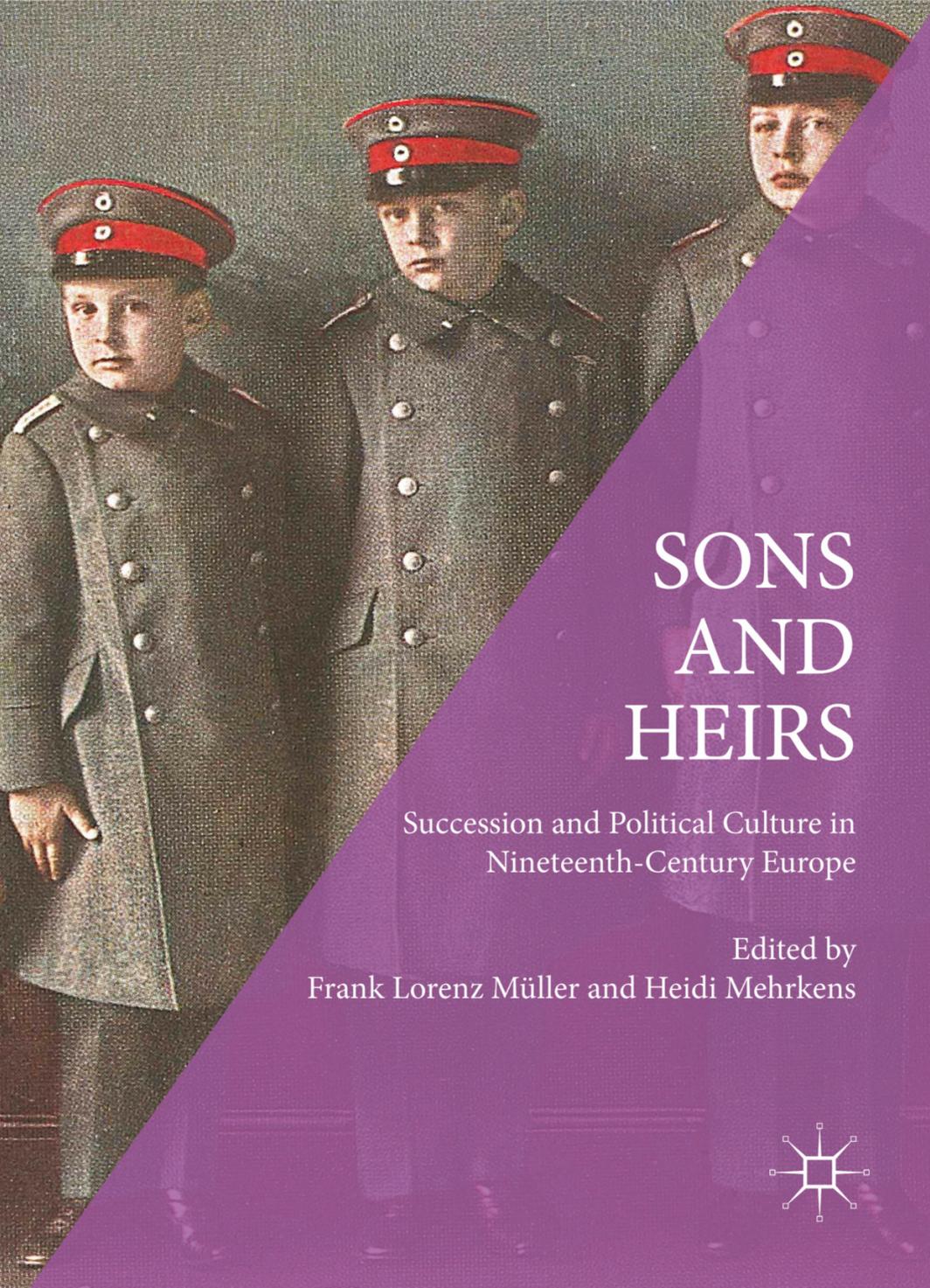


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SONS AND HEIRS

Succession and Political Culture in
Nineteenth-Century Europe

Edited by
Frank Lorenz Müller and Heidi Mehrkens



Sons and Heirs

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Sons and Heirs

Succession and Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century Europe

Edited by

Frank Lorenz Müller

University of St Andrews, UK

and

Heidi Mehrkens

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1

Stabilizing a ‘Great Historic System’ in the Nineteenth Century? Royal Heirs and Succession in an Age of Monarchy

Frank Lorenz Müller

In terms of epochal epithets, Europe’s nineteenth century provides an embarrassment of riches. Eric Hobsbawm’s classic tryptic characterized it as a threefold age, first of revolution, then of capital and finally of empire. In his durable textbook M. S. Anderson focused on the continent’s ‘ascendancy’ after 1815. Jonathan Sperber chose to headline its ‘revolutionary’ character for the first half of the century and described the decades after 1850 as shaped by ‘progress, participation and apprehension’. Eberhard Weis and Theodor Schieder, who covered the century within the grand Propyläen history of Europe series, declared the ‘breakthrough of the bourgeoisie’ and ‘system of states as global hegemon’ to be the epoch’s defining themes. Finally, in his magisterial global history of the century, Jürgen Osterhammel recently credited the era with having achieved ‘the transformation of the world’.¹

These, and many other prominent appraisals of the period, foreground the dimensions of the enormous change that occurred between the French Revolution and the First World War. The century witnessed industrialization and scientific advance, demographic growth and mass migration, general literacy and the expansion of the public sphere, constitutional progress and large-scale enfranchisement, Europe’s dramatic imperial reach across much of the globe, and many other profound cultural, social and emotional transformations. When the Long Nineteenth Century ended, some 130 years after the final meeting of France’s Estates General, the world had learned to use X-ray machines, drop bombs from fixed-wing aircraft and laugh at Charlie Chaplin films. This stupendous record of innovation has left its mark on the ways in which the period has been explored. The historians’ attention – just like the human eye – is drawn to rapidly moving parts. The resultant emphasis on what changed in the nineteenth century has, however, served to obscure what may appear to be

a remarkable and counter-intuitive survival and persistence phenomenon: European monarchy.

The hypothesis that has inspired the present volume is that another epithet must be added to the other crucial characterizations mentioned above in order to achieve a full and fruitful understanding of Europe's nineteenth century: it was also an age of monarchy. Notwithstanding the depth and breadth of the epochal changes, which meant that the notion of divine ordination lost almost all traction, executive power was increasingly in the hands not of princes but of ministers and laws could no longer be made without a form of parliamentary cooperation, monarchy as a system of government and – more widely – as a complex of cultural, emotional and legal structures proved astonishingly resilient. For all of its drama and symbolic significance Louis XVI's mounting of the scaffold in January 1793 did not mark the beginning of an extinction event for European monarchs. The 'Age of Democratic Revolution' did not usher in an age of republics.² The next great continent-wide revolution, the multiple upheavals of 1848–49, did not significantly thin out the royal panoply either. Instead, Europe remained solidly and deeply monarchical. Every European state that was newly formed in the nineteenth century – from Greece (1821) and Belgium (1830) to Bulgaria (1878) and Norway (1905) – chose to take the step into independence under a crowned head. When the continent went to war in 1914, France, Switzerland, San Marino and Portugal constituted the small republican exception that proved an overwhelmingly monarchical rule.³ While there were some anti-monarchical movements, and individual rulers were regularly subjected to fierce criticism, monarchy was not, on the whole, existentially threatened. Rather, hereditary monarchical regimes, in which the crown was passed on along a carefully guarded blood line, appear to have enjoyed a significant degree of popularity and occasionally affectionate forms of public endorsement. When the cataclysmic conflict that would end up sweeping away vast parts of monarchical Europe broke out in 1914, the continent's crowns were not identical to those of 1789, but were, on the whole, in fine fettle.

* * *

Historians seeking to account for these persistence and loyalty phenomena have seized upon the importance of a media culture of monarchical celebrity. Carefully and strategically conceived, nurtured and disseminated, it was meant both to camouflage the dwindling of the princes' command of hard power and to project and engender *Untertanenliebe* (subjects' love).⁴ How monarchies operated within the nineteenth century's evolving public spheres, which themes, narratives, images and methods they employed to communicate their message – either to their populations as a whole or to influential sub-groups – is now recognized as a key issue in the history of monarchical persistence in nineteenth-century Europe. The successes and failures of those acting their part either as members of Europe's 'Performing

Monarchy' or merely on its behalf will thus be one of the central concerns addressed in this volume.⁵

A complementary approach to explaining monarchical durability, which will also play a prominent role in the present volume, focuses on the adoption of monarchical constitutionalism across much of nineteenth-century Europe. There appear to be good reasons for why this happened. Recent studies have drawn attention to the significant problem-solving capacity offered by this political model. 'Constitutional monarchy provided an answer to questions arising in various European countries', Martin Kirsch has observed, pointing to issues such as 'the financial problems of the absolutist state, national independence, structuring a new – or newly expanded – state or the integration of the people into the formation of a political will'. Dieter Langewiesche has provided a similar appraisal: he emphasizes the monarchs' record of achieving, essentially through the granting of constitutions, an orderly completion of the necessary reform processes begun by the revolutions of the late eighteenth century. Moreover, Langewiesche credits the monarchs with having facilitated 'the incremental concentration of power in a small number of states without triggering a great European war', a feat which he recognizes as the most important achievement of the monarchs of nineteenth-century Europe. This point is echoed by Johannes Paulmann, who describes the constitutionally 'converted' European monarchies post-1815 as a 'stabilizing element' within a less bellicose international order and praises their cooperation within a 'nascent "royal international"' as 'one element of the early nineteenth-century political equilibrium'. Little wonder, then, that Volker Sellin recently recognized the granting of monarchical constitutions as a legitimizing strategy aimed at securing acceptance of the monarchies amongst Europe's citizenry.⁶

This volume takes the notion of a pan-European model of monarchical constitutionalism as the starting point for its analysis of the meanings of succession within the political culture of nineteenth-century Europe. By framing its topic in this fashion it is informed by the seminal work of Martin Kirsch who accords 'monarchical constitutionalism' – defined as rule by a single individual whose power is constrained by (codified) constitutional law – the status of a 'European constitutional type'. It emerged in almost all of the continent's constitutional states. Within this wider type, preponderant power could be located in different places. Yet regardless of whether monarch or parliament were dominant, whether a specific version of the model bore Bonapartist or corporate features, whether monarchies strove to become national institutions (or instead chose to remain sub- or multinational entities), the nineteenth century witnessed a consistent preservation of the *monarchical* variant of constitutionalism – in preference to republican or collegial alternatives.⁷ A central explanation for this, Kirsch argues, can be found in the process of the 'functionalization' of the monarch on the basis of constitutional law. As long as he or she was effective, the bearer of

the crown – functioning, variably, as a source of national integration, as a political mediator or as a bulwark against further political change – would be underpinned by a new mixture of legitimating principles. ‘A king’s rule was not accepted as God-given’, Kirsch concludes, ‘but was increasingly judged according to the success with which he fulfilled his function in state and nation’. By 1912, according to the liberal politician and writer Friedrich Naumann, this criterion had become so important that monarchy had to pass a quasi-democratic test. ‘The king himself cannot wish to be a minority-king for any length of time. Monarchs need majorities’, he wrote. ‘They live on being deemed necessary. Once this belief has gone, even the most ancient hereditary legitimacy will be no help’.⁸

The concept ‘monarchical constitutionalism’ does not, of course, imply that the theory and practice of monarchical systems all over the continent and across the decades were uniform, monolithic or unchanging. The experience of monarchy in Louis XVIII’s France was profoundly different from Christian IX’s Denmark or Edwardian Britain. The political environment changed as more and more constitutions were passed, electorates grew, states modernized and public spheres expanded. Using the wide definition of this constitutional type makes it possible, though, to identify at different points in time both the contrasts and commonalities that can be observed amongst the various monarchical systems that complied with Kirsch’s basic definition. It also facilitates the investigation of an overall phenomenon that, through its dynastic networks and connections, consistently reached across national borders, while – at the same time – contributing to a firmer and more explicitly articulated definition of distinct nation states.⁹ As the catalogue of their different functions within the constitutional state shows, monarchs could act as bulwarks delaying a widening of political participation or the granting of social demands. Yet, monarchical systems also provided the framework within which constitutional reform and political transformation could take place in an ordered and peaceful manner.

This contradictory and multivalent record indicates that the topic needs to be approached in an open way which eschews teleologies. Europe’s monarchies did not move uniformly in the direction of some constitutional beau ideal – neither towards the Whig version of a parliamentary monarchy epitomizing freedom and progress nor in the direction of the more authoritarian ‘monarchical principle’ Otto Hintze celebrated in 1911.¹⁰ Monarchies did not march towards the Great War and obsolescence, either. Such unilinear narratives are problematic, not least because of the great importance of individual agency within monarchical systems. After all, fulfilling ‘his function in state and nation’ proved to be well beyond many a monarch, while some others rose to the challenge. Besides, the topic is simply too multi-faceted for reductionist interpretations. Given their near-omnipresence and high political profile, the continent’s monarchical systems had to respond to, were shaped by and played a part in most aspects of the lives of Europeans in the nineteenth

century. The resilience and adaptation of monarchy are woven into the very fabric of the century's dramatic changes. With its traditional baggage and rigidities as well as its adoption of new techniques and ideas, nineteenth-century monarchy was not just a survivor, but also a child of its times.

