108-148.
[10] In fact, Laudan persuasively argues that such knowledge loss is also a characteristic of disciplinary development in the natural sciences. In a word, "there are usually problem losses as well as problem gains associated with the replacement of any older theory by a newer one." Larry Laudan, *Progress and Its Problems: Toward a Theory of Scientific Growth* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p. 148.

early modern alliances—a fact otherwise difficult to explain—becomes explicable. During the early modern period, dynastic interests frequently crossed political boundaries due to the cross-territorial reach of dynastic houses, and the fact that early modern political alliances were often anchored upon the institution of the dynastic marriage renders the counterintuitive nature of some of these dynastic alliances more readily comprehensible. A deep web of kinship ties and a mutual interest in maintaining access to a pool of potential marriage partners allows us to see why rivalries between dynasties, far from solidifying into something resembling hard enmity, often exhibited the unexpected result of solidifying into an alliance robust even in the face of contrary pressures emanating from power political considerations.

The long-term alliance between France and Spain after the accession of Philip V as King of Spain is one such case that confounds expectations arising from power politics, given that alliances between neighbors are usually exceedingly difficult to maintain in the long-term due to the rivalry and fear that is fomented by proximity. The fact that there existed ample sparks for conflict between these two kingdoms can be demonstrated by the historical enmity existing between the rulers of France and Spain since the beginning of the sixteenth century until the War of the Spanish Succession, as well that France under the reign of Louis XIV had reached the apogee of its power capabilities. However, it was the dynastic ties that bound together the rulers of these two kingdoms after the Bourbon dynasty secured the succession of its candidate, Philip V, to the Spanish throne. These two countries, which had previously been fierce rivals, became consistent allies, "fought together in every war of the century until the French

Revolution," and consolidated their relations in three Family Compacts, of 1733, 1743, and 1761.[11]

Early modern alliances defying realist expectations also include the *longue durée* family alliance in the seventeenth century between the Austrian and Spanish arms of the Habsburg dynasty. After Charles V separated the succession of the hereditary dominions unified under his rule, the German territories went to his brother Ferdinand, and Spain, Burgundy, and the Italian territories went to his son Philip II. As Wight wrote of this alliance, it "depended on family agreements and intermarriage in each generation, rather than on formal treaties," and he writes that "for Spain, the relationship might be summed up in the statement that it was unthinkable ever to make war on the Austrian branch of the family."[12] Though kinship ties did not always guarantee that an alliance would develop, or that alliance commitments—where made—would be fulfilled, nonetheless the elective affinity between marriage ties and alliances in early modern Europe is strong enough that an understanding of political alliances in this milieu is incomplete without a consideration of the family relations underpinning them.

The characteristically inflexible nature of early modern alliances, which goes against the realist dictum that a state should retain maximum flexibility to choose alliance partners for self-help purposes, were in part a consequence of the dynastic kinship ties that lent such alliances an additional layer of obligation on top of standard strategic considerations. Furthermore, the relative stability of sovereign control characteristic of *ancien régime* Europe indicates another factor in lending a degree of inflexibility to the

---

[11] Evan Luard, *The Balance of Power: The System of International Relations 1648-1815* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), p. 260.

[12] Martin Wight, *Power Politics* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978), p. 126. Wight in turn quotes C. H. Carter, *The Secret Diplomacy of the Habsburgs 1598-1625* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964).

alliances of the time. The relative absence of conquest attempts in early modern Europe suggests that, though rulers engaged in acute rivalries over limited goals, the fear of state death was not an omnipresent factor shaping the perception of threat. We can postulate that in relatively immature anarchic systems—where warfare is more intense, social norms less accepted, and the danger of state death more immediate—the nature of alliance formation (whether in terms of balancing or bandwagoning) will be flexible and unconstrained by considerations of identity or obligation. Conversely, in mature anarchic systems, or those where the likelihood of state death is otherwise attenuated, the urgency of maintaining a flexible posture toward alliances is correspondingly weaker, and inflexible alliances—such as those discernible in *ancien régime* politics—become more sustainable as a strategic choice.[13]

Dynastic intermarriage survives as a deeply ingrained practice even today among the royal families of Europe, though these families no longer exercise much in the way of real power. Though the material politics of developed countries are no longer strongly colored by kinship ties between ruling families, in many parts of the non-Western world—and particularly in some authoritarian states—family ties still play an important role in determining the occupants of political roles. Furthermore, functioning monarchies survive in some parts of the Middle East, and where it does the practice of royal intermarriage still persists. In recent years, explaining the resilience of Middle Eastern monarchies in the face of the revolutions of the Arab Spring has become an important puzzle for political science, and influential research suggests that dynastic intermarriage has played an important part in both solidifying a sense of solidarity among ruling

---

[13] Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear, Second Edition* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991), Chapter 4.

dynasties, but also in acting as a channel through which group strategic learning can take place. Even when inter-dynastic ties do not exist, the practices of dynasticism that place family members in key political positions have been argued to be strongly efficacious in ensuring regime loyalty.[14]

The role of dynastic ties in facilitating regime survival is not limited to either monarchies or the Middle East. Political dynasties have long played an important role in the politics of East Asia, and though the continuing role of dynasties there do not simply reflect the survival of traditional attitudes but rather involve a complex reconstitution of traditional forms in a modern institutional environment,[15] nonetheless the latter day resilience of dynasticism as a nexus for cultivating would-be leaders suggests that dynastic inheritance gives its beneficiaries an important comparative advantage in political competition. Besides the symbolic cachet and legitimacy gains that dynastic heritage can bestow on political parties, the heightened loyalty, secrecy and concentrated learning potential of the family laboratory is a critical resource. Nor does pointing to these somewhat archaic aspects entail culturalist or patronizing connotations, as we see with the current re-emergence of full-blown dynasticism in American politics.

When planning political interventions to buttress or destabilize particular regimes, the aim of strengthening or disrupting kinship ties between key actors may be an important goal for governments and their opponents to aim towards. The family nexus will no doubt continue to provide an immensely rich source of political insight into the nature of alliances and regime resilience for years to come.

---

[14] Sean Yom, "Authoritarian Monarchies as an Epistemic Community," *Taiwan Journal of Demcracy* 10, no.1 (2014): pp. 43-62.

[15] On this point, see Mark Thompson, "Asia's Hybrid Dynasties," *Asian Affairs* 43, no. 2 (2012): pp. 204-220.

Deterrence

Secondly, we point to deterrence theory as another important field of research where the study of dynastic deterrence can offer important insights. Since the end of the Cold War, the utility of deterrence as a strategy has come into question. Developed primarily in the United States as a body of doctrine to counter the threat emanating from the Soviet Union at the same time as avoiding nuclear war, deterrence theory was built largely upon the basic insight that "an enemy will not strike if it knows the defender can defeat the attack or can inflict unacceptable damage in retaliation."[16] However, with the decline of the nuclear threat emanating from the Soviet Union with its disintegration and the rise of non-state threats from terrorist groups and extremist networks, the logic of deterrence was initially seen to be of limited use due to its perceived inability to counter threats where the adversary did not have a territorial mooring to which massive retaliation could be targeted.[17] Moreover, deterrence theory as conceived at the height of bipolarity was a blunt instrument relying on the maintenance of severe punishment capabilities and the signaling of a readiness to retaliate, often in excess. In the new post-Cold War context where the threat from state actors is seen to be manageable at least from the perspective of the lone superpower, deterrence was often seen to be needlessly combative where it was reasoned that reassurance might be better at mobilizing cooperation around shared goals.