* * *

The studies presented in this volume are informed by a sophisticated and growing body of research directed at the phenomenon of nineteenth-century monarchy. This is a relatively recent achievement, though. As late as 1989 David Cannadine still criticized royal scholarship for offering 'too much chronicle and too little history, a surfeit of myth-making and a dearth of scholarly scepticism'. To correct this, he insisted, monarchy would have to be treated 'as an historical problem and as an historical phenomenon'.¹¹ Following a long period of relative neglect, when the topic was either dismissed as reactionary, nostalgic and apologetic, or was frequently approached in overly orthodox ways,¹² the field has flourished in the last two decades. Between 1995 and 2001 a remarkable clutch of studies appeared which marked a step change in the examination of late-modern monarchy. By exploring imperial ceremony and imagery in late-modern Russia (Richard Wortman) and Japan (Takashi Fujitani), the influence of monarchical philanthropy on Britain's civic life (Frank Prochaska), monarchical constitutionalism across Europe (Martin Kirsch), the melding of dynastic and international history in monarchical encounters (Johannes Paulmann) and the role of the monarchical state in the creation of sub-national identities in Germany (Abigail Green) these works have prepared the ground for much fuller, more problem-orientated research into monarchical topics.¹³

Since then, the investigation of the relationship between monarchy, the media and the public spheres created by them has attracted particular attention. John Plunkett, Martin Kohlrausch, Eva Giloi, Daniel Unowsky, Simone Mergen, Catherine Brice, Dominik Petzold, Michael Obst and Alexis Schwarzenbach, to name but a few, have explored the mutual interactions between monarchy and their various publics in Prussia-Germany, Bavaria, Saxony, Britain, Austria-Hungary, Italy and Belgium.¹⁴ The media analysed by these authors range from newspapers and books, to photographs, material objects, souvenirs, museums institutionalizing a royal politics of memory, (re)invented ceremonial, the staging of anniversaries, systematic philanthropy, public oratory and film. Their work shows monarchical systems that were fully engaged in modern forms of mass communication and, seeking to utilize them, found themselves at their mercy. While Queen Victoria and Prince Albert may have succeeded in generating and utilizing a 'civic publicness', the 'logic of the mass media' left Emperor Wilhelm II and his attempt to stage a 'charismatic monarchy' (M. Kohlrausch) mired in a series of scandals. He also, as Jost Rebentisch has shown, ended up lampooned in ever more aggressive cartoons.¹⁵ 'A prince's palace will always be more or less a

glass house', is how Berlin's *National-Zeitung* summarized the new reality when commenting on a royal wedding anniversary in 1883.¹⁶ How those inside the palaces reacted to and sought to manipulate the public gaze, how well (or ineptly) they coped with and utilized what Heinz Dollinger described as the increasingly inescapable 'publicity of their existence' is now much better understood.

Silke Marburg's study of the voluminous correspondence within Saxony's royal family shows, though, that parallel levels of 'interior communication' (*Binnenkommunikation*) existed within dynasties. The discourses reflected in these sources complement and correct the expressions of an ostensibly 'bourgeois' outlook frequently found in public forms of monarchical communication.¹⁷ As such they underpin Hubertus Büschel's sceptical attitude to key assumptions about the nineteenth century's 'monarchical cult': his comparative analysis of several German monarchies has led him to doubt that much can be known with certainty about the motives driving the public staging of courtly ritual or about the quality of the emotional stance of the ruled towards their ruler, their much-vaunted *Untertanenliebe* (subjects' love).¹⁸

While the depth of people's love for their monarchs may ultimately be unfathomable, there is now a fuller appreciation of the motives for and forms of *anti-monarchical* attitudes. Ironically, research in this field has focused on what is widely perceived as the most successful and progressive monarchical system: the British crown. Studies by Richard Williams, Antony Taylor and Frank Prochaska have drawn attention to the testiness of the British regarding public funding of the monarchy – especially when an inactive or invisible monarch appeared to offer poor value for money.¹⁹ Research on the British monarchy is also leading – less surprisingly, perhaps – in another respect: gender and the 'feminization of monarchy'. As early as the 1980s, Heinz Dollinger commented on the 'emerging prominence of the female element within nineteenth-century monarchy' in general, but the issue has only received detailed consideration in connection with Queen Victoria. Dorothy Thompson, Margaret Homans and Adrienne Munich have considered questions such as whether a matriarchal version of monarchy was more acceptable both in Britain and across the empire. They have pointed to the importance of the stylization of Victoria's role as wife which worked to allay fears about female power, chimed with middle-class expectations and helped to fashion an influential (rather than powerful) monarchy.²⁰

There is a similarly sophisticated literature exploring the incremental constitutional development of the British monarchy, but the process more frequently found on the continent – with a codified constitution formally granted by the monarch – has also attracted considerable attention over recent years. Echoing Kirsch's notion of a European pattern, Markus Prutsch has shown how the French *Charte* of 1814 was set up and then served as a model. It influenced the royal decree that turned the grand duchy of Baden into a constitutional monarchy in 1818 and also shaped the new Bavarian

constitution granted in the same year. For Volker Sellin, processes of constitutional transfer and innovation like these formed a central plank within a wider monarchical 'policy of legitimation'. In a recent development of his earlier work Sellin has gone even further. On the basis of six national case studies (from France in 1814 to Russia in 1905) he has categorized instances of monarchical restoration through constitutional decrees as acts which, though aimed at preserving monarchy, still 'served the progress of liberty'. These constitutional settlements, motivated by revolutionary pressure but delivered through acts of monarchical restoration, also proved more lasting than revolutionary creations. If monarchs had remained committed to this policy of restorative concessions, Sellin concludes, all of Europe would still be monarchical today.²¹

Finally, attention should also be drawn to the wealth of recent biographical studies providing sophisticated accounts of the lives of nineteenth-century monarchical figures and their environments. There are many more notable publications in this field than can be addressed in this short introduction with some 'stars' of the biographical genre – like Emperor Wilhelm II, King Ludwig II of Bavaria, Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria or Queen Victoria – having small libraries of books dedicated to them.²² But there now also exist very instructive biographies on somewhat less prominent monarchical figures such as King Louis Philippe, Prince Max of Baden, King Edward VII, Queen Isabel II of Spain, Leopold I of the Belgians or Emperor Friedrich III.²³

* * *

The authors contributing to the present collection are fortunate to be able to build on such broad and sophisticated foundations. This volume takes a further innovative step, though, by making the process of succession and the individuals on whom successions pivoted – the various heirs to the throne – the centre of attention. Succession, the passing on of monarchical rule from one individual to his or her successor, usually from one generation to the next, was an essential task monarchical systems had to complete. The figure of the successor was at the centre of every dynastic system, embodying both its essential continuity and the inevitability of future change at the very apex of the system. On the one hand, the many men (and few women) predestined to wear the crown one day were strongly conditioned by their origins and by existing dynastic and courtly environments. Successors were not exclusively the products of ancient practices and traditions, though. The advent of the constitutional age provided a formal, usually codified link between the dynasty (with its own rules of legitimacy and succession) and the executive and legislative organs of the state. Often the heir's rights to the crown and of participation in some of the state's institutions were laid down in these documents along with the basic rights of the individuals and the powers of elected assemblies. The manner in which the integration of the future monarch into a constitutional system, with its own valid

and lively elements, was achieved and perceived depended on many factors; not least on the heir's personality and ambition. Successors also served as relatively empty canvases onto which contemporaries projected hopes that combined an optimistic anticipation of a better future with a yearning for familiar continuities in an age of change.

As the principle of hereditary rule lay at the very heart of Europe's monarchical systems, heirs to the throne remained crucial. They provided these systems with a characteristic and newly relevant political resource: the visible existence, long before the actual moment of transition, of the next generation of rulers. Monarchies thus had the ability to anticipate, prefigure and communicate the future in flesh and blood. With their roles defined not just by ancient dynastic convention, but also by new constitutional law and with their lives frequently lived – from birth – on the stage of the very publicity that now defined the monarchical office, the next-in-line also became 'functionalized'. Whether the royal heir was (or appeared to be) competent or feckless, virtuous or unworthy, well-prepared or out of his depth, engaged or detached, a loving husband or a lewd philanderer mattered more in an age of 'functionalized' monarchs living in glass palaces than ever before. An examination of royal heirs during the years and decades when they were expected to fulfil their duty for the system whose future they embodied – as darling infants on royal photographs, as studious pupils, as dashing officers, as diligent members of upper chambers, as loving parents, as the hope of the nation – thus yields a rich insight.

For a dynastic system, succession, for all of its challenges and vagaries, provided a valuable and recurring opportunity for reinvention, recalibration and adaption. Through its heir it could match its brand to the needs and preferences of the 'political mass market' that emerged in the course of the nineteenth century.²⁴ Like the periodic moulting of crustaceans, succession within monarchical systems was a transformative process accompanied by a temporary vulnerability. If completed successfully, succession resulted in the original structure being better adapted, though still clearly recognizable in its reassuringly traditional form. This being the case, a fuller understanding of the processes surrounding succession helps to explain the extent (as well as the limits) of monarchical durability, adaptability and success in the nineteenth century.

The importance of the heirs to constitutional thrones was not missed on contemporaries. 'If sovereignty has been relieved by our modern institutions of some of its burdens', William Gladstone wrote in 1885, 'it still, I believe, remains true that there has been no period of the world's history at which successors to the Monarchy could more efficaciously contribute to the stability of a great historic system dependent even more upon love than upon strength by devotion to their duties, and by a bright example to the country. This result we have happily been permitted to see, and other generations will, I trust, witness it anew.'²⁵ Gladstone's fulsome prose should not

lure us into accepting an optimistic legend, though. The recipient of these birthday greetings was Prince Albert Victor, the oldest son of the Prince of Wales and a man whose intellectual deficiencies and general idleness gave cause for serious concern. He would die of influenza in 1892, aged 28, to be smoothly replaced as heir to the throne by his younger brother George whose achievements, if hardly stellar, clearly outshone those of his predecessor. As will be shown, though, the loss of a royal heir usually caused a significant rupture and could destabilize the system.

Prince George, for his part, reacted with apprehension to the news of his elevation to the rank of heir apparent, and this was hardly surprising. The available biographies of European monarchs show how heavily the combination of the old (dynastic) and new (constitutional, public, functionalized) challenges of their position weighed on most of the future rulers. Archdukes Rudolf and Franz Ferdinand of Austria, Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm (the later Emperor Friedrich III) of Germany, Prince Ludwig (the later King Ludwig III) of Bavaria and Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) are just some of the most prominent examples of those who chafed under the yoke of a position which combined obedience to the ruling monarch and restrictions of their personal freedom with high levels of public exposure. The present collection of studies adds further to our understanding of the impact of the office 'royal successor' on the individuals concerned – in their various roles as son, pupil, bridegroom, husband, combatant or even head of government. It also considers the effects acting in the opposition direction, though: did heirs really contribute to stabilizing their 'great historic systems'? How did successors and succession constellations affect the monarchical systems and their ambient political cultures more broadly?

Looking beyond the courts, the governments and the state proper, the studies presented here also seek to illuminate facets of the wider political culture of monarchical Europe reflected in the various succession scenarios. This will involve an appreciation not only of the 'system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols, and values, which defines the situation in which political action takes place', but also of the institutions and individual agents that sustained and communicated these systems.²⁶ The background against which monarchical successions took place in the nineteenth century was the process of a fundamental political mobilization of European society which occurred within the continent's more or less authoritarian states. This transition away from a politics of the notables to mass politics was driven and shaped by a combination of forces. The emergence of a political mass market within which a number of different actors had to compete was facilitated by growing literacy, the formation of modern political parties and pressure groups as well as by the increasing reach and power of the print media.

This book seeks to do justice to this dynamism – as well as to the persistent features that characterized Europe’s monarchies – by exploring five different scenarios. A first group of studies focuses on royal heirs within the context of family – both in the sense of traditional dynastic constraints and with regard to the nineteenth-century celebration of marriage and family as allegedly bourgeois values. Hereditary monarchy was nothing if not a family business. The notion that the crown must pass down the generations along a precious blood line, meandering through the vagaries of biological reproduction and complicated by meticulous legal stipulations, is as old as monarchy itself. With the arrival of the nineteenth century, though, this age-old situation underwent a double-edged process of change. On the one hand, the universal applicability and appealing familiarity of the family structure provided monarchies with an attractive public narrative that was new and ageless at the same time: that the state was headed by a multi-generational collective of grandparents, parents and children experiencing the joys and sorrows of family life just like their subjects. On the other hand, it imposed external expectations on the conduct of the members of the dynasty which did not always sit easily with aristocratic conventions.

Christopher Clark opens Part I by charting the recurring tensions between monarch and successor, father and son, within the Hohenzollern dynasty and assessing the intersection of personal and political relationships. In his study of the carefully arranged and publicized married and family life of Prince Umberto and his wife Margherita, Axel Körner explores an attempt to embed the Savoia dynasty in the Italian nation. The final chapter of this section focuses on the marriages of Prussia’s crown princely couples in the course of the nineteenth century. Daniel Schönplflug finds these celebrations caught in the increasing tension between the public’s desire to share in a lavish yet personal love story and the unchanging underlying conventions of monarchical behaviour.

An heir to the throne was always embedded in a highly sophisticated institution tailored to the needs of educating, supporting and representing royalty. The courtly contexts explored in Part II defined and restricted the roles of the next-in-line, but could also provide him or her with the means to disseminate their own message. Though seemingly ancient, the phenomena of court life underwent important processes of transformation in the course of the Long Nineteenth Century.

This part of the book brings together three case studies illuminating aspects of the courtly life of royal heirs in the kingdom of Württemberg, Victorian Britain and Austria-Hungary. Eberhard Fritz examines how the three future kings of Württemberg were educated at the Stuttgart court between 1806 and 1918. This *longue durée* allows him to observe continuities and change regarding educational aims and the qualities deemed desirable for a future ruler. Sophie Gordon shows how the advent of photography (and of the photographer as a member of a prince’s entourage) resulted in

making the 'mobile court' of a travelling royal visually accessible to wide audiences and introduced the need for a new skill set to the princely repertoire: controlling the photographic image. The lodging of the Austrian crown princes in the different apartments of Vienna's Hofburg is the focus of Richard Kurdiovsky's article on the visibility of the Habsburg heirs. He shows that architecture, rather than simply providing space for the prince's court, could be identified with the heir's status and political stance.

Part III, entitled 'Overcoming Succession Crises', explores difficulties either caused by or encountered during the succession process. Constitutional monarchies were meant to provide stability, predictability and the reassurance of a smooth transition into the future. Yet dynastic succession occasionally had to overcome significant political and social frictions. This part of the book investigates such crises by focusing on the strategies developed to preserve the future of the monarchy and what they reveal about the political system.

The death of the childless king Frederik VII of Denmark in 1863 brought a pre-selected foreign candidate, the German Prince Christian of Glücksborg, to the Danish throne. Jes Fabricius Møller explains how a dynastic hiatus and international politics combined to produce a succession crisis. This compelled Christian IX to develop a resourceful and patient strategy of 'domestication' to achieve popular endorsement. Spanish politics was thrown into hectic political scheming when King Alfonso XII suddenly died in 1885. As Carmina López Sánchez shows, the heads of the leading parties, Cánovas and Sagasta, coordinated their political actions to protect the recently restored monarchical constitution and successfully played for time until, six months later, the widowed queen gave birth to the longed-for male heir. Owing to a series of scandals and King Umberto's ill-advised political interventions the Italian monarchy was in a similarly precarious situation when the monarch was assassinated in 1900. Valentina Villa illustrates, though, how the education received by his son Vittorio Emanuele and the carefully cultivated neutrality and sobriety of his demeanour enabled this successor to save the monarchy.

The studies forming Part IV of the book consider the consequences of the most profound rupture in the succession scenario: the death of the royal heir. Where a future narrative advantageous to the monarchy had been built on the figure of a well-established, successful and popular successor, his death could cause significant damage and put the monarchical and political system under enormous strain. Where heirs or their spouses had formed part of the dynastic underpinning of foreign policy, there could even be international repercussions. In domestic politics, too, the loss of one heir and the installation of another could be attended with a change in direction. At the very least the emotional upheaval caused by the bereavement – often centred on the royal family's private grief – generated a fluid situation with unpredictable outcomes.

Between 1834 and 1891 the Belgium monarchy had to mourn three young heirs to the throne. Christoph De Spiegeleer examines strategies of crisis management and the reactions to these deaths which reflected the growing international standing of the young Belgian state. They also revealed, though, that public mourning was seized upon to ease intra-national tensions as subjects could be united behind a grieving dynasty. Prince Ferdinand of Orléans embodied the July Monarchy's fondest hopes for the future of the country and the regime. In her assessment of the consequences of his accidental death in 1842 Heidi Mehrkens points to the connection between Ferdinand's tragic death and the eventual demise of the monarchy six years later. Günter Kronenbitter's exploration of the opposition strategies pursued by two very dissimilar heirs to the Habsburg crown – Archdukes Rudolf and Franz Ferdinand – demonstrates that the death of the former had profound consequences. Not only did the nature of the wranglings within the imperial dynasty change completely once Franz Ferdinand had established himself, it is also clear that under his leadership the political future of the country would have been very different.

The final part of the volume studies the experiences of heirs in the Great War. The years between 1914 and 1918 were a touchstone for Europe's monarchies. Many reigning dynasties would succumb to the radical social, political and cultural changes wrought by the conflict. This part explores how the reality of total war put the structures of the monarchical systems to the test while providing some members of the royal families with new spheres of influence and action. As combatants and eye witnesses, some royal heirs experienced the war as a personal challenge. Beyond their personal experiences, heirs appeared – deliberately or not – as symbols and representatives of the monarchy.

While the future Edward VIII longed to overcome the restrictions stopping him from engaging in actual combat, Heather Jones argues that the young prince's dreams of battlefield glory reinforced the home front's identification with the royal family's participation in the British war effort. Failing in his senior command position, Crown Prince Wilhelm of Prussia gradually witnessed his future crumble to dust. As Katherine Anne Lerman observes, his unconvincing advocacy of political reform, combined as it was with an all too eager concern for protecting the power of the crown, came to nothing. Prince Max of Baden actually assumed political responsibility as Germany's Imperial Chancellor in 1918. The experiment failed, though, and Lothar Machtan explains that important reasons for this failure could be located in his monarchical background. Explorations of the war experiences of these three men chart the political and cultural spaces inhabited and co-created by monarchical figures in Europe at the very end of the Long Nineteenth Century – at a time when the political systems of which they had formed a part were first tested and then either confirmed or disposed of.

The studies assembled in this volume richly illustrate how tightly and variedly the sons and heirs of Europe's constitutional monarchies were woven into the political, social and cultural fabrics of their age. Rather than delivering definitive conclusions the research presented here is meant to open up a conversation about the importance of successors and succession in the shaping of this monarchical age. Nevertheless, two broad observations appear to emerge from our case studies.

First, heirs to the throne remained constrained by traditional dynastic and aristocratic rules pre-dating the novelty of their 'functionalized' nineteenth-century role. But these atavistic patterns – such as complete subordination to paternal authority, rigid educational objectives, limited marital choices, expectation of military valour, membership of a transnational dynastic elite, or allocation of symbolically relevant accommodation – were increasingly at odds with the message an essentially public monarchy needed to communicate. The persistence of these traditional features speaks to their importance for the identity and 'internal communication' of monarchy as well as for maintaining its public appeal as an awe-inspiring, majestic other. As a consequence, adapting (rather than abandoning) these features from generation to generation so that they would meet the needs of changing political, cultural and social environments emerges as a central challenge within the monarchies' successful 'legitimizing strategy'.

Second, succession and royal heirs emerge as important aspects in the constitutional development of nineteenth-century monarchy. The positive outcomes of the succession crises investigated here point in an interesting direction: they were resolved through successors either already embodying or moving towards styles of monarchy considered more in tune with the expectations of the country. Vittorio Emanuele III promised to act as a well-educated, disciplined king well aware of his constitutional remit; Christian IX came to embody a modest and domestic quality of kingship in tune with a Danish self-image. Even the more extraordinary situations speak to the important connection between succession and constitutional development: the loss of a promising future perspective, as in the case of Prince Ferdinand of Orléans, could fatally undermine a form of constitutional monarchy. Or, as in the case of Alfonso XII's unborn heir, the monarchical constitution could be deemed so valuable that usually hostile party political forces united to protect it during a phase of weakness. Generally, the breadth and publicity of discussions about heirs – their deaths, abilities, preparation, character, shortcomings, intentions – are evidence that they were fully integrated into the process of 'functionalizing' the constitutional monarch(y). Heirs contributed to the symbiotic relationship between monarchical survival and constitutional development in the nineteenth century.

Notes

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6. Martin Kirsch (2007), 'Die Funktionalisierung des Monarchen im 19. Jahrhundert im europäischen Vergleich', in: Stefan Fisch, Florence Gauzy and Chantal Metzger (eds), *Machtstrukturen im Staat in Deutschland und Frankreich*, Stuttgart, 87; Dieter Langewiesche (2006), 'Die Monarchie im Europa des bürgerlichen Jahrhunderts. Das Königreich Württemberg', in: *Das Königreich Württemberg 1806–1918. Monarchie und Moderne*, Stuttgart, 26, 28; Johannes Paulmann (2001), 'Searching for a "Royal International": The Mechanics of Monarchical Relations in Nineteenth-Century Europe', in: M.H. Geyer and Johannes Paulmann (eds), *The Mechanics of Internationalism*, Oxford, 153, 157; Volker Sellin (2011), *Gewalt und Legitimität. Die Europäische Monarchie im Zeitalter der Revolutionen*, Munich, 294 (the other five strategies he discusses are dynastic legitimacy, divine ordination, military prowess, nationalization and social reform). See also Arthur Schlegelmilch (2009), *Die Alternative des monarchischen Konstitutionalismus. Eine Neuinterpretation der deutschen und österreichischen Verfassungsgeschichte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Bonn, 193, where monarchical constitutionalism is characterised as a "viable symbiosis" of "partial sovereignties".
7. Martin Kirsch (1999), *Monarch und Parlament im 19. Jahrhundert. Der monarchische Konstitutionalismus als europäischer Verfassungstyp – Frankreich im Vergleich*, Göttingen.

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16. *National-Zeitung* (Berlin), 25 January 1883.
17. Silke Marburg (2008), *Europäischer Hochadel. König Johann von Sachsen (1801–1873) und die Binnenkommunikation einer Sozialformation*, Berlin; on the persistence of an aristocratic 'culture of distinction' see also Martina Fetting (2013), *Zum Selbstverständnis der letzten deutschen Monarchen. Normverletzungen und Legitimationsstrategien der Bundesfürsten zwischen Gottesgnadentum und Medienrevolution*, Frankfurt/Main.
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Part I

Dynasties as Royal Families

2

Fathers and Sons in the History of the Hohenzollern Dynasty

Sir Christopher Clark

If we survey the inner history of the Hohenzollern dynasty, two contradictory features attract our attention. The first is the remarkable consistency of political will from each generation to the next. The second is the reality of recurrent conflict between fathers and sons. In this chapter, I want to offer a brief overview of these conflicts and then see whether we can discern any pattern in them. What were father-son conflicts actually about? Did they place the viability of the dynasty at risk, or did they, on the contrary, reinforce its legitimacy? Did they arise because external pressures drove a wedge between different wings or members of the same family, or was it rather that tensions that were psychological or genuinely intra-familial in origin imposed themselves on the court and its political appendages?

As the political testaments of the Great Elector, Friedrich I, Friedrich Wilhelm I and Friedrich the Great show, these monarchs saw themselves as involved in a cumulative historical project, each new ruler accepting as his own the unfulfilled objectives of his predecessors.¹ Hence the consistency of intention that can be observed in the pattern of Brandenburg-Prussia's expansion and the long memory of this dynasty, its capacity to recall and reactivate old claims whenever the time seemed right. Between 1640 and 1797, there was not a single reign in which significant territorial gains were not realized. And the awareness of this continuity across the generations was unusually strong among the Hohenzollern monarchs.

Yet this apparently seamless continuity between generations belied a reality of recurrent conflict. The problem arose in the 1630s towards the end of Elector Georg Wilhelm's reign, when the crown prince, Friedrich Wilhelm (the future Great Elector), refused to return from the Dutch Republic, for fear that his father was planning to marry him off to an Austrian princess. He came to believe that Count Schwarzenberg, Georg Wilhelm's most powerful minister, was plotting his death. The crown prince did eventually rejoin his father at Königsberg in 1638, but the damage done to their relationship was never repaired and Georg Wilhelm made no effort to involve his son in the affairs of state, treating him instead as a complete stranger. In his political

testament for his own successor the Great Elector later wrote that his own government 'would not have been so difficult at the beginning', if he had not been frozen out in this way by his father.²

In this case, the bone of contention appears to have been foreign policy and specifically the question of whether Brandenburg should align itself with the Catholic interest – an option personified by the powerful controversial Count Schwarzenberg, himself a Catholic and leader of a pro-Habsburg faction in Berlin. In the extraordinarily precarious and polarized situation of the late 1630s, when the Thirty Years War was still raging and it was unsafe for either the crown prince or his father to reside in Berlin, it is perhaps hardly surprising that the tensions within the princely household should have resolved themselves along this policy divide. Having spent his adolescence in Calvinist Holland, the prince was always likely to serve as a focal point for those powerful Calvinist noblemen who opposed the 'Hispanic Tyranny' of Schwarzenberg and were sceptical about any rapprochement with Vienna.³

One might have expected that the memory of the Great Elector's youthful experience would suffice to prevent similar tensions arising at the end of his reign. He had never been very impressed by the young man who would become his successor – his favourite was the older brother Karl Emanuel, who died of dysentery during the French campaign of 1674–75, plunging the Elector into a period of profound grief. Whereas Karl Emanuel was a talented and charismatic figure with a natural aptitude for the military life, Friedrich – the future King Friedrich I – was highly strung, sensitive and partially disabled by a childhood injury. 'My son is good for nothing', the Elector told a foreign envoy in 1681, when Friedrich was a married man of 24.⁴ The relationship was further complicated by the coldness and mutual distrust between Friedrich and the Elector's second wife, Dorothea of Holstein. Friedrich had been his own mother's favourite child, but after her death, his step-mother had provided the Elector with another seven children and naturally tended to favour these over the children of her husband's first marriage. It was under pressure from Dorothea that the Great Elector agreed to provide for his younger sons through the testamentary partition of his lands, a decision that was concealed from Friedrich and that the latter successfully countermanded after his accession.

The last decade of the Great Elector's life was thus soured by an increasingly tense family situation. A low-point was reached in 1687, when Friedrich's younger brother died unexpectedly after a bout of scarlet fever. Suspicion now deepened into outright paranoia: Friedrich believed that his brother had been poisoned as part of a plot to open the way to the throne for the eldest son of the second marriage, and that he himself would be the next victim. He was suffering from frequent stomach pains at this time, probably because of the many dubious powders and potions he was taking to ward off the possible effects of poison. As the court seethed with rumour and

counter-rumour, he fled to the home of his wife's family in Hanover and refused to return to Berlin, saying that 'it was not safe for him to be there, since it plainly appeared that his brother had been poisoned'. The Great Elector was furious and announced that he would cut the crown prince out of the succession. Not until Emperor Leopold and William III of England intervened did it prove possible to reconcile the two men, only months before the father's death.⁵ Needless to say, it was quite impossible under these conditions to provide the crown prince with a proper induction into the affairs of state. And behind the stand-off between the two men loomed the powerful figure of the stepmother, like a figure from Grimm's fairy tales, jealous of the spawn of the previous marriage and determined to see to the interests of her own biological children.

In general we should recall how powerful these dynastic women were. The Elector's first wife (and Friedrich's mother), Luise Henriette of Nassau, was one of her husband's most important political advisors. She ran her own foreign-political correspondence and succeeded, through her negotiations with the Queen of Poland, Maria Louise Gonzaga, in securing an alliance with that country. Her successor, Sophie Dorothea of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg, bore the Elector seven children, four of them sons, and was impressively active in securing inheritances for her sons, among them Brandenburg-Schwedt, which she purchased as a fief in 1670. These influential women, who never entirely subordinated their own clan interests to the dynastic interests of their husbands, were the sleeping partners in many of the father-son conflicts that troubled the Hohenzollern family.