Though we hardly bemoan the decline of deterrence as a grand strategic doctrine organizing American foreign policy, nonetheless the analytical and prescriptive utility of

---

[16] Richard Betts, "The Lost Logic of Deterrence," *Foreign Affairs,* March/April 2013, p. 88.
[17] Richard Betts, "The New Threat of Mass Destruction," *Foreign Affairs,* January/February, 1998, p. 34.

deterrence as a concept should not be prematurely abandoned. Even if we accept that deterrence is no strategic panacea, as an analytical tool it might yet be a powerful heuristic device to understand situations and settings where an international rivalry did not spiral out of control but unexpectedly regained equilibrium within a tolerable set of parameters. Resembling a homeostatic mechanism generated by negative feedback, the lesson from our study of early modern dynastic politics is that when such self-stabilizing equilibria are found, it is worth asking whether mechanisms resembling those of dynastic deterrence we outlined in previous chapters might not be operating invisibly to prevent the escalation of a conflict. The utility of deterrence as an explanatory device for capturing dynastic marriage as a factor limiting international conflict shows that a more general conceptualization of deterrence is valuable insofar as it allows for disparate phenomena to be interpreted through a common lens. As the classic distinction between the spiral model and the deterrence 'model' outlined by Robert Jervis makes clear, when spiral dynamics are prevalent conflicts can escalate uncontrollably due to unduly harsh punishments (a form of positive feedback), whereas in cases where deterrence dynamics are dominant, a self-sustaining homeostasis can be achieved through appropriate deterrent threats. The common assumption is that conflict escalation is undesirable.[18]

To understand the utility of deterrence as a general framework for understanding interaction when each party has control over a source of value for an opponent, we might turn to the economic relationship between China and Japan. This relation, which due to the dependence of both countries on a statist protectionist development model seems

---

[18] The spiral and deterrence models are outlined in Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), Chapter 3. See also Stephen Van Evera, "The 'Spiral Model' vs. the 'Deterrence Model'," *Unpublished Manuscript.*

primed for escalation, manages to remain tense but stable. Katz has argued that the stability of the relationship, which he terms one of 'mutually assured production,' is largely due to a high degree of interdependence in economic structure, as "China needs to buy Japanese products as much as Japan needs to sell them."[19] The highly de-territorialized production chains characteristic of high technology manufacturing today makes it difficult for countries to establish autarkic independence, and the high volume of high-end parts that China must import from Japan makes it highly dependent on access to Japanese markets. The same logic makes Japanese companies highly dependent on Chinese consumers for their profitability, and these economic imperatives—or so the argument runs—curtail the potential for escalation in the bilateral relationship.

If we view this interaction in terms of deterrence concepts, it becomes clear that deterrence logic is not limited to the military sphere but also permeates economic relations. When each party of a dyad possesses—in its own domain—a resource essential or valuable for the other's subsistence, the threat of each cutting off the other's access leads to a stalemate and the dyad regains stability. If after this point conflict is to reignite and escalate, it must do so in another domain. The postulated 'capitalist peace' mechanism also operates much along these lines. Gartzke has argued that geographically contiguous dyads at a similar developmental stage are less likely to experience conflict, due to the preference for acquisition via trade over theft.[20] Though normative preferences for coexistence may result from high levels of economic development, peaceful co-existence is in many cases itself a precondition for the early initiation of economic development. Moreover, just as causally efficacious factors producing an outcome at the

---

[19] Richard Katz, "Mutual Assured Production," *Foreign Affairs,* July/August 2013, p. 18.
[20] Erik Gartzke, "The Capitalist Peace," *American Journal of Political Science,* 51, no. 1 (2007): p. 172.

beginning of a historical process may not be the same factors that produce the same outcome at a later point in time, detailed analysis of pacific dyads may reveal that contiguity masks the presence of hidden deterrent mechanisms at work.

It is the characteristic nature of global capitalism that it widely distributes resources vital for economic prosperity into different territories even when the overall level of inequality between societies is on the rise. When studying international conflict and its interaction with the global economic system, deterrence analysis may still be able to play a crucial role in identifying when and where conflict is likely to emerge, as its logic would assert that regions and countries with few vital resources hostage in other territories and yet with control over a high volume of others' needs, are more likely to feel emboldened when threatening others, and at the same time be less vulnerable to coercive diplomacy. This may correspond closely to countries and regions that are only weakly integrated into global production and consumption networks, such as North Korea and Africa. Asymmetries of interdependence[21] can give less globalized states and regions increased strategic maneuverability and an offensive advantage due to their low degree of dependence on other countries for vital resources, a fact leading to relative imperviousness to deterrent threats.

Where the preconditions for a high degree of mutual deterrence do not exist, they can nonetheless be cultivated. One of the basic insights of Cold War deterrence doctrine is that full-blown conflict is very costly and not to be preferred to a stable relationship of mutual deterrence where the latter is possible, and the wisdom of this realization should not be lost despite a greater awareness of the limits of Cold War thinking. The realm of

---

[21] Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye, Jr., *Power and Interdependence, Fourth Edition* (Boston: Longman, 2011).

cyber-security is one where deterrence outwardly seems to have limited purchase, but this appearance is deceptive. One of the preconditions of effective deterrence is the ability and willingness to threaten an adversary with the certainty of unacceptable damage to key values. If aggressive state and non-state actors in cyberspace have not thus far been deterred from undertaking malicious cyber-attacks on American infrastructure, this is likely indicative of an insufficient investment in and/or willingness to use American cyber-warfare capabilities to punish adversaries more than it is an indictment of deterrence itself as a strategy. Deterrence of crime according to criminological theory requires certainty and celerity of punishment as well as punishment of sufficient severity to outweigh any possible gains from the offense.[22] Effective deterrence in the cyber domain will depend on identification of the core sources of value of an adversary, and the willingness to punish an adversary quickly and forcefully at their point of maximum vulnerability to deter future attacks.

The Liberal Peace

In closing, we note that the theory of dynastic deterrence has two sets of implications for the liberal research paradigm within international relations. Firstly and most obviously, there is the prospect that extant works on the liberal peace have overlooked intermarriage and immigration between societies as effective pacific mechanisms. In a manner somewhat akin to Ann-Marie Slaughter's depiction of disaggregated governmental networks,[23] societal intermarriage and immigration—

---

[22] Raymond Paternoster, "How Much Do We Really Know about Criminal Deterrence?," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 100, no. 3 (2010): p. 783.
[23] Anne-Marie Slaughter, *A New World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004)

especially in regionally open systems such as the European Union—could constitute a type of concealed deterrence mechanism suppressing the escalation of interstate conflict. It would be a dividend if, when applying the central insights of our research, it was found that the core mechanism underlying dynastic deterrence might function to suppress the escalation of conflict in other political contexts. Secondly, and more pessimistically, societies deeply embedded in immigration and cross-border marriage networks could be susceptible to the fate that befell the Holy Roman Empire—namely that though it secured historical longevity its ruling house gradually became penetrated by the interests and demands of surrounding inferior dynasties. We look at each of these points in turn.

The theory of the liberal peace asserts that liberal states exercise restraint with each other when it comes to warfare, though they are not averse to bellicosity when interacting with other non-liberal states. In a classic article, Michael Doyle argues that two threads within liberal thought lead to the expectation of a liberal peace. The first approach, or what he terms liberal pacifism, is an interest-based logic contending that as liberals seek gain and because war does not pay, liberals do not wage war. The second approach, or liberal internationalism, argues that regions where there exist certain attributes—such as representative institutions limiting resort to war, a collective security agreement enhancing security, and cosmopolitan laws allowing citizens hospitality and free movement across borders (thereby promoting cultural understanding)—will move gradually toward a general peace.[24] The Kantian logic that is elaborated by Doyle does not specify intermarriage and immigration as an essential underpinning of the liberal peace, but in light of the role we have outlined of dynastic intermarriage in curbing the

---

[24] Michael Doyle, "Liberalism and World Politics," *American Political Science Review* 80, no. 4 (1986): pp. 1151-1169.

conquest impulse in early modern Europe, these two factors would seem to be vitally important, though not in the way conventionally thought.

Some liberals in the early twentieth century believed that the free movement of people would enhance the mutual understanding and sympathy of one man for another across national boundaries, and that this sympathy would inhibit the desire of men to wage war on one another. This line of thinking was propelled by deep globalizing forces that had gained a foothold in *fin de siècle* Europe, when vast numbers of people left their land of birth to start a new life in the colonies. As we know the first globalization wave did not lead to the end of warfare, and it has since become a truism that contact between people of different countries and races just as often fosters mutual suspicion and incomprehension as it does sympathy. It would be the two world wars of the last century that largely put paid to the widely held opinion that cross border movement fosters understanding and because of this curtails the impulse for war.

Though today we are disabused of the earlier unduly optimistic view of the cross-border movement of peoples, nonetheless the logic of dynastic deterrence applied to contemporary circumstances suggests that immigration and societal intermarriage might still under specific circumstances hold the potential to curb interstate conflict. However, the critical process in this case is not interaction between the people of different cultures leading to a deepened understanding and sympathy, but rather a bilateral exchange of a significant number of immigrants between two states providing a deterrent against either state waging war on the other.

Even without cross-cultural understanding resulting from an exchange of immigrants, the fact that a significant group of a state's nationals resides in another state

325

should be a significant deterrent to offensive operations being waged against that state (due to the anticipated detrimental consequences to one's own nationals resident there). Though unidirectional migration might check the sending state's aggressive designs somewhat, we assume that bidirectional migration will be required to completely check the outbreak of war in a dyad. A large number of cross-national marriages would lend further strength to this deterrent effect, due to the decreased mobility of the family unit and thus married couples' diminished ability to escape threats emanating from the environment.