Electo Friedrich III, later crowned King Friedrich I, was determined not to repeat the errors of his predecessors and went to great pains to provide his heir both with the fullest possible training in government and with a quasi-independent sphere of action in which to develop his capacities. While still a child, Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm was granted the command of a company of troops and the ownership and management of an estate (at Wusterhausen). As a teenager, he was thoroughly inducted into all the main branches of government. The youthful Friedrich Wilhelm was a difficult, obstreperous child who drove his teachers to distraction (it was said of his long-suffering tutor, Jean Philippe Rebeur, that he would have been happier working as a galley slave than teaching Friedrich Wilhelm), but he was always fastidiously respectful in his bearing towards his father. In this case, it was the crisis of 1709-10 that placed the relationship under strain.

In 1709-10, an epidemic in East Prussia killed thousands of people and caused an instantaneous collapse in crown revenues. Neither the central nor the provincial administration proved capable of responding effectively to the disaster as it unfolded. The catastrophe in East Prussia highlighted the inefficiency and corruption of the ministers and senior officials, many of whom were personal favourites of the king. A party - including Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm - formed at court to bring down the leading

minister, Kolbe zu Wartenberg, and his cronies. After an official enquiry revealed misappropriations and embezzlement on an epic scale, Wartenberg was forced into retirement; his close associate Wittgenstein was incarcerated in Spandau fortress, fined 70,000 thalers and subsequently banished.

Friedrich, amiable to the last, avoided an irreparable break by backing down and allowing power to pass gradually to his son. In the last few years of his reign we can speak of a co-regency of father and son. Yet this conciliatory approach did not weaken Friedrich Wilhelm's resolve after his accession to erase every last trace of the exuberant baroque political culture his father had created. Many of the great administrative enterprises of Friedrich Wilhelm's reign – from the 're-establishment' of East Prussia to the purging of corruption and the expansion of the magazine system – can be understood as a reply to the perceived shortcomings of his father's rule.⁶

Within days of his accession in February 1713, Friedrich Wilhelm laid an axe to the tree of his father's court establishment. What followed was a kind of style revolution. There was no follow-up to the coronation of 1701 – a very magnificent festivity at which the first Prussian king made known the ascent of his house to royal status. Having scrutinized the financial accounts of the royal household, the new king embarked on a drastic cost-cutting campaign. Two-thirds of the servants employed at the court – including the chocolatier, a brace of castrato singers, the cellists, composers and organ-builders – were sacked without notice; the rest had to put up with salary reductions of up to 75 per cent. In a report filed on 28 February 1713, the British envoy William Breton observed that the king was 'very busye cutting off pensions and making great retrenchements in his civill list, to the great grief of many fine gentlemen'.⁷ The Queen Dowager's household had been especially hard hit and 'the poore maids [had] gone home to their friends with heavy hearts'. The court established under Friedrich quickly withered away. What took its place was a leaner, cheaper, rougher and more masculine social scene.

In this case, it would appear that the divide between father and son was authentically political in origin. Only during the crisis of 1709 was there an open break, though in this case it expressed itself as a form of loyal opposition that enabled senior reformist officials to make themselves heard without drawing upon themselves the odium of sedition.

The cold war that seethed between Friedrich Wilhelm and his own teenage son, the future Friedrich the Great, puts all these earlier conflicts in the shade. Never had the struggle between father and son been waged with such emotional and psychological intensity. The roots of the conflict can be traced in part to Friedrich Wilhelm's profoundly authoritarian temperament. Since he himself had always been scrupulously respectful in his dealings with his father, even when he felt forced by circumstance to join the opposition party, he was completely unable to understand any form of insubordination from his heir. Coupled with this was a conceptual and emotional

inability to detach his own person from the administrative achievements of his reign, so that any failure of deference appeared to place his historical accomplishment, and the very state itself, in jeopardy. It seemed to him that the work he had laboured so hard to complete must collapse if the successor did not share 'his belief, his thoughts, his likes and dislikes, in short, if the successor were not his mirror-image'.⁸

It became clear early in Friedrich's life that the young prince would not fulfil these exacting designs. He showed little in the way of soldierly aptitude – he often fell from his horse and was frightened of shooting. His posture and comportment were languid, his hair messy, he slept late, enjoyed being alone and was often to be found reading novels in the rooms of his mother and sister. Whereas Friedrich Wilhelm had been frank, even brutally honest, even as a small boy, Friedrich was oblique, ironic, as if he had already learned to hide his true nature from the hostile eyes of his father. 'I would like to know what is going on in this little head', the king remarked in 1724, when Friedrich was 12 years old. 'I know for sure that he does not think as I do.'⁹

Friedrich Wilhelm's solution was to step up the pressure on the crown prince by subjecting him to a gruelling routine of daily chores – military reviews, inspection tours, council meetings, all timetabled to the very last minute. In a letter written when Friedrich was in his 14th year, the imperial ambassador Seckendorff observed that 'the crown prince, despite his young years, looks as elderly and stiff as if he had already served on many campaigns'.¹⁰ But as even Seckendorff could tell, these measures were unlikely to have the desired effect. Instead they merely hardened and deepened Friedrich's opposition. He became an adept at resisting his father's will by a kind of sly civility. When the king asked him at a review of the Magdeburg regiments in the summer of 1725 why he was so often late in arriving, Friedrich, who had slept in, replied that he needed time to pray after he had dressed. The king answered that the prince could just as well say his morning prayers while he was being dressed, to which the boy replied: 'His Majesty will surely allow that one cannot pray properly if one is not alone, and that one must set aside a time specifically for praying. In such matters one must obey God rather than men'.¹¹

By the time he was 16 (in 1728) the prince was leading a double life. He conformed outwardly to the hard regime imposed by his father and fulfilled his duties, adopting a cold, impenetrable countenance whenever he was not among intimates. In secret, he began playing the flute, composing verse and accumulating debts. Through the good offices of his Huguenot instructor Duhan, he acquired a library of works in French reflecting a secular, enlightened, philosophical literary taste that was the diametrical antipode of his father's world. Sensing that his son was drifting away from him, Friedrich Wilhelm became increasingly violent. He frequently slapped, cuffed and humiliated the prince in public; after one particularly savage beating he

is reported to have shouted at the crown prince that he would have shot himself if his father had mistreated him thus.¹²

In this case, then, we can speak of an authentically psychological impasse that pre-dated any exposure to politics, except of course if you read the very contrasting tone and attitude of the immediate surroundings and milieu of the king and his wife – the Hanoverian princess Sophie Dorothea – as representing a polarization of styles that was in some sense political. By the late 1720s, in any case, the deepening antipathy between father and son had become intertwined with political and factional tensions at court.

In 1725–27 Friedrich Wilhelm and Sophie Dorothea had been involved in negotiations over the possible double marriage of Friedrich and his sister Wilhelmine to the British princess Amalia and the Prince of Wales respectively. Fearing that this alliance would create a western bloc that could threaten Habsburg interests, the Imperial court pressured Berlin to withdraw from the double marriage. An imperial faction formed in Berlin, centred on the imperial ambassador Seckendorff and the king's trusted minister General Friedrich Wilhelm von Grumbkow, who appears to have been taking hefty bribes from Vienna. Opposing the machinations of this faction was the queen, Sophie Dorothea, who saw in the double marriage a chance to pursue the interests both of her children and of her dynasty, the Guelph House of Hanover and Great Britain. The passion, bordering on desperation, with which she pursued this project doubtless reflected years of accumulated frustration at a court where the room for political action by women had been radically curtailed.

As the web of intrigues spun by English, Austrian, Prussian and Hanoverian diplomacy thickened, the Berlin court polarized around the two factions. The king, fearing a break with Vienna, withdrew his support for his son's marriage and sided with Grumbkow and Seckendorff against his own wife, while the crown prince was drawn ever more deeply into his mother's designs and became an active supporter of the English marriage. It was the will of the king that prevailed and the double marriage was abandoned.

The struggle over the 'English marriage' set the context for Friedrich's attempted flight from Brandenburg-Prussia in August 1730, one of the most dramatic and memorable episodes in the history of the dynasty. The crown prince was not motivated by political outrage or by personal disappointment at the evaporation of his marriage to Princess Amalia, whom he had never met. In fact, the *Kronprinzenflucht* was so lacking in positive political content that the historian Jürgen Luh has interpreted it as an empty, a performative and almost existential gesture, designed not to achieve any specific objective, but to draw attention to the person of the prince and forge a public drama out of his private anguish.¹³ The struggles and intrigues of 1729–30 merely brought to boiling point his frustration and resentment at the treatment his father had meted out to him over the past years.

The narrative of the prince's attempted flight is well known – it is to those few episodes of Hohenzollern family history which belong not just to history, but also to legend. The flight itself was a non-starter. Friedrich and his collaborator Hans Hermann von Katte went about their business with a carelessness that soon aroused suspicion. The king put the prince's tutors and servants on alert and had him watched day and night. In the small hours of the night of 4–5 August 1730, Friedrich slipped away from his encampment near the village of Steinfurt. A servant raised the alarm and he was easily captured. His father was informed in the morning.

There followed an elaborate punitive ritual. Friedrich Wilhelm ordered that his son be carted to the fortress at Küstrin, the stronghold where the Great Elector had spent his childhood during the bleakest years of the Thirty Years War. Here he was confined to a dungeon cell and forced to wear the brown habit of a convict; the guards appointed to watch over him were forbidden to answer any questions from the prisoner and the tallow light he was given to read his Bible by was extinguished each evening at seven. In the course of the investigation that followed, the prince was subjected to a detailed inquisition, which included the following question number 185:

Since, in saving his life, he would ipso facto lose his honour, and, in effect, be disqualified from succeeding [to the throne], would he thus stand down in order to save his life, and renounce his right to the throne in such a manner that this could be confirmed by the entire Holy Roman Empire?

Friedrich answered that 'his life was not so dear to him, but His Royal Majesty would surely not be so harsh in his treatment of him'.¹⁴ What is remarkable here is the level of self-restraint that the prince's deft answers display, despite the terror that he must have been feeling at this time, when his future was still so uncertain.

The harsh punishments meted out to Friedrich's friend Hans Hermann von Katte and to a range of other suspected accomplices and the spectacular execution of Katte in front of the prince's cell window need not concern us here. What followed was a phase of demonstrative remorse and self-subordination to the will of the father. Friedrich took on the subdued comportment of the sincere penitent, endured the monotony of life in the garrison town of Küstrin without complaint and conscientiously performed his administrative duties, acquiring useful knowledge in the process. Most importantly, he resigned himself to accepting the marriage now proposed for him by his father with Princess Elisabeth Christine of Brunswick-Bevern, a cousin of the Habsburg Empress. Her choice as bride represented a clear victory for the imperial interest over the party that had favoured the 'English marriage'. Friedrich's future bride was effectively the Austrian candidate. 'If I am forced into marriage with her', he warned the minister Friedrich Wilhelm von

Grumbkow in 1732, 'she will be rejected [*elle sera repudiée*]'.¹⁵ Friedrich would hold to this resolution after his accession in 1740, consigning Elisabeth Christine to a twilight existence on the margins of public life.

Was this episode in Friedrich's life a trauma that transformed the prince's personality? He had fainted into the arms of his guards before the moment of Katte's decapitation in Küstrin and remained in a state of extreme terror and mental anguish for some days, partly because he initially believed that his own execution was still imminent. Did the events of 1730 forge a new and artificial persona, acerbic and hard, remote from others, locked within the nautilus shell of a convoluted nature? Or did they merely deepen and confirm a tendency towards self-concealment and dissimulation that was already well developed in the adolescent prince? The question is ultimately unanswerable.

What does seem certain is that the crisis had important implications for the prince's developing conception of foreign policy. The Austrians were closely involved not only in masterminding the collapse of the English marriage, but also in managing the crisis that broke out following Friedrich's attempted flight. It is an indication of how deeply imperial and Brandenburg-Prussian court politics were interwoven during the reign of Friedrich Wilhelm I that the first draft of the document setting out a 'policy' for disciplining and rehabilitating the errant prince was submitted to the king by the imperial envoy, Count Friedrich Heinrich von Seckendorff.

Austria's tutelage over the Brandenburg-Prussian court was thus both a political and a personal reality for Friedrich. The crisis of 1730 and its aftermath amplified the prince's distrust of the Austrians and reinforced his cultural and political attachment to France, Vienna's traditional enemy in the west. Indeed, it was Friedrich Wilhelm's own growing frustration with Austrian policy during the 1730s that opened the door to a fuller reconciliation between father and son. The emotional taproot of the cold determination with which Friedrich challenged the captivity of the Habsburg dynasty in the years following his accession in 1740 surely lies in this traumatic chapter of his early life.¹⁶

The transition from Friedrich II to his successor and nephew, Friedrich Wilhelm II, was not attended by the kind of claustrophobic psychodrama that overshadowed the life of young Friedrich. But there were the usual Hohenzollern family contrasts. The uncle was misanthropic, aloof and utterly uninterested in women. The nephew was genial, gregarious and recklessly heterosexual. His first marriage with Elisabeth Christine Ulrike of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel was dissolved after infidelities on both sides; the second marriage with Friederike Luise of Hessen-Darmstadt produced seven children, a further seven offspring were born of his life-long relationship with his mistress Wilhelmine Encke (later raised to the peerage as Princess Liegnitz) and there were two further (bigamous) marriages 'under the left hand'.

The uncle had remained loyal to the values of the high Enlightenment, espousing a rigorously sceptical rationalism that seemed old-fashioned by the 1780s. The nephew was a man of his era who took an interest in spiritualism, clairvoyance, astrology and other pursuits that would have disgusted his predecessor. The uncle had demonstrated his personal attachment to the ideals of the Enlightenment by joining the freemasons when he was still crown prince. The nephew, by contrast, joined the Rosicrucians, an esoteric and secretive offshoot of freemasonry dedicated to mystical and occult pursuits. Friedrich the Great had managed, through rigorous economies in all domains of state activity, to leave behind a treasury of 51 million thalers; this staggering sum was squandered by his successor in only 11 years.¹⁷

We meet the same contrast again in 1797, with the accession of Friedrich Wilhelm III. We move from the last gasp of the baroque to the first dawn of a more modest style of monarchy, restrained, less given to formalities, almost 'bourgeois' in its *mode de vivre*. The son was austere in his tastes and remained faithful to his wife. Friedrich Wilhelm III found the city palace in Berlin too imposing and preferred to stay in the smaller residence he had occupied as crown prince. His favourite domicile of all was a rustic little estate he bought at Paretz near Potsdam. Here he could live in tranquil domesticity and pretend he was an ordinary country squire. Unlike his predecessors, Friedrich Wilhelm drew a clear distinction between his private life and his public functions. He was painfully shy and disliked elaborate public occasions at court. He enjoyed the theatre because it was the one place where he could be in company without being the centre of attention.¹⁸ Here, of course, we are not concerned with the tension born of open conflict, but rather with a striking alternation of personal styles which is a marked feature of the Hohenzollern monarchical sequence and to which I will return at the close of this chapter.

In the meanwhile, let me touch on the last occasion when psychopolitical tensions poisoned the relationship between a Hohenzollern father and his son. I am referring to the relationship between the last Kaiser Wilhelm II and his father Emperor Friedrich III – a confrontation shaped by the remarkable coexistence of three adult generations of Hohenzollern males. When Wilhelm II was born in January 1859, his grandfather had not yet ascended the Prussian throne. Not until just before his second birthday did his grandfather succeed – a further three decades would pass before the grandfather died in March 1888, at the ripe old age of 90. From early in his life, then, Wilhelm was aware that his own father, Friedrich Wilhelm, was not the only figure commanding respect. Above his father stood a further, greater father – a figure of extraordinary gravitas with the whiskers of a biblical patriarch who was not just king and emperor but the executive head of his extended family – a fact with complex implications for the lives of his descendants.

There were constant battles between the parents and the grandparents over every conceivable issue, from the choice of military and civilian tutors to the various symbolic transactions associated with representative duties at court. And as so often before, these tensions were overlaid by the political oppositions that had polarized the Prussian court and Prussian public life ever more deeply since the appointment of Bismarck as minister president in 1862. Friedrich and his wife Vicky aligned themselves with the liberal faction in the Reichstag. As Frank Lorenz Müller has shown, Friedrich became the first ever Prussian crown prince to associate himself with a genuinely parliamentary and oppositional network.¹⁹ Of course, those liberal parliamentarians who threw in their lot with the crown prince had to wait a long time, just as the politicians who formed the 'Patriot' opposition in the late 1730s around Frederick Prince of Wales had to wait another 20 years before George II died in 1760. And the unhappy prince, who was already dying of cancer when he eventually reached the throne, was destined to spend only 99 days in power.

Meanwhile, the Prussian-German court witnessed a father-and-son conflict that could not help but have a profound impact on the development of the next generation. The education of an absolutist or neo-absolutist monarch is always, as John Röhl has observed, 'ipso facto a political issue of the highest importance' because it is concerned with the future exercise of sovereign power.²⁰ In the case of the future Kaiser Wilhelm II, these concerns were complicated by partisan allegiances that alienated the crown prince (the future Emperor Friedrich) and his entourage from the reigning monarch (Wilhelm I) and his prime minister (Otto von Bismarck). The resulting polarization was reflected in two opposing pedagogical ideals: one anglophile, liberal-bourgeois and based upon the cultivation of civil virtues and social responsibility; the other old-Prussian, aristocratic and based upon the cultivation of military skills and discipline.

This became apparent when 'civilian' and 'military' tutors had to be found for Prince Wilhelm. The first candidate selected by his parents as civilian tutor had to be dropped on account of his progressive political connections; the final choice fell upon Georg Ernst Hinzpeter, a man with close, if indirect, links to the 'Crown Prince Party', who requested and received exclusive authority over the prince's education. Conflict also broke out over the respective powers and responsibility of the two tutors. The prince's first military tutor grew weary of his post when he realized that Wilhelm's parents had allotted Hinzpeter the lion's share of responsibility for the child's upbringing. After his resignation in 1867 there was a dispute over his replacement in which the king's entourage became directly involved. 'We luckily carried our point', Victoria wrote to her mother, 'but I think this interference in our concerns too bad. You have no idea what trouble the reigning party takes to put their spies about our court, nor to what degree they hate us'.²¹

The representational duties of the princes were a further cause of grief to the crown princess and her husband. In August 1872, she confessed her 'horror' at having heard that Wilhelm would be required to wear a Russian uniform in honour of a visit from the Russian tsar. 'I of course am not asked and all these things are arranged without my having a voice in the matter.'²² It was in part to get the boys away from the coercive environment of the court that Victoria and Friedrich Wilhelm pressed the emperor for permission to send them to school to be educated with children of their own age. No Hohenzollern prince had ever been educated in this 'bourgeois' fashion before. Wilhelm could, of course, have been educated at a grammar school in Berlin, but his mother argued against this on the grounds that the only appropriate school in the capital was too politically 'reactionary'.²³

Not surprisingly, the plan met with strong opposition from the Kaiser; only after a prolonged 'siege from all sides with various machines' could he be persuaded to agree. As Victoria observed in a letter to her mother, it would henceforth be impossible for the Kaiser to 'force Wilhelm to appear at Berlin on all occasions and go out into the world – it was the only way of stopping this preposterous determination on the emperor's part'.²⁴ The move to Kassel was a victory for the pedagogical ideals of the crown prince and his wife. Wilhelm's enrolment in the Kassel Gymnasium from 1874 involved prolonged absences from Berlin and, more importantly, exemption from his military duties until his 18th year (Wilhelm had been attached to the First Footguards Regiment since his tenth birthday). The subordination to a tough and meritocratic pedagogical regime was also intended to strip Wilhelm of the arrogance and princely allures encouraged by the sycophancy and self-display of court life. It was above all thanks to her influence that her son enjoyed – by the standards of Hohenzollern princely education – a remarkably unmilitary upbringing. Until the completion of his tertiary studies at the University of Bonn, Wilhelm's stints of military service were emphatically subordinated to the demands of his 'civilian' education.

This helps to explain the fact that, despite his undoubted attraction to the culture and ambience – and especially uniforms – of regimental life, Wilhelm appears never to have internalized the habits of self-subordination and discipline that a fully fledged Prussian military education was designed to instil. He found it difficult to deal with correction or even advice from his superior officers. Even after five years at Wilhelm's side from 1879–84, his military adjutant, Captain Adolf von Bülow, acknowledged that he had failed to correct the effects of the prince's education; Wilhelm had adopted the external trappings, but not the values and mental habits of a Prussian officer.²⁵ Wilhelm was not the creation of Potsdam and the barracks square that some popular biographies have portrayed, but a military dilettante. For all her oft-voiced misgivings, then, his mother's plan to subvert the claims of the military upon her son must be judged a success. Whether the curious blend of Hinzpeter, Potsdam, Kassel and Bonn on which Wilhelm

was nourished actually represented an improvement upon the traditional model is another question.

As a child and adolescent, Wilhelm was a mere pawn in the battles fought out between his parents and his grandparents. But as a young man he began to exploit the room for manoeuvre created by them. A clear step in this direction can be discerned in 1883, when the 24-year-old Wilhelm was asked by his father to accompany him on an official journey to Spain. He had no wish to go, but rather than refuse directly he secretly requested his grandfather, who had not concealed his scepticism regarding this expensive venture, to forbid the journey on the grounds that it would be undesirable for him to leave his battalion at that time. This successful move was almost certainly not the first of its kind; when Friedrich Wilhelm discovered what had happened in November 1883, he accused his son in a heated confrontation of 'having long dealt with the Kaiser behind the backs of his parents'.²⁶

There were explosive scenes when Wilhelm connived with Bismarck and the Kaiser to have himself subbed into a diplomatic mission to St Petersburg in place of his father, on the grounds that his father Friedrich, whose Russophobia was notorious,²⁷ was not suited to this role. Friedrich Wilhelm, who was only informed of the matter after it had been decided, justly felt that he had been deliberately overlooked. Wilhelm returned from Russia to a cool parental reception. 'When he got back from St Petersburg, Wilhelm was greeted warmly by everyone except his parents – they had heard too much good about him', observed Count Waldersee, who had accompanied the prince on his journey. 'Whoever wishes to insinuate himself into their favour must speak badly of their son.'²⁸

And as if that were not bad enough, Wilhelm then set himself up as an informer for the tsar, reporting in detail – with Bismarck's connivance! – on his parents in long letters to the Russian court. In this 'secret correspondence', Wilhelm recommended himself to the Russian sovereign as a staunch opponent of his father's Russophobe position. In one characteristic letter written shortly after his return, he urged the tsar not to take his father's outbursts too seriously: 'you know him, he loves to oppose, he is under the influence of my mother, who for her part is directed by the Queen of England, and makes him see everything through English glasses. I assure you that the Kaiser, Prince Bismarck and I are all completely in agreement and that I will not cease to see the reinforcement and the maintenance of the Three Emperors' League as my highest duty.' A letter of June 1884 informed the tsar of his father's extreme hostility to the policies of the Russian sovereign and his government: 'he (Papa) accused the government of lying, of betrayal etc., there was no hateful adjective that he did not employ in order to blacken your name.' During the following year, with Bismarck's continuing encouragement, Wilhelm still operated his 'hotline' to the tsar.²⁹ This striking breach of familial confidentiality before a foreign sovereign demonstrates the extent of the young prince's determination to

enhance his profile by exploiting the animosities and political divisions at the Hohenzollern court. This was not the last time Wilhelm blithely usurped a diplomatic role for which he had received no training or instruction.

And just as in the 1630s and the 1720s, foreign policy was at the heart of the political quarrel. Had Wilhelm been marked out for special advancement in some area of the domestic administration, with or without prior consultation with his parents, the crown prince would doubtless have been rather less aggrieved. But in the absolutist and neo-absolutist regimes of nineteenth-century Europe, diplomacy was regarded as the domain of politics proper, the supreme sphere for the exercise of sovereign power and the highest activity of the state. 'Foreign Affairs are a purpose in themselves', declared Bismarck in 1866. 'I rate them higher than all other matters.'³⁰ This subjective 'primacy of foreign policy' as the pre-eminent vocation of monarchs and statesmen helps to explain why Wilhelm's growing role in German diplomacy touched a raw nerve in the crown prince and his wife. Wilhelm was now trespassing on an area central to Friedrich Wilhelm's ambitions as future monarch.

The same issue emerged in sharper relief during the autumn and winter of 1886, when it became apparent that Wilhelm – on Bismarck's suggestion – was to be initiated into the internal workings of the Foreign Office.³¹ The crown prince wrote to the chancellor objecting to this move on the grounds of his son's 'lack of maturity and inexperience, together with his tendency towards arrogance and exaggeration', and warned that it would be 'dangerous at this early time to bring him into contact with foreign questions'. Bismarck disagreed and pointed out that Wilhelm was now 27 years old, older than Friedrich Wilhelm I and Friedrich Wilhelm III at the times of their accessions. He went on to remind the crown prince that 'in the royal family the authority of the father is subsumed in that of the monarch'.³² The news of Wilhelm's posting triggered a row of unprecedented fury between father and son in December 1886, and it is worth citing Wilhelm's account of the episode (as reported by Herbert von Bismarck) at length:

His father had always been hard, contemptuous and rough with him, said the prince, but he had never seen him so embittered, he had become greyish-white and threatened [him] with a clenched fist, saying:

This is a trick that has been played upon me, and one which I shall never forget: my objections which I so pointedly expressed, were completely ignored: people behave as if the crown prince were no longer there. But I will teach the gentlemen of the Foreign Office, I give my word of honour that I will do this as soon as I accede to the throne and that they will not be forgiven for this.³³

We need not dwell any further on these unedifying scenes. The key point is that the man who became Wilhelm II grew up in an atmosphere suffused with a struggle for power and influence that infiltrated virtually all the

personal relationships around him. His parents, and particularly his mother, were as absorbed by these struggles as their opponent, Chancellor Bismarck. How could the young prince fail to be impressed by the way in which issues and debates were subordinated to questions of power? How could he fail to view politics in ad hominem terms as an interplay between friend and foe? By the time he ascended the throne in 1888, Wilhelm II already had an unusually intense interest in power and a strikingly strong appetite for it. That much was clear from the rather worrying postcards he liked to distribute to friends showing a full-length portrait of himself and bearing the handwritten legend 'I bide my time'.³⁴ But what he would actually do with power once he got hold of it was less clear. We might discern in this aporia one of the roots of his failure as a monarch.

In a final ironic inversion, Wilhelm himself would fall victim to the same relentless logic of conflict: in the last years before the outbreak of the First World War, his own eldest son joined the ranks of the ultra-rightist opposition – not a parliamentary faction, but an extra- and anti-parliamentary network of senior militaries and reactionary journalists. In 1913, the crown prince bombarded his father with letters demanding a *coup d'état* against the parliament. The Kaiser was not impressed: '*Coups d'état*', he informed his son, 'may belong to the tools of government in South- and Central American republics; in Germany, thank God, they are no longer customary and should not become so, regardless of whether they are launched from below or from above. People who urged such a course of action were dangerous, more dangerous for the monarchy and its survival than the wildest social democrat'.³⁵ To everyone's and perhaps to his own surprise, the Kaiser had been outflanked on the right by his own son. The crown prince's reputation as a reactionary helps to explain why, on the eve of the armistice in 1918, Prince Max of Baden proposed to skip two generations of Hohenzollerns in the hope of rescuing the Prussian monarchy.