The operative mechanism in this case is fear for the safety of one's foreign nationals on the part of a government, rather than any edifying consequence of cross-cultural interaction. However, it should be noted that one reason why immigration in the modern world may not fully yield its beneficent effects, is the largely unidirectional nature of population movements from underdeveloped regions to developed regions. Because the population-flow is predominantly one way, we might predict that the countries of the developed world will be relatively uninhibited in their use of force against developing countries, whereas the countries of the developing world may hesitate to threaten a developed country where a large number of their citizens reside. In this world where immigration and deterrence collide, allowing large inflows of immigrants may paradoxically be a protective strategy against the offensive designs of sending nations.

One final sobering implication must be mentioned with regards to the liberal peace and our analysis of dynastic deterrence in early modern Europe. The Holy Roman Empire, though it existed before the era of liberalism, possessed one aspect of the

prototypical liberal state insofar as its complex structure left it relatively susceptible to external influence through the channel of its dynastic ties. Though the Reich managed to secure longevity through a two-tiered structure of dynastic rule and cross-territorial dynastic marriage ties, nonetheless it became susceptible to the demands of the dynasties that were tied by marriage to the House of Habsburg. Though a more powerful dynasty may manage to retain great influence in a network of kinship ties, the direction of influence is inevitably not entirely one way, and even powerful dynasties cannot quarantine themselves from being influenced by an inferior party. In this regard, dynastic intermarriage—as also cross-territorial marriage and immigration today—may be a strategy that renders a state particularly vulnerable to outside influence via the immigrants that reside within its borders and the ties they retain with their home countries. This susceptibility to influence may be exacerbated when electoral rules and/or their enforcement in a liberal state do not put a sufficiently strong curb on the lobbying activities of foreign interests. Though the perennial fear of fifth columns and foreign infiltration during the height of twentieth century conflict was surely mostly a product of paranoid thinking, nonetheless it is an uncomfortable truth that relatively open liberal societies do leave themselves susceptible to external influence. In such a milieu, the degree and nature of the external influence that a liberal society tolerates is a conscious decision that must be made rather than a choice that can be indefinitely deferred.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abramson, Scott. "The Economic Origins of the Territorial State." *International Organization* 71 (2017): pp. 97-130.

Adamson, J. S. A. "The Baronial Context of the English Civil War." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 40 (1990): pp. 93-120.

Adamson, John. "The Making of the Ancien Régime Court 1500-1700." In *The Princely Courts of Europe 1500-1750,* edited by John Adamson, pp. 7-41. London: Seven Dials, 2000.

Adamson, J. S. A. *The Noble Revolt: The Overthrow of Charles I.* London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2007.

Almond, Gabriel, and Stephen Genco. "Clouds, Clocks, and the Study of Politics." *World Politics* 29, no.4 (1977): pp. 489-522.

Anderson, M. S. "Eighteenth-Century Theories of the Balance of Power." In *Studies in Diplomatic History,* edited by Ragnhild Hatton, pp. 183-198. London: Longman, 1970.

Anderson, M. S. *Europe in the Eighteenth Century 1713-1783, Third Edition.* London: Longman, 1987.

Anderson, M. S. *War and Society in Europe of the Old Regime 1618-1789.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998.

Anderson, M. S. *The War of the Austrian Succession 1740-1748.* London: Longman, 1995.

Aran, Bethany. "Voyages from Burgundy to Castile: Cultural conflict and dynastic transitions, 1502-06." In *Early Modern Dynastic Marriages and Cultural Transfer,* edited by Joan-Lluís Palos and Magdalena Sánchez, pp. 91-114. Farnham: Ashgate, 2016.

Arrieta Alberdi, Jon. "Forms of Union: Britain and Spain, a Comparative Analysis." *Revista Internacional de Estudios Vascos,* Cuad 5 (2009): pp. 23-52.

Art, Robert. "To What Ends Military Power." *International Security* 4, no. 4 (1980): pp. 3-35.

Asch, Ronald. "Introduction: Court and Household from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Centuries." In *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility,* edited by Ronald Asch and Adolf Birke, pp. 1-38. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Asch, Ronald. "Monarchy in Western and Central Europe." In *Oxford Handbook of Early Modern European History 1350-1750,* edited by Hamish Scott, pp. 355-380. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Aston, Trevor, ed. *Crisis in Europe 1560-1660.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963.

Axelrod, Robert. *The Evolution of Cooperation.* New York: Basic Books, 2006.

Aylmer, G. E. *Rebellion or Revolution? England from Civil War to Restoration.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Bachrach, Peter, and Morton Baratz. "Two Faces of Power." *American Political Science Review* 56, no. 4 (1962): pp. 947-952.

Ball, Terence. "From Paradigms to Research Programs: Towards a Post-Kuhnian Political Science." *American Journal of Political Science* 20, no. 1 (1976): pp. 151-177.

Ball, Terence. "Is There Progress in Political Science?." In *Idioms of Inquiry: Critique and Renewal in Political Science,* edited by Terence Ball, pp. 13-41. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987.

Barber, Peter. "Maps and Monarchs in Europe 1550-1800." In *Royal and Republican Sovereignty in Early Modern Europe,* edited by Robert Oresko, G.C. Gibbs, and H. M. Scott, pp. 75-124. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Barnard, Toby. *The Kingdom of Ireland, 1641-1760.* Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004.

Barnard, Toby. "Scotland and Ireland in the later Stewart monarchy." In *Conquest and Union: Fashioning a British State,* edited by Steven G. Ellis and Sarah Barber, pp. 250-275. London: Longman, 1995.

Baty, Thomas. "The Relations of Invaders to Insurgents." *Yale Law Journal* 36, no.7 (1927): pp. 966-984.

Bennett, Andrew. "A Lakatosian Reading of Lakatos: What Can We Salvage from the Hard Core?." In *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* edited by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, pp. 455-494. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.

Bergin, Joseph, ed. *The Short Oxford History of Europe: The Seventeenth Century.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Bernstein, Steven, Richard Ned Lebow, Janice Gross Stein, and Steven Weber. "God Gave Physics the Easy Problems: Adapting Social Science to an Unpredictable World." *European Journal of International Relations* 6, no. 1 (2008): pp. 43-76.

Betts, Richard. "Analysis, War, and Decision: Why Intelligence Failures are Inevitable." *World Politics* 31, no. 1 (1978): pp. 61-89.

Betts, Richard. "The Lost Logic of Deterrence." *Foreign Affairs,* March/April 2013.

Betts, Richard. "The New Threat of Mass Destruction." *Foreign Affairs,* January/February, 1998.

Beyerchen, Alan. "Clausewitz, Nonlinearity, and the Unpredictability of War." *International Security* 17, no. 3 (1992): pp. 59-90.

Biddle, Stephen. *Military Power: Explaining Victory and Defeat in Modern Battle.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Black, Jeremy. *European Warfare 1660-1815.* London: UCL Press, 1994.

Black, Jeremy. "Habsburg-Valois Wars." In *Europe 1452-1789, Volume 3,* edited by Jonathan

    Dewald, pp 119-122. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2004.

Black, Jeremy. *Kings, Nobles and Commoners.* London: I.B. Tauris, 2004.

Black, Jeremy. *The Rise of the European Powers 1679-1793.* London: Edward Arnold, 1990.

Black, Jeremy. "Was there a Military Revolution in Early Modern Europe?." *History Today* 58,

    no. 7 (2008): pp. 34-41.

Blanning, T.C.W. *The Culture of Power and the Power of Culture.* Oxford: Oxford University

    Press, 2002.

Blanning, Tim. *Frederick the Great.* London: Allen Lane, 2015.

Blanning, Tim. *The Origins of the French Revolutionary Wars.* London: Longman, 1986.

Blocher, Joseph. "Selling State Borders." *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 162, no.2

    (2014): pp. 241-305.

Blyth, Mark. "ELEN Degenerates – or – Four (plus two) Reasons to Take Ideas Very Seriously

    Indeed." unpublished manuscript, 2008.

Blyth, Mark. "Great Punctuations: Predictions, Randomness, and the Evolution of Comparative

    Political Science." *American Political Science Review* 100, no. 4 (2006): pp. 493-498.

Blyth, Mark. "Structures Do Not Comes with an Instruction Sheet: Interests, Ideas, and Progress

    in Political Science." *Perspectives on Politics* 1, no. 4 (2003): pp. 695-706.

Botero, Giovanni. *The Reason of State*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956.

Braddick, Michael. *God's Fury, England's Fire: A New History of the English Civil Wars*

    Harmondsworth, Penguin, 2008.

Brodie, Bernard. "Implications for Military Policy." In *The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order,* edited by Bernard Brodie, pp. 57-89. New Haven: Yale Institute of International Studies, 1946.