To conclude. Whether a single pattern emerges from the sequence of Hohenzollern father-son conflicts is unclear. If we look at the alternation of styles, we might say that the first two Prussian kings marked out the extremes between which their successors would position themselves. At one end of the spectrum we find the type-A Hohenzollern monarch: expansive and expensive, ostentatious, detached from the regular work of state, focussed on image; at the other end his type-B antipode: austere, thrifty, workaholic. The 'baroque' style of monarchy inaugurated by Friedrich I retained a certain resonance within the collective memory of the dynasty, and the epochal alternation of tastes and fashions ensured that there would be periodic revivals of courtly largesse – under Friedrich Wilhelm II, court expenditure exploded once again to around 2 million thalers per annum, about one-eighth of the total state budget (the figure for his predecessor Friedrich the Great had been 220,000). The last decades of the nineteenth century would witness a period of relative austerity – recall Kaiser Wilhelm

I's hostility to the fitting of rubber tyres, which he regarded as decadent concessions to comfort, to the royal carriages and his resistance to the installation of baths in the Berlin Palace. But this was followed by what John Röhl has called the 'monstrous late blooming' of courtly culture around the person of the last Kaiser Wilhelm II.³⁶

Yet the type-B kingship of Friedrich Wilhelm I also had a vigorous after-life in the history of the dynasty. The harsh marginal jottings of Friedrich Wilhelm I were imitated (with more wit) by his illustrious son Friedrich II and (at greater length and with less wit) by his more distant descendant Kaiser Wilhelm II. Friedrich Wilhelm I's habit of wearing military uniform rather than the more expensive civilian alternative was taken up by Friedrich II and remained a striking feature of Hohenzollern dynastic representation until the fall of the Prussian monarchy at the end of the First World War. The historical power of the type-B model lay not merely in its association with Prussia's later ascendancy in Germany but also in its affinity with the values and preferences of an emergent Prussian public, for whom the image of a hard but just monarch dedicated to the service of the state came to embody a specifically Prussian vision of kingship. Far from endangering the legitimacy of the dynasty, it seems likely that the alternation over many generations of sharply opposed personal and public styles enhanced the adaptive flexibility of this tenacious and successful dynasty, enabling it to keep pace with the changing tastes of new generations.

Father-son conflicts turned on a range of issues. Foreign policy was often a motivating factor, as one would expect of an environment in which foreign policy was the first definitive domain of princely authority. But there were also cases – the tensions, for example, between the first and the second Prussian king – which turned on issues of domestic governance. The causal nexus between psychologically anchored intra-familial conflicts and exogenic political pressures appears to have worked in both directions. In the case of the young Friedrich II, the traumatized relationship between father and son endowed political differences with a heightened toxicity. In the case of the Great Elector, who scarcely knew his father, it was rather the other way around: politics got between father and son, drawing them into a vortex of polarization. The same can be said of Wilhelm II's long conflict with his own parents, in which it is impossible to disentangle intra-familial bitterness from the stresses wrought by an exceptionally polarized political environment.

Of course, there was nothing uniquely Prussian about the problem of father-son conflict as such. Look at the Hanoverians: George I quarrelled with his son in 1717–20; George II quarrelled with Prince Frederick in 1739–42; George III was at loggerheads with Prince George from the late 1770s, but especially during the Regency Crisis of 1788–89. Under the Hanoverian monarchs, Andrew Hanham has observed, it became 'almost the norm for princes of Wales and their households to provide a focus of opposition to the

king and his ministers'.³⁷ The prince's residence at Leicester House became the venue for a shadow court whose very existence was a provocation to the reigning monarch. The stand-offs could be bitter and sometimes entailed the severing of all relations between the prince's entourage and the king's court. But there was a difference: in Britain, father-son conflicts resonated with the conflict between parliamentary factions. It was not uncommon for irritated crown princes to side with opposition politicians. These may not ever have coalesced into a party-like grouping capable of wielding lasting impact, but they did connect the inner life of the dynasty with the inchoate forces of parliamentary politics. Andrew Thompson has suggested that the conflict between Hanoverian crown princes and Hanoverian kings in Britain – the existence, in other words, of a 'reversionary interest' – created a space in which something that would later be known as a 'loyal opposition' could begin to flourish.³⁸

Whether this is true of Brandenburg-Prussia is doubtful. The recurrence of father-son conflict became a stock theme in the dynasty's political legend – thanks above all to the unforgettable narrative of Crown Prince Friedrich's attempted flight and the unique brilliance of its young protagonist – but father-son conflicts never fed into the broader political culture in the way they did in Britain. It is true that the Great Elector and Friedrich Wilhelm I both aligned themselves with reformist ministers, but in neither case did the institutional platform exist for a 'loyal opposition' beyond the factional grouping assembled to achieve a specific set of objectives. In the absence of a national parliament, crown princes found allies among senior functionaries and groups of 'noble friends' like the neo-Pietist noblemen who surrounded the young Friedrich Wilhelm IV. The exception was Kaiser Friedrich, who had begun forging links with a parliamentary faction – this was the moment, if there ever was one, for the emergence of a 'reversionary interest'. But Bismarck's vigorous suppression of their public activities and the brevity of Friedrich's sojourn in power muted the impact of this affiliation on the broader political scene.

If the narrative of Hohenzollern father-son conflict fed into the broader culture, then it was not through the political mechanisms we associate with the 'reversionary interest' but rather through the diffuse operations of myth. This was a myth marked by the juxtaposition of contradictory images – paternal-filial solidarity on the one hand and violence between fathers and sons on the other. It became a way of celebrating the audacity of youth without definitively jettisoning the traditional hierarchy of family relations. In particular the seething feud between King Friedrich Wilhelm and his son, the future Friedrich II, was endlessly reworked in the historical novels that proliferated after the revolutions of 1848, a tradition that found its culmination in Jochen Klepper's extraordinary novel *Der Vater*, in which the author drew on the experience of conflict with his own father to draw an intimate and disturbing portrait of Friedrich Wilhelm the Soldier

King, a portrait that bracketed out politics, blurred the boundaries between cruelty and love, and endowed this notorious moment in the history of the Hohenzollerns with the intensity of a family psychodrama.³⁹

Notes

1. The testaments can be consulted in Richard Dietrich (1986), *Die politischen Testamente der Hohenzollern*, Cologne.
2. Martin Philippson (1897), *Der Große Kurfürst Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg, vol. 1: 1640–1660*, Berlin, 20; Political Testament of the Great Elector (1667), in: Dietrich (1986), 179–204, 203; Derek McKay (2001), *The Great Elector*, Harlow, 14–15.
3. On Schwarzenberg's relations with the Brandenburg nobility, see Christoph Fürbringer (1985), *Necessitas und Libertas. Staatsbildung und Landstände im 17. Jahrhundert in Brandenburg*, Frankfurt/M., 54–57.
4. The remark was addressed to the French envoy Rébenac; cited in McKay (2001), 238.
5. McKay (2001), 239–40.
6. Carl Hinrichs (1941), *Friedrich Wilhelm I., König in Preussen: eine Biographie*, Hamburg, 454–57, 464–68, 473–87; Linda and Marsha Frey (1984), *Frederick I: The Man and His Times*, Boulder, CO, 89–90; Rodney Gotthelf (2000), 'Frederick William I and Prussian Absolutism, 1713–1740', in: Philip G. Dwyer (ed.), *The Rise of Prussia, 1700–1830*, Harlow, 47–67, 50–51; Fritz Terveen (1954), *Gesamtstaat und Retablissement. Der Wiederaufbau des nördlichen Ostpreussen unter Friedrich Wilhelm I. (1714–1740)*, Göttingen, 17–21.
7. The National Archives, Kew (TNA), SP 90/6: William Breton to Earl of Strafford, Berlin, 28 February 1713; Carl Hinrichs (1964), 'Der Regierungsantritt Friedrich Wilhelms I.', in: Carl Hinrichs, *Preussen als historisches Problem*, ed. Gerhard Oestreich, Berlin, 91–137, 106.
8. Carl Hinrichs (1964a), 'Der Konflikt zwischen Friedrich Wilhelm I. und Kronprinz Friedrich', in: Hinrichs (1964), 185–202, 189.
9. Cited in Reinhold Koser (1886), *Friedrich der Große als Kronprinz*, Stuttgart, 26.
10. Hinrichs (1964a), 191; Carl Hinrichs (1971), *Preussentum und Pietismus. Der Pietismus in Brandenburg-Preußen als religiös-soziale Reformbewegung*, Göttingen, 60.
11. Hinrichs (1964a), 193.
12. On the growing alienation between father and son, see Johannes Kunisch (2004), *Friedrich der Grosse. Der König und seine Zeit*, Munich, 18–28.
13. For a brilliant analysis of this episode, see Jürgen Luh (2011), *Der Große. Friedrich II. von Preußen*, Berlin, 17–19.
14. Theodor Schieder (2000), *Frederick the Great*, trans. Sabina Berkeley and H.M. Scott, Harlow, 25.
15. Schieder (2000), 29; Kunisch (2004), 46.
16. Christopher Clark (2006), *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia, 1600–1947*, London, 107–11.
17. Kunisch (2004), 285; on Friedrich Wilhelm II, see also Wilhelm Moritz von Bissing (1967), *Friedrich Wilhelm II., König von Preußen*, Berlin; David Barclay (2006), 'Friedrich Wilhelm II (1786–1797)', in: Frank-Lothar Kroll (ed.), *Preußens Herrscher. Von den Ersten Hohenzollern bis Wilhelm II.*, Munich, 179–96.

18. On Frederick William III, see above all Thomas Stamm-Kuhlmann (1992), *König in Preußens großer Zeit. Friedrich Wilhelm III., der Melancholiker auf dem Thron*, Berlin; on the king's personal style see Stamm-Kuhlmann (1989), 'War Friedrich Wilhelm III. ein Bürgerkönig?', *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* 16, 441–60 and Stamm-Kuhlmann (1990), 'Der Hof Friedrich Wilhelms III. von Preußen (1797–1840)', in: Karl Möckel (ed.), *Hof und Gesellschaft in den deutschen Staaten im 19. und im beginnenden 20. Jahrhundert*, Boppard, 275–319.
19. Frank Lorenz Müller (2011), *Our Fritz: Emperor Frederick III and the Political Culture of Imperial Germany*, Cambridge, MA.
20. John Röhl (1993), *Wilhelm II. Die Jugend des Kaisers 1859–1888*, Munich, 134.
21. Crown Princess to Queen Victoria, Neues Palais, 11 September 1867, in: Roger Fulford (ed.) (1971), *Your Dear Letter: Private Correspondence of Queen Victoria and the Crown Princess of Prussia 1865–1871*, London, 150. The appointment of the first tutors is treated in detail by Röhl (1993), 136–57. The best account of the crown princess's travails at court can be found in Hannah Pakula (1996), *An Uncommon Woman: The Empress Frederick, Daughter of Queen Victoria, Wife of the Crown Prince of Prussia, Mother of Kaiser Wilhelm*, London, 106, 109, 138, 139, 141, 151, 154, 190.
22. Crown Princess to Queen Victoria, Berchtesgaden, 27 August 1872, in: Roger Fulford (ed.) (1976), *Darling Child: Private Correspondence of Queen Victoria and the Crown Princess of Prussia 1871–1878*, London, 57.
23. Röhl (1993), 216, 218.
24. Crown Princess to Queen Victoria, Neues Palais, 5 September 1874, in: Fulford (1976), 150.
25. Lamar Cecil (1989), *Wilhelm II, vol. 1: Prince and Emperor, 1859–1900*, Chapel Hill, 60.
26. Cited in Röhl (1993), 433. On the Kaiser's attitude to the Spanish journey, see Friedrich von Holstein to Herbert von Bismarck, Berlin, 29 October 1883, in: Walter Bußmann (ed.) (1964), *Staatssekretär Graf Herbert von Bismarck. Aus seiner politischen Korrespondenz*, Göttingen, 178.
27. On the prince's 'notorious' Russophobia, see Friedrich von Holstein, diary entry of 6 June 1884, in: Norman Rich and M.H. Fisher (eds) (1957), *The Holstein Papers: The Memoirs, Diaries and Correspondence of Friedrich von Holstein 1837–1909, vol. 2: Diaries*, Cambridge, 154.
28. Alfred von Waldersee, diary entry of 10 June 1884, in: Heinrich Otto Meisner (ed.) (1922), *Denkwürdigkeiten des General-Feldmarschall Alfred Graf von Waldersee, vol. 1: 1832–1888*, Stuttgart and Berlin, 242.
29. William to Tsar Alexander III, 25 May, 19 June 1884, cited in Röhl (1993), 440. This letter is also discussed in Patricia A. Kollander (1995), 'Politics for the Defence? Bismarck, Battenberg and the Origins of the Cartel of 1887', *German History* 13, 28–46, but misdated to a later Russian visit of 1886.
30. Quoted in Brendan P. Simms (1997), *The Impact of Napoleon: Prussian High Politics, Foreign Policy and the Crisis of the Executive, 1797–1806*, Cambridge, 2.
31. Wilhelm had been pressing for a more active role in the making of foreign policy since his first trip to Russia in 1884, and was encouraged in this ambition by the Bismarcks; see Röhl (1993), 584–97.
32. Crown Prince to Bismarck, Portofino, 28 September 1886, cited in Otto von Bismarck (1932), *Erinnerung und Gedanke*, edited by Gerhard Ritter and Rudolf Stadelmann, Berlin, 455–56.
33. Reported in Herbert von Bismarck to Kuno von Rantzau, Berlin, 20 December 1886, in: Bußmann (1964), 415.

34. Thomas Kohut (1991), *Wilhelm II and the Germans: A Study in Leadership*, Oxford, 81.
35. Wilhelm II to Crown Prince Wilhelm, 22 November 1913, cited in: Hans-Günter Zmarzlik (1957), *Bethmann Hollweg als Reichskanzler 1908–1914. Studien zu Möglichkeiten und Grenzen seiner innerpolitischen Machtstellung*, Düsseldorf, 40.
36. John Röhl (1987), 'Hof und Hofgesellschaft unter Kaiser Wilhelm II.', in: John Röhl, *Kaiser, Hof und Staat. Wilhelm II. und die deutsche Politik*, Munich, 78–115.
37. Andrew Hanham, 'The Leicester House Faction', in: *The History of Parliament: British Political, Social and Local History*, www.historyofparliamentonline.org/periods/hanoverians/leicester-house-faction, accessed 25 January 2015; see also Aubrey N. Newman (1961), 'Leicester House Politics, 1748–1751', *The English Historical Review* 76 (October), 577–89; James Lee McKelvey (1979), *George III and Lord Bute: The Leicester House Years*, Durham, NC.
38. Andrew Thompson, 'Fathers and Sons: The Politics of Intergenerational Conflict and the Hanoverian Monarchy', guest lecture given on 9 July 2014 for the Society for Court Studies at the Paul Mellon Centre, London.
39. Jochen Klepper (1937), *Der Vater. Roman des Soldatenkönigs*, 2 vols, Berlin; on Klepper, see Rita Thalmann (1977), *Jochen Klepper. Ein Leben zwischen Idyllen und Katastrophen*, Munich; Martin Wecht (1998), *Jochen Klepper. Ein christlicher Schriftsteller im jüdischen Schicksal*, Düsseldorf.