Brown, Chris. *Understanding International Relations.* Houndmills: Palgrave, 2001.

Brown, Chris, Terry Nardin, and Nicholas Rengger, eds. *International Relations in Political Thought.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Brown, Keith M. *Kingdom or Province? Scotland and the Regal Union, 1603-1715.* London: Macmillan, 1992.

Brunner, Otto. *Land and Lordship: Structures of Governance in Medieval Austria.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992.

Bryce, James. "Flexible and Rigid Constitutions." In *Studies in History and Jurisprudence,* pp. 124-215. New York: Oxford University Press, 1901.

Bueno De Mesquita, Bruce. "Toward a Scientific Understanding of International Conflict: A Personal View." *International Studies Quarterly* 29 (1985): pp. 121-136.

Bues, Almut. "The Formation of the Polish-Lithuanian Monarchy in the Sixteenth Century." In *The Polish-Lithuanian Monarchy in European Context, c.1500-1795,* edited by Richard Butterwick, pp. 58-81. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001.

Buisseret, David, ed. *Monarchs, Ministers and Maps: The Emergence of Cartography as a Tool of Government in Early Modern Europe.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Bukovansky, Mlada. *Legitimacy and Power Politics.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002.

Bull, Hedley. *The Anarchical Society,* Second Edition. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.

Bull, Hedley. "International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach." *World Politics* 18, no. 3 (1966): pp. 361-377.

Burnet, Gilbert. *A Sermon Preached at the Coronation of William III and Mary II.* London: Printed for J. Starkey and Ric. Chiswell at the Rose and Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1689.

Bury, J. B. *The Idea of Progress: An Inquiry into its Origin and Growth.* New York: Macmillan, 1932.

Butler, Geoffrey, and Simon Maccoby. *The Development of International Law.* London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1928.

Butterfield, Herbert. "The Balance of Power." In *Diplomatic Investigations,* edited by Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, pp. 132-148. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1966.

Butterfield, Herbert. *The Whig Interpretation of History.* New York: W.W. Norton, 1965.

Butterwick, Richard. *The Polish-Lithuanian Monarchy in European Context.* Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001.

Buzan, Barry. *People, States and Fear, Second Edition.* Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1991.

Buzan, Barry, and Richard Little. *International Systems in World History: Remaking the Study of International Relations.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Buzan, Barry, and Richard Little. "Why International Relations Has Failed as an Intellectual Project and What to do About it." *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 30, no. 1 (2001): pp. 19-39.

Cambray, Archbishop of. "Two Essays on the Balance of Europe." In *A Collection of Scarce and Valuable Tracts Vol. XIII*. Edited by Sir Walter Scott. London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1815.

Campbell, Donald. "Degrees of Freedom and the Case Study." *Comparative Political Studies* 8, no. 2 (1975): pp. 178-193.

Carr, E. H. *The Twenty Years' Crisis*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001.

Carr, E. H. *What is History?*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 1961.

Carter, C. H. *The Secret Diplomacy of the Habsburgs 1598-1625*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1964.

Chalmers, George. *A Collection of Treaties between Great Britain and Other Powers, Volume II*. London: J. Stockdale, 1970.

Chandler, David. *The Campaigns of Napoleon*. New York: Scribner, 1966.

Chernoff, Fred. "Scientific Realism as a Meta-Theory of International Politics." *International Studies Quarterly* 46 (2002): pp. 189-207.

Christensen, Thomas, and Jack Snyder. "Progressive Research on Degenerative Alliances." *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 4 (1997): pp. 919-922.

Claude, Inis. "Balance of Power: An Ambiguous Concept." In *Power and International Relations,* p.11-39. New York: Random House, 1962.

Cole, Stephen. "Why Sociology Doesn't Make Progress Like the Natural Sciences." *Sociological Forum* 9, no. 2 (1994): pp. 133-154.

Connolly, Sean. *Divided Kingdom, Ireland 1630-1800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Cooke, Edward. *Arguments for and Against An Union, Between Great Britain and Ireland, Considered*. London: J. Wright, 1798.

Cook, Chris, and Philp Broadhead. *The Longman Handbook of Early Modern Europe 1453-1763.* Essex: Pearson, 2001.

Copeland, Dale. "Economic Interdependence and War." *International Security* 20, no. 4 (1996): pp. 5-41.

Corp, Edward. *A Court in Exile: The Stuarts in France, 1689-1718.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Crankshaw, Edward. *Maria Theresa.* New York: The Viking Press, 1969.

Croxton, Derek. *The Last Christian Peace: The Congress of Westphalia as a Baroque Event.* New York: Palgrave, 2013.

Cunningham, Andrew. "Getting the Game Right: Some Plain Words on the Identity and Invention of Science." *Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science* 19, no. 3 (1988): pp. 365-389.

Davidson, Lillias Campbell. *Catherine of Bragança: Infanta of Portugal & Queen-Consort of England.* London: John Murray, 1908.

Dessler, David. "Explanation and Scientific Progress." In *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* edited by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, pp. 381- 404. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.

Dessler, David. "What's at Stake in the Agent-Structure Debate?." *International Organization* 43, no. 3 (1989): pp. 441-473.

Diesing, Paul. *How Does Social Science Work?.* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992.

Disney, A. R. *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire, Volume 1.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Donnachie, Ian, and George Hewitt. *A Companion to Scottish History from the Reformation to the Present.* London: Batsford, 1989.

Doty, Roxanne Lynn. "Aporia: A Critical Exploration of the Agent-Structure Problematique in International Relations Theory." *European Journal of International Relations* 3, no. 3 (1997): pp. 365-392.

Doyle, Michael. "Liberalism and World Politics." *American Political Science Review* 80, no. 4 (1986): pp. 1151-1169.

Dryzek, John S., and Stephen Leonard. "History and Discipline in Political Science." *American Political Science Review* 82, no. 4 (1988): pp. 1245-1260.

Dryzek, John S. "The Progress of Political Science." *Journal of Politics* 48 (1986): pp. 301-320.

Duchhardt, Heinz. "The Dynastic Marriage." EGO European History Online. Published April 8, 2011. http://www.ieg-ego.eu/duchhardth-2010-en.

Duindam, Jeroen. *Dynasties: A Global History of Power, 1300-1800.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Dunning, Thad. *Natural Experiments in the Social Sciences.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Eckstein, Harry. "Case Study and Theory in Political Science." In *Strategies of Inquiry,* edited by Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby, pp. 79-138. Reading MA: Addison-Wesley, 1975.

Elias, Norbert. *The Civilizing Process.* Oxford: Blackwell, 1994.

Elias, Norbert. *The Court Society.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1983.

Elliott, J.H. *The Count-Duke of Olivares.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986.

Elliott, J. H. "A Europe of Composite Monarchies." *Past and Present* 137 (1992): pp. 48-71.

Elliott, J. H. *Imperial Spain 1469-1716.* Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2002.

Elliott, J. H. "The Political Context of the 1612-1615 Franco-Spanish Treaty." In *Dynastic Marriages 1612/1615,* edited by Margaret McGowan, pp. 5-18. London: Routledge, 2013.

Elliott, J. H. "Revolution and Continuity in Early Modern Europe." *Past and Present* 42 (1969): pp. 35-56.

Elliott, J. H. *Richelieu and Olivares.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Elliott, J. H. "The Spanish Monarchy and the Kingdom of Portugal, 1580-1640." In *Conquest and Coalescence,* edited by Mark Greengrass, pp. 48-67. London: Edward Arnold, 1991.

Elman, Colin, and Miriam Fendius Elman. "How Not to Be Lakatos Intolerant: Appraising Progress in IR Research." *International Studies Quarterly* 46 (2002): pp. 231-262.

Elman, Colin, and Miriam Fendius Elman. "Lakatos and Neorealism: A Reply to Vasquez." *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 4 (1997): pp. 923-925.

Elman, Colin, and Miriam Fendius Elman. "Lessons from Lakatos." In *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* edited by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, pp. 21-68. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.

Elman, Colin, and Miriam Fendius Elman, eds. *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field. Cambridge, MA:* MIT Press, 2003.

Erasmus. *The Education of a Christian Prince.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Ertman, Thomas. *Birth of the Leviathan.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Evans, R. J. W. *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Farr, James, John Gunnell, Raymond Seidelman, John Dryzek, and Stephen Leonard. "Can Political Science Be Neutral?." *American Political Science Review* 84, no. 2 (1990): pp. 587-607.

Fazal, Tanisha. *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007.

Ferguson, W. "The Making of the Treaty of Union of 1707." *The Scottish Historical Review* 43, no. 136 (1964): pp. 89-110.

Ferrero, Guglielmo. *Peace and War.* London: Macmillan, 1933.

Fichtner, Paula Sutter. "Dynastic Marriage in Sixteenth-Century Habsburg Diplomacy and Statecraft." *The American Historical Review* 81, no.2 (1976): pp. 243-265.

Fletcher, Andrew. *Account of a Conversation Concerning a Right Regulation of Governments for the Common Good of Mankind.* Edinburgh, 1704.

Frederick II. *Frederick the Great on the Art of War.* New York: Da Capo Press, 1999.

Frederick II. *The History of My Own Times, Part I.* Translated by Thomas Holcroft. London: G.G.J. and J. Robinson, 1789.

Frederick II. "Ideas on Political Projects to be Formed in Connection with the Death of the Emperor, (1740)." In *The Habsburg and Hohenzollern Dynasties in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* edited by C.A. Macartney, pp. 327-328. New York: Walker and Company, 1970.

Frederick II. "Political Testament 1752." In *The Habsburg and Hohenzollern Dynasties in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* edited by C.A. Macartney, pp. 331-346. New York: Walker and Company, 1970.

Frederick William. "Political Testament." In *The Habsburg and Hohenzollern Dynasties in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* edited by C.A. Macartney, pp. 309-322. New York: Walker and Company, 1970.

Freedman, Lawrence. *Deterrence.* Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004.

Freedman, Lawrence. *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy, Third Edition.* Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2003.

Frost, Robert. *After the Deluge: Poland-Lithuania and the Second Northern War 1655-1660.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Frost, Robert. (1986), "Initium Calamitatis Regni? John Casimir and Monarchical Power in Poland-Lithuania, 1648-68." *European History Quarterly,* 16 (1986): pp. 181-207.

Frost, Robert. *The Northern Wars: War, State and Society in Northeastern Europe, 1558-1721.* Essex: Longman, 2000.

Gartzke, Erik. "The Capitalist Peace." *American Journal of Political Science,* 51, no.1 (2007): pp. 166-191.

Gavrilov, Leonid, and Natalia Gavrilova. "Evolutionary Theories of Aging and Longevity." *The Scientific World Journal* 2 (2002): pp. 339-356.

Gavrilov, Leonid, and Natalia Gavrilova. "Mortality Measurement at Advanced Ages." *North American Actuarial Journal* 15, no. 3 (2011): pp. 432-447.

Geevers, Liesbeth, and Mirella Marini, eds. *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe.* Surrey: Ashgate, 2015.

Gentz, Friedrich von. *Fragments upon the Balance of Power in Europe.* London: M. Peltier, 1806.

Gerring, John. "What is a Case Study and What Is It Good for?." *American Political Science Review* 98, no. 2 (2004): pp. 341-354.

Gilpin, Robert. *War and Change in World Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Goldie, Mark. "Divergence and Union: Scotland and England, 1660-1707." In *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707,* edited by Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill, pp. 220-245. London: Macmillan, 1996.

Gompertz, Benjamin. "On the Nature of the Function Expressive of the Law of Human Mortality, and on a New Mode of Determining the Value of Life Contingencies." *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* 115 (1825): pp. 513-583.

Gourevitch, Peter. "The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics." *International Organization* 32, no. 4 (1978): pp. 881-912.

Greengrass, Mark. "Introduction: Conquest and Coalescence." In *Conquest and Coalescence,* edited by Mark Greengrass, pp. 1-24. London: Edward Arnold, 1991.

Gross, Leo. "The Peace of Westphalia." *American Journal of International Law* 42, no. 1 (1948): pp. 20-41.

Gustafsson, Harald. "The Conglomerate State: A Perspective on State Formation in Early Modern Europe." *Scandinavian Journal of History* 23 (1998): pp. 189-213.

Hacking, Ian. "Lakatos's Philosophy of Science." In *Scientific Revolutions,* edited by Ian Hacking, pp. 128-143. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Hall, Rupert. "On Whiggism." *History of Science* 21 (March, 1983): pp. 45-59.

Hamilton, Alexander, *et al. The Federalist with Letters of "Brutus."* Edited by Terence Ball. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Hargreaves-Mawdsley, W. N., ed. *Spain under the Bourbons, 1700-1833: A collection of documents.* London: Macmillan, 1968.

Hatton, R. M. "Charles XII and the Great Northern War." In *The New Cambridge Modern History, Volume VI,* edited by J.S. Bromley, pp. 648-680. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Hatton, R. M. *Charles XII of Sweden.* New York: Weybright and Talley, 1968.

Hempel, Carl. "The Function of General Laws in History." *The Journal of Philosophy* 38 (1942): pp. 35-48.

Hinsley, F. H. *Power and the Pursuit of Peace.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963.

Hintze, Otto. *The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze.* Edited by Felix Gilbert. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.

Hoffman, Martha. *Raised to Rule: Educating Royalty at the Court of the Spanish Habsburgs, 1601-1634.* Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011.

Hollis, Martin, and Steve Smith. "Beware of Gurus: Structure and Action in International Relations." *Review of International Studies* 17 (1991): pp. 393-410.

Hollis, Martin, and Steve Smith. *Explaining and Understanding International Relations.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.

Hollis, Martin, and Steve Smith. "Structure and Action: Further Comment." *Review of International Studies* 18 (1992): pp. 187-188.

Holsti, K. J. "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, Which Are the Fairest Theories of All?." *International Studies Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (1989): pp. 255-261.

Holzgrefe, J. L. "The Origins of Modern International Relations Theory." *Review of International Studies* 15, no. 1 (1989): pp. 11-26.

Howard, Michael. *The Causes of Wars.* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1983.

Howard, Michael. *War in European History.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976.

Hurwich, Judith J. "Marriage Strategy among the German Nobility." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* XXIXL, no. 2 (1998): 169-195.

Jablonowski, H. "Poland–Lithuania 1609–48." In *The New Cambridge Modern History Vol. IV,* edited by J.P. Cooper, pp. 585-601. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Jackson, Patrick Thaddeus, and Daniel Nexon. "Relations Before States: Substance, Process and the Study of World Politics." *European Journal of International Relations* 5, no. 3 (1999): pp. 291-332.

James I. *The Political Works of James I,* edited by Charles Howard McIlwain. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1918.

Jervis, Robert. "Hans Morgenthau, Realism, and the Scientific Study of International Politics." *Social Research* 61, no. 4 (1994): pp. 853-876.

Jervis, Robert. *The Meaning of the Nuclear Revolution.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989.

Jervis, Robert. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics.* Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976.

Jervis, Robert. "Pluralistic Rigor: A Comment on Bueno de Mesquita." *International Studies Quarterly* 29 (1985): pp. 145-149.

Jervis, Robert. "Realism, Neoliberalism, and Cooperation: Understanding the Debate." In *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* edited by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, pp. 277-310 . Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.

Jervis, Robert. *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life.* Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997.

Johnston, Alastair Iain. *Social States.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008.

Kaiser, Thomas. "Who's Afraid of Marie-Antoinette? Diplomacy, Austrophobia and the Queen."
French History 14, no.3 (2000): pp. 241-271.

Kamen, Henry. *Spain, 1469-1714: A Society of Conflict, Third Edition.* Harlow: Pearson
Longman, 2005.

Katz, Richard. "Mutual Assured Production." *Foreign Affairs,* July/August 2013.

Kaufman, Stuart, Richard Little, and William Wohlforth, ed. *The Balance of Power in World
History.* Houndmills: Palgrave, 2007.

Keene, Edward. *International Political Thought: A historical introduction.* Cambridge: Polity,
2005.

Keohane, Robert. *After Hegemony.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.

Keohane, Robert and Joseph Nye, Jr. *Power and Interdependence, Fourth Edition.* Boston:
Longman, 2011.

Keohane, Robert, and Lisa Martin. "Institutional Theory as a Research Program." In *Progress in
International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* edited by Colin Elman and Miriam
Fendius Elman, pp. 71-107 . Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.

King, Gary, Robert Keohane, and Sidney Verba. *Designing Social Inquiry.* Princeton: Princeton
University Press, 1994.

Knorr, Klaus, and James Rosenau. "Tradition and Science in the Study of International Politics."
In *Contending Approaches to International Politics,* edited by Klaus Knorr and James
Rosenau, pp. 3-19. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.

Kocs, Stephen. "The Dynastic Constitution of Early Modern International Politics." Unpublished
manuscript, 2010.

Koenigsberger, H. G. "The European Civil War." In *The Habsburgs and Europe 1516-1660,* pp. 219-285. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971.

Koenigsberger, H. G. *Monarchies, States Generals and Parliaments.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Koenigsberger, H. G. *Politicians and Virtuosi.* London: Hambledon Press, 1986.

Korman, Sharon. *The Right of Conquest.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.