3

Heirs and Their Wives: Setting the Scene for Umbertian Italy

Axel Körner

Italian literature from the Risorgimento period – the works of D’Azeglio, Guerrazzi or of Verdi’s librettist Solera – portrayed Italian women as the defenders of morality and of the purity of Italian blood. They fulfilled their role as good wives and mothers by bearing future Italians and by holding the nation together. This description of the nation in terms of direct blood relations and kinship influenced a growing audience of patriots in Risorgimento Italy.¹ Meanwhile, what divided these patriots were Italy’s future constitutional arrangements. The question of republic versus monarchy was only resolved, at least temporarily, after the revolutions of 1848–49, when the kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia took the lead in the struggle for Italian unification. Piedmont created Italy through a series of wars and the deposition of long-reigning dynasties. There were also annexations of external territories, which as late as the uprisings of 1831 had still been described as ‘foreign’ by the revolutionaries themselves.

Although a growing contingent of Italians supported the national movement, popular and revolutionary elements played only a limited role in the process of unification after 1849. Most nationalists subordinated their political and constitutional ideals to the ambitions of Piedmont. As a consequence of becoming the Risorgimento’s main actor, the Savoy dynasty had to respond to this political process, justifying its position and fostering its relationship with the new nation.² Cultural symbols, including forms of representing the monarchy, helped to communicate and negotiate Savoy involvement in the life of the nation.

Having found a ruling monarch to represent the new nation state – a more straightforward process for Italians than after the foundation of the Belgian kingdom or following the unification of Germany – attention soon shifted from the kingdom’s founder, Vittorio Emanuele II, to the heir to the throne, Prince Umberto. This shift assumed particular significance after Umberto’s marriage to his cousin Margherita of Savoy in 1868. While the position of Vittorio Emanuele II as the ‘soldier-king’ was undisputed even among former republicans, the future of the monarchy was frequently questioned. A crisis

comparable to the one that occurred when Prime Minister Count Camillo Cavour suddenly died in 1861, within months of the kingdom's foundation, could easily arise after the death of the kingdom's founding monarch. In the decades after unification, the cult surrounding Margherita of Savoy, Italy's first crown princess, played a crucial role in rallying new sections of the nation behind the monarchy. The ways in which she performed the symbolic link between dynasty and nation made explicit reference to the idea of the nation as family. This led to novel ways of representing the monarchy.

This new image of the royal family contrasted dramatically with the ideas associated with the kingdom's founder. Proud of its dynastic conventions, the House of Savoy had a tradition of avowed unease concerning symbolic celebrations of the Italian nation. This reserve contrasted with the nationalization of the monarchy that occurred, for instance, in Georgian Britain.³ Vittorio Emanuele II was popular among supporters of the national movement, but this was mostly in recognition of his role as a military leader during the wars of liberation.⁴ His constitutional role after unification was still to be determined and his relationship with the political establishment was often tense, not least because of attempts made by his own entourage, the *partito di corte*, to influence political processes. Moreover, there was little scope for constructing the relationship between crown and nation through the image of a royal family. The king's consort, Maria Adelaide of Habsburg-Lorraine, daughter of Archduke Rainer of Austria, Vice King of Lombardy-Venetia, and mother of the future Italian king Umberto I, had died six years before unification.

Royalist myths had it that Vittorio Emanuele and Maria Adelaide's marriage was passionate and loving, but soon after the wedding Vittorio Emanuele started a long-term relationship with Rosa Vercellana, the daughter of a palace guard. The couple even had two children.⁵ While maintaining other lovers in Turin and Florence, the king also entered into open competition with Count Cavour for the affection of the former ballerina Bianca Ronzani. In addition to the fact that his wife was a member of the Habsburg dynasty whose rule over Italians Vittorio Emanuele sought to end, Vittorio Emanuele's lifestyle did nothing to enhance his reputation as a family man. In 1869, after long political struggles with his government and his own family, the widowed king and Rosa Vercellana were united in a morganatic marriage. At that time the king seemed struck down by a fatal illness, but after the nuptials he miraculously recovered. The wedding took place just weeks after Vittorio Emanuele had married his daughter to the first cousin of the French Emperor, Prince Napoléon Joseph Bonaparte. This almost triggered a diplomatic crisis with France. 'La bella Rosina' was made Countess of Mirafiori and Fontanafredda, but remained excluded from any official dynastic role. She was a queen 'without throne and without crown'.⁶ In addition to the king's openly unconventional love life, the ritualistic

focus of royal representation on military achievements and Piedmontese tradition created a distance between Vittorio Emanuele and the nation that would hamper the formation of national identity after unification.

Like his father before him, the Prince of Piedmont maintained a number of intimate relationships, before as well as throughout his marriage to Margherita of Savoy. The press and popular royalist literature provided ample coverage of his liaison with the Duchesse Eugenia Litta, who took residence in Monza, conveniently close to the palace where Umberto and Margherita spent much of their married life.⁷ Umberto's relationship with Margherita was thus very different from the life of another famous royal couple of that time: that of the Prussian Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm and Britain's Princess Royal Victoria, married in 1858 and sincerely devoted to each other.⁸ Umberto's attitude to marriage challenged the carefully constructed image of the monarchy as a model family, but it did not diminish Margherita's role in advancing the monarchy's popular appeal. This proved powerful enough to transform the sense of national identity in post-unification Italy. There can be little doubt that within months of their marriage Margherita had turned into the most popular representative of Italy's royal family. She retained this role after the assassination of Umberto I in 1900 and her retirement to the position of queen mother, despite an estranged relationship with her son, King Vittorio Emanuele III.⁹

That Margherita was a proud Savoy in her own right helped this process. Her christening in 1851 had been attended by almost the entire political establishment of Piedmont-Sardinia, including Count Cavour, the Marchese d'Azeglio, Marchese Menabrea, and the generals Di Robilant, Durando, Morozzo della Rocca and La Marmora, several of them future prime ministers of Italy.¹⁰ Margherita's correspondence with the king suggests that Vittorio Emanuele II admired in her the daughter of his beloved and long lost brother.¹¹ Devoted to her father's memory, Margherita regarded being a princess of the House of Savoy as more important than the illusion of romantic love.¹² She responded to her role as future queen with a sense of dynastic duty as well as political imagination, and historians widely acknowledge her role in transforming the Savoy dynasty into a *monarchia popolare*, based on the popular legitimization of monarchical myth.¹³

Compared to their British counterparts the Italian sovereigns retained a strong influence on government politics, especially through the appointment of prime ministers and by conducting their own foreign policy, or *diplomazia parallela*.¹⁴ The Piedmontese constitution of 1848, the so-called *statuto*, had been a reaction to a political emergency (the first war of liberation against Austria) and provided the monarch with strong executive powers. During the post-revolutionary epoch, when most states considered restricting the political rights of their subjects, the Savoy dynasty's decision to retain the constitution granted in 1848 played an important role in giving legitimacy to the monarchy. However, many Italian patriots hoped

that unification was to be completed by a patriotic insurrection in Rome, which would then lead to the convocation of a national assembly. It would be up to this body to discuss constitutional change, including the restriction of the king's existing powers and the adaptation of the constitution to the peninsula's new political circumstances.¹⁵ This never happened, though. Rome was annexed as a consequence of the Franco-Prussian War, when the French protection of the Papal State simply collapsed. Dynastic interests, combined with factionalism among parliamentarians and widespread fear of radical change, prevented serious constitutional debate in 1871.

Concerns about constitutional instability, as well as the complicated relationship between court and government, left the heir with little space for political manoeuvre. Although he seems to have supported his father's belligerent ambition to resolve the Balkan question, Umberto played little or no role in his father's day-to-day politics.¹⁶ In his correspondence with his son, the king frequently mentioned a need to talk, but there is little evidence of the prince's direct involvement in politics. From the age of 21, the Savoy crown princes were automatically members of the kingdom's senate; they also represented the monarchy at public events, but there were no other provisions for their involvement in political affairs. According to Piedmontese tradition, the queen assumed a more prominent role than the heir in the representation of the monarchy – both by the king's side and in her own right.¹⁷ Along with the king, the queen was the only member of the royal family to be addressed as 'majesty'. Although Vittorio Emanuele II no longer had a queen at his side, these provisions foreshadowed the role of Margherita of Savoy after her marriage to Umberto.¹⁸ From the moment plans for a royal wedding became public, Margherita, the wife of the future king, attracted great public interest. The ceremonial attention reserved for her mirrored the conventions of other European courts and is reflected in the celebrations not only of Umberto's marriage to Margherita in 1868, but also in the arrangements for their silver anniversary in 1893. The latter event was transformed into what contemporaries described as a 'new plebiscite' for the kingdom, a metaphor referring to the popular votes, which formalized Piedmont's annexation of the former Italian states after the second war of liberation in 1858.¹⁹

The crown prince and his wife, as well as the lesser princes, maintained separate courts, including a complex hierarchy of courtiers and professional staff. Nevertheless, Umberto was given little political training to prepare him for his future role. This exacerbated the problem of his almost complete lack of formal education and intellectual interests.²⁰ It is therefore remarkable that Umberto managed to use his position as heir and that of his wife to place the relationship between nation and crown on a new basis. The process was helped by the fact that, after 1871, the king left the representation of the monarchy in the new capital largely to Umberto. The new conception of the monarchy as a royal family and the active construction of

its popular appeal very much corresponded to the ideas of Francesco Crispi, who was about to become the new man of Italian politics.²¹

The gendering of the nation through the public image of the crown as a family forged, in the words of George Mosse, a previously unknown alliance between 'nationalism and respectability'.²² By assuming a public role specifically created for her, Margherita did much to change the existing image of the Italian monarchy. Her public role seems to have been sanctioned by the king; and her correspondence with Vittorio Emanuele suggests a rather affectionate relationship.²³ In her new function she became an object of intense popular admiration, in which her perceived beauty played an important role. During one of her early visits to Bologna, the former capital of the Papal Legations, the local newspaper *Il Monitore* referred to her '*simpatica fisionomia*'.²⁴

Who then was this beautiful princess of Savoy? After the early death of her father, and as the daughter of a princess of Saxony, she was brought up enjoying an almost bourgeois life-style, which presented a challenge to the severe etiquette of the court of Savoy. Margherita's public attitudes were influenced by her relatively liberal and modern education in which literature and the arts assumed a greater importance than the catechism, which had customarily been the focus of female education at the Savoy court. The display of her style – in terms of social relations, dress and public attitudes – helped the middle classes to identify with the House of Savoy and to transform their relationship with the monarchy. A book on Umberto, published a year after his succession, claimed that 'the prince and the princess do not tire of taking care of their domestic affairs'.²⁵ Unlike earlier generations of the House of Savoy, they created the impression that they were as one with their people. Although Umberto, in the best tradition of the Savoy, also pursued a prominent military career, the couple's new representation of royalty had a profound impact on Italy's *fine secolo*.²⁶

The day after their official engagement Umberto and Margherita chose the royal box of the Teatro Regio in Turin to present themselves in public for the first time.²⁷ A new tone characterising the relationship between nation and monarchy was set with the choice of the opera performed in Turin in honour of Umberto's and Margherita's wedding, on 16 April 1868: the Italian premiere of Meyerbeer's *Dinorah*.²⁸ Rarely performed today, Meyerbeer was nineteenth-century Europe's most popular composer. *Dinorah*, better known under its original French title *Le pardon de Ploërmel* was an *opéra comique*, but Meyerbeer was most famous for large-scale historical plots of *grand-opéra*, works widely appreciated by the new opera audiences of middle-class origin. Not only was his music praised for speaking a cosmopolitan language understood across nations and cultures,²⁹ it also stood for the 'urbanization of opera', contrasting with the traditional repertoire of the court theatres and reflecting the rapid changes of life produced by the modern age.³⁰ The fact that a French opera by a German-Jewish composer was chosen for the event

in Turin is remarkable in itself. While Umberto followed the Savoy family tradition of avoiding the theatre whenever possible, Margherita developed a strong interest in music, and in opera in particular. She was especially keen on exploring composers popular among the emerging middle class: Meyerbeer, then Wagner, and later Puccini. Their works stood for the internationalization of the Italian repertoire, but also for an art form the middle classes associated with the major European capital cities, a culture to which the Italian middle classes increasingly aspired.³¹

Umberto and Margherita spent the first two winters after their wedding in Naples, described in the devotional and commemorative literature as 'the two happiest years of their life'.³² Only three years after Italy had fought a most brutal civil war against the Mezzogiorno, a region still under a state of siege, many in the South perceived their submission to Piedmont as just another form of foreign domination.³³ Open hostility towards the new nation state notwithstanding, official communications spoke of the local population's great affection for the royals, underlining the Savoys' role in liberating Naples from what was presumed to be the yoke of the Bourbon dynasty. 'In honouring the Royal House of Savoy we will always show that our affection for the dynasty stands for the cult of freedom', the mayor of Naples, Guglielmo Capители, proclaimed in a manifesto to his citizens on 22 November 1868, the day the royal couple arrived in the city.³⁴ Other parts of the South had an even more immediate relationship with the family of the young princess: in Sicily, Margherita's father, the Duke of Genoa, was remembered as the king elected by the regional parliament after its defection from Naples, during the revolution of 1848. Sicily's constitutional experiments were soon overtaken by the events of the counter-revolution, but they remained enshrined in collective memories.