Kossmann, E. H. "Trevor-Roper's 'General Crisis'." *Past and Present* 18 (1960): pp. 8-11.

Krasner, Stephen. "Compromising Westphalia." *International Security* 20, no. 3 (1995/6): pp. 115-151.

Krasner, Stephen. "Toward Understanding in International Relations." *International Studies Quarterly* 29 (1985): pp. 137-144.

Krasner, Stephen. "Westphalia and All That." In *Ideas and Foreign Policy*, edited by Judith Goldstein and Robert Keohane, pp.235-264. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993.

Kratochwil, Fredrich. "Constructing a New Orthodoxy? Wendt's 'Social Theory of International Politics' and the Constructivist Challenge." *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 29, no. 1 (2000): pp. 73-101.

Kratochwil, Fredrich. "Evidence, Inference, and Truth as Problems of Theory Building in the Social Sciences." In *Theory and Evidence in Comparative Politics and International Relations,* edited by Richard Ned Lebow and Mark Irving Lichbach, pp. 25-54. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Kratochwil, Fredrich. "History, Action and Identity: Revisiting the 'Second' Great Debate and Assessing its Importance for Social Theory." *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 1 (2006): pp. 5-29.

Kratochwil, Fredrich. "Looking Back from Somewhere: Reflections on What Remains 'Critical' in Critical Theory." *Review of International Studies* 33 (2007): pp. 25-45.

Kratochwil, Fredrich. "Of False Promises and Good Bets: A Plea for a Pragmatic Approach to Theory Building." *Journal of International Relations and Development* 10 (2007): pp. 1-15.

Kuhn, Thomas. "Notes on Lakatos." *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science* VIII (1970): pp. 137-146.

Kuhn, Thomas. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions.* Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1996.

Laitin, David. "Disciplining Political Science." *The American Political Science Review* 89, no. 2 (1995): pp. 454-456.

Lakatos, Imre. "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes." In *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge,* edited by Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, pp. 91-196. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Lakatos, Imre. "History of Science and its Rational Reconstructions." In *Scientific Revolutions,* edited by Ian Hacking, pp. 107-127. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Lapid, Yosef. "The Third Debate: On the Prospects of International Theory in a Post-Positivist Era." *International Studies Quarterly* 33 (1989): pp. 235-254.

Laudan, Larry. "A Confutation of Convergent Realism." *Philosophy of Science* 48, no. 1 (1981): pp. 19-49.

Laudan, Larry. "A Problem-Solving Approach to Scientific Progress." In *Scientific Revolutions,* edited by Ian Hacking, pp. 144-155. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Laudan, Larry. *Progress and Its Problems: Toward a Theory of Scientific Growth.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.

Leifer, Eric. "Denying the Data: Learning from the Accomplished Sciences." *Sociological Forum* 7, no. 2 (1992): pp. 283-299.

Lendvai, Paul. *The Hungarians: A Hundred Years of Victory in Defeat.* Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003.

Lesaffer, Randall. "Peace Treaties and the Formation of International Law." In *The Oxford Handbook of The History of International Law,* edited by Bardo Fassbender and Anne Peters, pp. 71-94. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Lesaffer, Randall. "Peace Treaties from Lodi to Westphalia." In *Peace Treaties and International Law in European History: From the Late Middle Ages to World War One,* edited by Randall Lesaffer, pp. 9-44. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Levy, Jack. *War in the Modern Great Power System 1495-1975.* Lexington KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1983.

Lewitter, L.R. "The Partitions of Poland." In *The New Cambridge Modern History Vol. VIII,* edited by Elliot Goodwin, pp. 333-359. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965.

Lewitter, L.R. "The Partitions of Poland: Part I." *History Today* 8 no. 12 (1958): pp. 813-820.

Lewitter, L.R. "The Partitions of Poland: Part II." *History Today* 9, no. 1 (1959): pp. 30-39.

Lewitter, L.R. "Poland Under the Saxon Kings." In *The New Cambridge Modern History Vol. VII,* edited by J.O. Lindsay, pp. 365-390. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957.

Lieberson, Stanley, and Freda Lynn. "Barking Up the Wrong Branch: Scientific Alternatives to the Current Model of Sociological Science." *Annual Review of Sociology* 28 (2002): pp. 1-19.

Lieberson, Stanley. (1992), "Einstein, Renoir, and Greeley: Some Thoughts about Evidence in Sociology." *American Sociological Review* 57, no. 1 (1992): pp. 1-15.

Lijphart, Arend. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *The American Political Science Review* 65, no. 3 (1971): pp. 682-693.

Little, Richard. *The Balance of Power in International Relations.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

Lockhart, Paul. *Sweden in the Seventeenth Century.* Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004.

Lossky, Andrew. "International Relations in Europe." In *The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. VI,* edited by J. S. Bromley, pp.154-192. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Luard, Evan. *The Balance of Power: The System of International Relations 1648-1815.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992.

Luard, Evan. *War in International Society.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987.

Luhmann, Niklas. *Social Systems.* Translated by John Bednarz. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996.

Lukowski, Jerzy. *Liberty's Folly: The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the eighteenth century, 1697-1795.* London: Routledge, 1991.

Lukowski, Jerzy. *The Partitions of Poland 1772, 1793, 1795.* London: Longman, 1999.

Lynn, John. "International Rivalry and Warfare." In *The Eighteenth Century,* edited by Tim Blanning, pp. 178-217. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Lynn, John A. *The Wars of Louis XIV 1667-1714.* Essex: Pearson, 1999.

Macartney, C.A. *Maria Theresa and the House of Austria.* Mystic: Lawrence Verry, 1969.

Macaulay, Thomas Babington. *An Essay on Frederic the Great.* New York: Maynard Merrill, 1893.

Machiavelli, Niccolò. *Discourses on Livy.* Translated by Harvey Mansfield and Nathan Tarcov. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Machiavelli, Niccolò. The Prince. Edited by Quentin Skinner and Russell Price. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Macinnes, Allan I. *Union and Empire: The Making of the United Kingdom in 1707.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

MacIntosh, Gillian, H. *The Scottish Parliament under Charles II, 1660-1685.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007.

Mackinnon, James. *The Union of England and Scotland.* London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1907.

Maria Theresa. "Political Testament." In *The Habsburg and Hohenzollern Dynasties in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,* edited by C.A. Macartney, pp. 97-132. New York: Walker and Company, 1970.

Masters, Roger. "World Politics as a Primitive Political System." *World Politics* 16, no. 4 (1964): pp. 595-619.

Mattingly, Garrett. *Renaissance Diplomacy.* London: Jonathan Cape, 1955.

Maturana, Humberto, and Francisco Varela. *Autopoiesis and Cognition.* Dordrecht Holland: Reidel, 1980.

McKay, Derek, and H. M. Scott. *The Rise of the Great Powers 1648-1815.* London: Longman, 1983.

McKeown, Timothy. "Case Studies and the Statistical Worldview." *International Organization* 53, no. 1 (1999): pp. 161-190.

Mettam, Roger. "Louis XIV and the Illusion of 'Absolutism'." *Seventeenth-century French studies* 5 (1983): p. 297-34.

Meyer, John, John Boli, George Thomas, and Francisco Ramirez. "World Society and the Nation-State." *American Journal of Sociology* 103, no. 1 (1997): pp. 144-181.

Miller, John. *The Glorious Revolution.* London: Longman, 1983.

Milner, Helen. "The Assumption of Anarchy in International Relations Theory: A critique." *Review of International Studies* 17 (1991): pp. 67-85.

Milner, Helen. "Rationalizing Politics: The Emerging Synthesis of International, American, and Comparative Politics." *International Organization* 52, no. 4 (1998): pp. 759-786.

Mitchell, Silvia. "Marriage Plots: Royal Women, Marriage Diplomacy and International Politics at the Spanish, French and Imperial Courts, 1665-1679." In *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics Since 1500,* edited by Glenda Sluga and Carolyn James, pp. 86-106. London: Routledge, 2016.

Moody, T.W., F.X. Martin, and F.J Byrne, eds. *A New History of Ireland, Volume III: Early Modern Ireland 1534-1691.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976.

Moravcsik, Andrew. "Liberal International Relations Theory: A Scientific Assessment." In *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* edited by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, pp. 159-204. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.

Morgenthau, Hans. *Scientific Man vs. Power Politics.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946.

Nef, John. *War and Human Progress.* New York: Norton, 1968.

Nenner, Howard. *The Right to be King: The Succession to the Crown of England, 1603-1714.*

    London: Macmillan, 1995.

Nexon, Daniel. *The Struggle for Power in Early Modern Europe.* Princeton: Princeton

    University Press, 2009.

Nicolson, Harold. *Kings, Courts and Monarchy.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1962.

Ogg, David. "The Emergence of Great Britain as a World Power." In *The New Cambridge

    Modern History, Volume VI,* edited by J.S. Bromley, pp. 254-283. Cambridge:

    Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Onuf, Nicholas. "Levels." *European Journal of International Relations* 1, no. 1 (1995): pp. 35-

    58.

Orr, Clarissa Campbell. "Dynasticism and the World of the Court." In *A Companion to

    Eighteenth-Century Europe,* edited by Peter H. Wilson, pp. 435-450. Oxford: Blackwell,

    2008.

Osiander, Andreas. "Sovereignty, International Relations, and the Westphalian Myth."

    International Organization 55 (Spring, 2001): pp. 251-287.

Osiander, Andreas. *The States System of Europe, 1640-1990.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Padgett, John F., and Christopher Ansell. "Robust Action and the Rise of the Medici, 1400-

    1434." *American Journal of Sociology* 98 no. 6 (1993): pp. 1259-1319.

Paret, Peter. "Napoleon and the Revolution in War." In *Makers of Modern Strategy,* edited by

    Peter Paret, pp. 123-142. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.

Parker, Geoffrey. "Crisis and Catastrophe: The Global Crisis of the Seventeenth Century

    Reconsidered." *The American Historical Review* 113, no. 4 (2008): pp. 1053-1079.

Parker, Geoffrey. "Dynastic War." In *The Cambridge History of Warfare,* edited by Geoffrey Parker, pp. 148-166. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Parker, Geoffrey. *Global Crisis: War, Climate Change and Catastrophe in the Seventeenth Century.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.

Parker, Geoffrey. "The 'Military Revolution,' 1560-1660—a Myth?." *The Journal of Modern History* 48, no. 2 (1976): pp. 195-214.

Paternoster, Raymond. "How Much Do We Really Know about Criminal Deterrence?." *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 100, no. 3 (2010): p. 765-823.

Patomaki, Heikki. "How to Tell Better Stories about World Politics." *European Journal of International Relations* 2, no. 1 (1996): pp. 105-133.

Perceval-Maxwell, M. "Ireland and the Monarchy in the Early Stuart Multiple Kingdom." *The Historical Journal* 34, no. 2 (1991): pp. 279-295.

Persson, Fabian. "The Courts of the Vasas and Palatines." In *The Princely Courts of Europe 1500-1750,* edited by John Adamson, pp. 275-294. London: Seven Dials, 2000.

Pierson, Paul. *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Pitt, William. *The Speeches of the Right Honourable William Pitt, in the House of Commons, Volume IV.* Paternoster-Row: Longman, 1806.

Platt, John. "Strong Inference." *Science, New Series* 146, no. 3642 (1964): pp. 347-353.

Pocock, J.G.A. "The War of the Three Kingdoms." In *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707,* edited by Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill, pp. 172-191. London: Macmillan, 1996.

Polsby, Nelson. "Social Science and Scientific Change: A Note on Thomas S. Kuhn's Contribution." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (1998): pp. 199-210.

Popper, Karl. "The Rationality of Scientific Revolutions." In *Scientific Revolutions,* edited by Ian Hacking, pp. 80-106. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981.

Popper, Karl. "Truth, Rationality, and the Growth of Scientific Knowledge." In *Conjectures and Refutations,* edited by Karl Popper, pp. 215-250. London: Routledge, 1963.

Prestage, Edgar. *The Diplomatic Relations of Portugal with France, England, and Holland from 1640 to 1668.* Watford: Voss & Michael, Ltd, 1925.

Raffensperger, Christian. *Reimagining Europe.* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2012.

Reddaway, W. F. "The First Partition." In *The Cambridge History of Poland 1697-1935,* edited by W. F. Reddaway, J. H. Penson, O. Halecki, and R. Dyboski, pp. 88-111. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951.

Reddaway, W.F. *Frederick the Great and the Rise of Prussia.* New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1904.

Reus-Smit, Christian. *The Moral Purpose of the State.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.

Richelieu. *The Political Testament of Cardinal Richelieu.* Translated by Henry Bertram Hill. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.

Ritter, Gerhard. "Frederician Warfare." In *Frederick the Great: A profile,* edited by Peter Paret, pp. 99-120. London: Macmillan, 1972.

Roberts, Michael. *Essays in Swedish History.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1967.

Robertson, John. "An Elusive Sovereignty: The Course of the Union Debate in Scotland 1698-1707." In *A Union for Empire,* edited by John Robertson, pp. 198-227. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Robertson, John. "Empire and Union: Two concepts of the early modern European order." In *A Union for Empire: Political Thought and the Union of 1707,* edited by John Robertson, pp. 3-36. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Rogers, Clifford. "The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years' War." *The Journal of Military History,* 57 no. 2 (1993): pp. 241-278.

Rose, Michael. *Evolutionary Biology of Aging.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Rosén, Jerker. "Scandinavia and the Baltic." In *The New Cambridge Modern History Vol. V,* edited by F.L. Carsten, pp. 519-542. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961.

Rowlands, Guy. *The Dynastic State and the Army under Louis XIV*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Ruggie, John Gerald. "Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity." In *Neorealism and its Critics,* edited by Robert Keohane, pp. 131-157. New York: Columbia University Press, 1986.

Sahlins, Peter. "Natural Frontiers Revisited: France's Boundaries since the Seventeenth Century." *The American Historical Review* 95, no. 5 (1990): pp. 1423-1451.

Sartori, Giovanni. "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics." *American Political Science Review* 64, no. 4 (1970): pp. 1033-1053.

Schelling, Thomas. *Arms and Influence.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.

Schmidt, Brian. *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998.

Schönpflug, Daniel. "One European Family? A Quantitative Approach to Royal Marriage Circles 1700-1918." In *Royal Kinship Anglo-German Family Networks 1815-1918,* edited by Karina Urbach, pp. 25-34. Munich: K.G. Saur, 2008.

Schroeder, Paul. "Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realist Theory." *International Security,* 19 no. 1 (1994): pp. 108-148.

Schroeder, Paul. "Napoleon's Foreign Policy: A Criminal Enterprise." *The Journal of Military History* 54, no. 2 (1990): pp. 147-161

Schroeder, Paul. *The Transformation of European Politics 1763-1848.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.

Schwartz, Stuart. "Portuguese War of Restoration." in *Europe 1450-1789, Volume 5,* edited by Jonathan Dewald, pp. 203-205. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2004.

Schweller, Randall. "Bandwagoning for Profit: Bringing the Revisionist State Back In." *International Security* 19, no. 1 (1994): pp. 72-107.

Schweller, Randall. "New Realist Research on Alliances: Refining, Not Refuting, Waltz's Balancing Proposition." *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 4 (1997): pp. 927-929.

Schweller, Randall. "The Progressiveness of Neoclassical Realism." In *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* edited by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, pp. 311-347. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.

Scott, Hamish. "The Line of Descent of Nobles is from the Blood of Kings: Reflections on Dynastic Identity." In *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe,* edited by Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini, p. 217-242. Surrey: Ashgate, 2015.

Scott, H. M. and Christopher Storrs. "The Consolidation of Noble Power in Europe, c.1600-1800." In *The European Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, Volume One,* edited by H. M. Scott, pp. 1-35. London: Longman, 1995.

Seton, William. *Scotland's Great Advantages by an Union with England.* Edinburgh, 1706.

Sewell, William. "Three Temporalities: Towards an Eventful Sociology." In *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences,* edited by T. J. McDonald, pp. 245-280. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996.

Shennan, J. H. *International Relations in Europe, 1689-1789.* London: Routledge, 1995.

Shils, Edward, and Morris Janowitz. "Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (1948): pp. 280-315.

Showalter, Dennis E. *The Wars of Frederick the Great.* London: Longman, 1996.

Simms, Brendan. *The Struggle for Mastery in Germany, 1779-1850.* New York: St Martin's Press, 1998.

Simms, J.G. "The Jacobite Parliament of 1689." In his *War and Politics in Ireland 1649-1730,* pp. 65-90. London: Hambledon Press, 1986.

Simowitz, Roslyn. "Measuring Intra-programmatic Progress." In *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* edited by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, pp. 405-417. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.

Singer, J. David. "The Level-of-Analysis Problem in International Relations." *World Politics* 14, no. 1 (1961): pp. 77-92.

Skinner, Quentin. "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas." *History and Theory* 8, no. 1 (1969): pp. 3-53.

Slaughter, Anne-Marie. *A New World Order.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Smout, T. C. "The Anglo-Scottish Union of 1707. I. The Economic Background." *The Economic History Review* 16, no. 3 (1964): pp. 455-467.

Smout, T. C. "The Road to Union." In *Britain after the Glorious Revolution,* edited by Geoffrey Holmes, pp. 176-196. London: Macmillan, 1969.

Smyth, Jim. "The Communities of Ireland and the British State, 1660-1707." In *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707,* edited by Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill, pp. 246-261. London: Macmillan, 1996.

Snyder, Glenn. "The Balance of Power and the Balance of Terror." *In The Balance of Power*, edited by Paul Seabury, pp. 185-201. Scranton: Chandler, 1965.

Snyder, Jack. "'Is' and 'Ought': Evaluating Empirical Aspects of Normative Research." In *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* edited by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, pp. 349-380. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.

Spruyt, Hendrik. *The Sovereign State and Its Competitors*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Stephenson, Carl. *Mediaeval Feudalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1942.

Stirk, Peter. *The Politics of Military Occupation*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009.

Stoye, John. *The Siege of Vienna*. New York: Pegasus Books, 2006.

Stradling, R.A. *Europe and the Decline of Spain*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1981.

Strath, Bo. *Europe's Utopias of Peace*. London: Bloomsbury, 2016.

Stubbs, William. *Seventeen Lectures on the Study of Medieval and Modern History*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1887.

Sully, Maximilien de Béthune, duc de. *Sully's Grand Design of Henry IV*. London: Sweet and Maxwell, Limited, 1921.

Szabo, Franz. *The Seven Years War in Europe, 1756-1763*. London: Longman, 2008.

Tainter, Joseph. *The Collapse of Complex Societies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Teschke, Benno. *The Myth of 1648.* London: Verso, 2003.

Thompson, Mark. "Asia's Hybrid Dynasties." *Asian Affairs* 43, no. 2 (2012): pp. 204-220.

Thomson, Mark. "Louis XIV and the Origins of the War of the Spanish Succession."

    Transactions of the Royal Historical Society 4 (1954): pp. 111-134.

Thomson, Mark. "Self-determination and Collective Security as Factors in English and French

    Foreign Policy, 1689-1718." In *William III and Louis XIV*, edited by Ragnhild Hatton and

    J. S. Bromley, pp. 271-286. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1968.

Tilly, Charles. *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1990.* Oxford: Blackwell, 1990.

Tilly, Charles, ed. *The Formation of National States in Western Europe.* Princeton: Princeton

    University Press, 1975.

Toulmin, Stephen. "Does the Distinction between Normal and Revolutionary Science Hold

    Water?." In *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge,* edited by Imre Lakatos and Alan

    Musgrave, pp. 39-47. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Toulmin, Stephen. "The Evolutionary Development of Natural Science." *American Scientist* 55,

    no. 4 (1967): pp. 456-471.

Toulmin, Stephen. *Foresight and Understanding: An Enquiry into the Aims of Science.* New

    York: Harper and Row, 1961.

Toynbee, Arnold. *A Study of History, Abridgement of Volumes I-VI.* Edited by D.C. Somervell.

    New York: Oxford University Press, 1947.

Toynbee, Arnold. *A Study of History, Volume IV.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939.

Treasure, Geoffrey. *Richelieu and Mazarin.* London: Routledge, 1998.

Troost, Wout. *William III, the Stadholder-King: A Political Biography,* Translated by J. C.

    Grayson. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005.

Tully, James. "The Pen is a Mighty Sword: Quentin Skinner's Analysis of Politics." In *Meaning and Context,* edited by James Tully, pp. 3-25. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.

Van Evera, Stephen. "The 'Spiral Model' vs. the 'Deterrence Model'." *Unpublished Manuscript.*

Vasanthakumar, Ashwini. "Treason, Expatriation and 'So-Called' Americans." *Georgetown Journal of Law and Public Policy* 12 (2014): pp. 187-224.

Vasquez, John. "Kuhn vs. Lakatos?: The Case for Multiple Frames in Appraising IR Theory." In *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* edited by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, pp. 419-454. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.

Vasquez, John. "The Realist Paradigm and Degenerative versus Progressive Research Programs: An Appraisal of Neotraditional Research on Waltz's Balancing Proposition." *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 4 (1997): pp. 899-912.

Völkel, Markus. "The Hohenzollern Court 1535-1740." In *The Princely Courts of Europe 1500-1750,* edited by John Adamson, pp. 211-230. London: Seven Dials, 2000.

Waever, Ole. "The Sociology of a Not So International Discipline: American and European Developments in International Relations." *International Organization* 51, no. 4 (1998): pp. 687-727.

Walt, Stephen. "The Progressive Power of Realism." *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 4 (1997): pp. 931-935.

Waltz, Kenneth. "Assaying Theories: Reflections on Imre Lakatos." In *Progress in International Relations Theory: Appraising the Field,* edited by Colin Elman and Miriam Fendius Elman, pp. vii-xii. Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 2003.

Waltz, Kenneth. "Evaluating Theories." *American Political Science Review* 91, no. 4 (1997): pp. 913-917.

Waltz, Kenneth. *Man, the State and War.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.

Waltz, Kenneth. "Realist Thought and Neorealist Theory." *Journal of International Affairs* 44 (1990): pp. 21-37.

Waltz, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics.* Boston: McGraw Hill, 1979.

Ward, A. W., G. W. Prothero, and Stanley Leathes, eds. *The Cambridge Modern History Atlas, Second Edition.* New York: Macmillan, 1924.

Watzlawick, Paul, Janet Beavin Bavelas, and Don Jackson. *Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies, and Paradoxes.* New York: W. W. Norton, 1967.

Weber, Max. *Economy and Society, Volume One.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.

Weber, Max. "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy." In *The Methodology of the Social Sciences,* edited by Edward Shils and Henry Finch, pp. 49-112. New York: The Free Press, 1949.

Wendt, Alexander. "The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory." *International Organization* 41, no. 3 (1987): pp. 335-370.

Wendt, Alexander. "Anarchy is What States Makes of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics." *International Organization* 42, no. 2 (1992): pp. 391-425.

Wendt, Alexander. "Bridging the Theory/Meta-Theory Gap in International Relations." *Review of International Studies* 17 (1991): pp. 383-392.

Wendt, Alexander. "Levels of Analysis vs. Agents and Structures: Part III." *Review of International Studies* 18 (1992): pp. 181-185.

Whaley, Joachim. *Germany and the Holy Roman Empire, Volume II.* Oxford: Oxford University

    Press, 2012.

Wheaton, Henry. *History of the Law of Nations in Europe and America.* New York: Gould

    Banks & Co., 1845.

White, Lorraine. "*War and Government in a Castilian Province: Extremadura 1640-1668.*" PhD

    diss., University of East Anglia, 1985.

Whitman, Sidney. *The Realm of the Habsburgs.* Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1893.

Wight, Martin. *Power Politics.* London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1978.

Wight, Martin. *Systems of States.* Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977.

Wilson, Adrian, and T.G. Ashplant. "Present-Centred History and the Problem of Historical

    Knowledge." 31, no. 2 (1988): pp. 253-274.

Wilson, Adrian, and T. G. Ashplant. "Whig History and Present-Centred History." *The*

    Historical Journal 31 no. 1 (1988): pp. 1-16.

Wilson, Peter. *Europe's Tragedy.* London: Allen Lane, 2009.

Wilson, Peter H. *From Reich to Revolution.* Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2004.

Wilson, Peter. *The Holy Roman Empire.* Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2016.

Wilson, Peter H. *The Holy Roman Empire, Second Edition.* Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011.

Wilson, Peter H. "War in German Thought from the Peace of Westphalia to Napoleon."

    European History Quarterly 28 no. 1 (1998): pp. 5-50.

Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1922.

Wohlforth, William, Stuart Kaufman, and Richard Little. "Introduction: Balance and Hierarchy

    in International Relations." In *The Balance of Power in World History,* edited by

Kaufman, Stuart, Richard Little, and William Wohlforth, pp. 1-21. Houndmills: Palgrave, 2007.

Wohlforth, William. "The Russian-Soviet Empire: A Test of Neorealism." In *Empires, Systems, and States: Great Transformations in International Politics,* edited by Michael Cox, Tim Dunne, and Ken Booth, pp. 213-235. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Wolf, Amin. "The Family of Dynasties in Medieval Europe: Dynasties, Kingdoms and 'Tochterstämme'." *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History* 12 (1991): pp. 183-259.

Wright, Moorhead. Introduction to *Theory and Practice of the Balance of Power, 1486-1914.* Edited by Moorhead Wright. London: Dent, 1975.

Yom, Sean. "Authoritarian Monarchies as an Epistemic Community." *Taiwan Journal of Demcracy* 10, no. 1 (2014): pp 43-62.