Despite the fact that the heirs were given no official political function, they became a powerful instrument in the government's attempts to overcome the stubborn distance between the kingdom of Italy and its southern provinces. This was a remarkable development, considering that Umberto's explicit distaste for Naples and the Neapolitans was a matter of public record.³⁵ Not much is known, however, as to exactly who shaped the heirs' role in this process: whether the initiative came from the king, the heirs themselves or the government. Reconciliation with the South, however, emerged as an important part of a policy, which Catherine Brice has described as 'the affirmation of the Savoys' Italianness'.³⁶

The birth of the next in line to the throne, the future Vittorio Emanuele III, in the city of Naples assumed a particular role in the monarchy's symbolic representation in the South. He was christened Vittorio Emanuele Ferdinando Maria Gennaro, and the last of his given names was chosen to honour the Patron Saint of Naples.³⁷ According to anecdotal literature and memorabilia it was the Princess of Piedmont who 'chose Naples as the

hometown for her first son, following the advice of the king, who intended to demonstrate once more the mutual affection between the provinces of the Mezzogiorno and those of the North'.³⁸ Exploring Margherita's alleged liking for the people of the South, the new connection between the dynasty and the southern provinces served to suggest that generational change had the power to heal the wounds of the past. The court doctors appointed a local peasant woman as the prince's wet-nurse and instead of keeping her nameless, as was customary at the time, Maria Maisto Cristiano's alleged admiration for Margherita was exploited further to strengthen the connections between the royal family and Naples. As reported in one of the first official biographies of Margherita,

When Ms Maisto returned to her husband, she was full of praise for the majestic woman, who had been so extraordinarily kind and respectful with her. 'How nice she is! When she received me she gave me a kiss on the forehead! That God bless her!' Even today Ms Maisto's husband Giuseppe Cristiano, whenever he is asked about Queen Margherita, replies with tears in his eyes and deeply moved that she 'is a Saint! Whenever she met with my wife she kissed her, she kissed her on the forehead! A princess, a future queen, can you believe that?'³⁹

Cristiano's supposed relationship with the crown princess became part of the royal family's public relations campaign, referred to in devotional literature for decades to come. In private Margherita expressed herself in rather different words about the wetnurse, describing her as a beggar (*pezzente*), a liar and a petty thief.⁴⁰ The dynasty's new relationship with Naples was officially sanctioned when King Vittorio Emanuele II created his grandson Prince of Naples, described in official proclamations as a Neapolitan 'fellow citizen', a *concittadino* (see Figure 3.1) According to a frequently retold anecdote, Vittorio Emanuele II visited Naples a few weeks after his grandson's birth. Margherita insisted on welcoming her father-in-law at the train station, allegedly using the same opportunity to present the newly born prince to the women of the local market.⁴¹

The idea of a king and a queen being close to their people became part of the royals' new branding, which was maintained even after Umberto's accession to the throne. Works of charity, public manifestations of compassion and contact with the people through royal visits were all part of this strategy.⁴² An illustrated biography of Margherita, published shortly after Umberto's assassination in 1900, recalled an anecdote relating to the 1884 cholera epidemic in Naples: 'Invited to honour with his presence the horse races in Pordenone, he replied to the mayor of that city, "In Pordenone people celebrate, in Naples they die. I am off to Naples. Umberto"'.⁴³ In order to explore the propagandistic effect to the full, the telegram was promptly published in the *Gazzetta Ufficiale del Regno*.



Figure 3.1 The Princess of Piedmont with her baby and dog (1870). Representing the monarchy as a family in a private setting was a modern media strategy designed to bridge the gap between Crown and nation in liberal Italy © The National Media Museum, Bradford

Immediately after the city's annexation in 1871 the heirs moved to Rome, where they assumed a role very similar to the one they had previously occupied in Naples. They took residence in the Eternal City at a time when Vittorio Emanuele II preferred to stay in his native Piedmont and visited the new capital only on special occasions. While the heir and his wife moved into the Papal apartments of the Quirinale, the king occupied the far more modest dwellings of a ground-floor apartment in the Palazzina Gregoriana.⁴⁴ As was the case during the couple's earlier stay in Naples, many Romans – especially members of the 'black' aristocracy, who had served the Popes and their governments for centuries – perceived the so-called 'liberation' as a hostile occupation and the deposition of the pontiff as patricide. The new role assumed by the royal heirs in Rome included regular appearances at social functions, visits to public institutions such as hospitals and schools, as well as daily coach trips through the streets of Rome.⁴⁵

Folkloric rituals also played a part. In 1876, two years before Umberto's accession to the throne, Margherita participated in the revived Roman Carnival, with the seven-year-old Prince of Naples throwing chocolates and sweets from a balcony of Palazzo Fiano.⁴⁶ The anecdote shows how similar the heirs' strategy was to the one employed a few years earlier in Naples. Making the best of her broad interest in culture and learned debate, Princess Margherita chose Italy's new capital to open her own salon. While many members of the Roman aristocracy kept their distance from the House of Savoy, her guests included artists, politicians and academics, often of middle-class origin and at times with republican sympathies.⁴⁷ While maintaining a salon was perceived as a breach of the Savoy royal etiquette, Margherita's endeavour found itself in line with the government's attempts to foster the relationship between nation and crown and to overcome resentment against the monarchy. As crown princess she was in a position to employ a form of soft diplomacy, which remained beyond the reach not only of the king, but also of the heir to the throne.⁴⁸

The heirs' new and different understanding of monarchy had a profound impact on the period of political transition after the sudden death of Vittorio Emanuele II in 1878, when some internal and external observers feared that the monarchy might not last. In contemporary discourse, the risks associated with the transition were often hidden behind royalist and patriotic rhetoric. For instance, a 'popular biography' of Umberto I, published in 1885, explained that 'Umberto's accession to the throne was most natural, a necessary consequence of the *statuto*, which Charles Albert, in 1848, granted to his people and which in 1859 was extended step by step to the rest of Italy'.⁴⁹ The fact that the author thought it necessary to underline the 'natural' ease of this process suggests that some Italians had questioned the transition. In the perception of Umberto's contemporaries, a peaceful transition of power was by no means guaranteed. During the weeks following the succession several newspapers and pamphlets expressed anxiety over the monarchy's

capacity to survive the death of its first king, mirroring the fears associated with the unexpected passing of the kingdom's first prime minister, Count Camillo Cavour, in 1861.⁵⁰ Directly addressing the new sovereign in a series of articles for the *Gazzetta d'Italia*, an anonymous 'conservative' alerted the king to the fact that over the last two decades the situation of the monarchy had completely changed:

Nobody doubts that the monarchical principle served the great purpose of achieving national independence. Not even the proudest demagogues dared to suggest that King Vittorio Emanuele had to give up the crown, because he greatly deserved the gratitude of his fatherland. The danger, however, is the following. These people granted to the individual what in effect was the merit of the institution. And so they cleared the way to free Italy from any obligation towards the monarchy once the first king had descended into his tomb. As a consequence, according to these revolutionaries who stood by the soldier king, his funeral was also intended to become the funeral of the monarchy.⁵¹

The author's principal objective in writing these lines was the foundation of a new conservative party, but his argument reflected a general sense of anxiety about the monarchy's survival after the death of Vittorio Emanuele. The disparate coalition of liberal forces, which had shared power since the foundation of the kingdom, still included many currents and individuals who endorsed the monarchical principle half-heartedly, mainly for pragmatic or opportunistic reasons. The fact that the Umbertian reign ultimately strengthened the nation's existing constitutional order was owed substantially to the heir's advocacy of a new relationship between nation and crown.

The new king's proclamation, countersigned by members of his government, insisted that there was no change to the role of the monarchy in Italy's constitutional order: 'Your first king is dead. His successor will give you the proof that the institutions do not die.'⁵² However, substantial changes had already taken place. The monarchy was no longer represented through a 'soldier king', but by the head of a royal family, who had placed its relationship to the nation on new foundations.

One of Umberto's first initiatives as king was the abolition of his personal political office, the *Gabinetto particolare*, transferring all of its powers to a governmental institution, the *Ministro della Real Casa*. He thus set much closer limits to the tradition of the Crown's parallel politics and responded to expectations of parliament and government. Again, popular literature on the Savoy was quick to take account of these changes, while at the same time retaining claims that Umberto's reign closely mirrored that of his father.⁵³ Umberto's first biographer provides a good illustration of this trend when explaining the numerous manifestations of support for Umberto during the early days of his reign: 'Why this outburst of love for a new king, of whom only

his military virtues, demonstrated during the war of 1866, were known?⁵⁴ Referring to the crown prince's official role rather than the image of the monarchy Umberto and his wife had created, Venosta found the answer in the king's proclamation, quoted above: 'He made it absolutely clear that he intends to follow in the footsteps of his father, imitating the great example which his ancestor had left him, devotion to the fatherland, love of progress, faith in free institutions, the pride of the House of Savoy.'⁵⁵ That the biographer ignored the changes to the institution, which had emerged during Umberto's time as heir and since his accession, shows the extent to which monarchical legitimacy was based not merely on formal laws of succession, but on the symbolic construction of continuity. As David D'Avray has explained in his study of medieval memorial preaching, the rhetoric used to commemorate a dead prince said less about the deceased than about expectations of his successor, fixing the boundaries of his office.⁵⁶ In Umberto's case, the emphasis on 'progress' and 'free institutions' was written back into the portrayal of his predecessor, with the aim of signalling to the heir how the monarchy had evolved and what this meant for his reign.

The institution of the monarchy was represented by kings and queens as well as by the heirs to the throne (and their consorts). In the decades after Italian unification, the representation of the Savoy as a family became key to the enterprise of giving a disparate nation a measure of unity, assigning a new role first to the heirs and then to the queen. Along with Italy's democratic left (the men around Agostino Depretis and Francesco Crispi), Margherita of Savoy played a crucial role in redressing the symbolic relationship between nation and crown. In this process too much agency should not be assigned to the heirs themselves. Instead, generational change within the House of Savoy coincided with an important moment of transition in the political life of the nation. This was initiated by Italy's parliamentary revolution of 1876, when the Centre Left for the first time won the majority of seats in the Italian parliament. The Centre Left was put in a position to transform the relationship between crown and nation, because they found in Margherita of Savoy a personality capable of symbolising this change. The image of Italy's first queen as the standard-bearer of a new age, therefore, is more than a construction of later generations of historians; contemporaries described her role in very similar words. On the occasion of her death in 1926 a popular historian of the monarchy defined her 'duty, first as wife of the heir to the throne and then as queen', as 'seeing to cohesion and assimilation in a country such as Italy, which for historical and ethnic reasons tended more to division and fragmentation than to unity'.⁵⁷

Whether royalty formed the basis for the exercise of power in nineteenth-century Europe, or vice versa, depended on the constitutional arrangements of each country and on the particular political dynamic of a given moment in time. While the political power of modern monarchs was subject to

change and circumstances, royalty also symbolized power; not the power of particular governments, but that of the state.

Since the late eighteenth century, legitimism had lost much of its role in justifying monarchical rule.⁵⁸ Its 'secular magic', as David Cannadine describes it, thus depended on popular sentiment.⁵⁹ Although modern nations often took their right to independent existence for granted, nation building remained a controversial and often brutal process. In the case of unified Italy, the Civil War in the Mezzogiorno and the forced integration of an entire region by means of military suppression offers a striking example of the cruelty with which nation building was pursued. The dramatic transformation of the political map of Europe became a powerful feature of the widely perceived change in the semantics of historical time, which Europeans associated with their experience of modernity. In this situation the symbolism of monarchy continued to exercise power.

In Italy the institutions of the liberal state – parliament, government and municipalities – transformed the monarchy into a symbol and embodiment of the nation. Royal parades, weddings and funerals, state visits and the royals' physical presence in different parts of the country provided opportunities to invest a dramatically changing external world with meaning. As David Kertzer explains, rituals helped in 'linking the past to the present and the present to the future', thus providing 'a sense of continuity'.⁶⁰ While royalty was subject to constant change, it offered an illusion of stability and social coherence, which most subjects of the modern age happily embraced.

Notes

1. Alberto M. Banti (2000), *La nazione del Risorgimento. Parentela, santità e onore alle origini dell'Italia unita*, Turin. Marina d'Amelia (2012), 'Between Two Eras: Challenges Facing Women in the Risorgimento', in: Silvana Patriarca and Lucy Riall (eds), *The Risorgimento Revisited: Nationalism and Culture in Nineteenth-Century Italy*, New York, 115–33. On the representation of women in Verdi's operas see Susan Rutherford (2013), *Verdi, Opera, Women*, Cambridge.
2. On the monarchy's strategies to affirm its role see Paolo Colombo and Valentina Villa (2012), 'Governare il popolo, legittimare il Re: la costruzione dell'identità nazionale e dell'immagine pubblica della Monarchia dal 1861 al 1900', in: Giovanni Ruocco and Luca Scuccimarra (eds), *Il governo del popolo, Dalla Restaurazione alla guerra franco-prussiana*, Rome, 355–74. For a recent general framework of the symbolic representation of power in Italy, in addition to the works cited below, see Maurizio Ridolfi and Marina Tesoro (2011), *Monarchia e Repubblica: istituzioni, culture e rappresentazioni politiche in Italia, 1848–1948*, Milan.
3. Linda Colley (1992), *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837*, New Haven and London. Although it is important to differentiate between the two queens' offices, Catherine Brice has argued that Queen Victoria's emphasis on domesticity served Margherita as a model: Catherine Brice (2006), 'Queen Margherita (1851–1926): "The Only Man in the House of Savoy"', in: Regina Schulte (ed.), *The Body of the Queen: Gender and Rule in the Courtly World, 1500–2000*, New York, 195–215.

4. Umberto Levra (1992), *Fare gli Italiani. Memoria e celebrazione del Risorgimento*, Turin, 8; Umberto Levra (1997), 'Vittorio Emanuele II', in: Mario Isnenghi (ed.), *I luoghi della memoria. Strutture ed eventi dell'Italia unita*, Rome and Bari, 47–64.
5. Anecdotal literature reflecting public perceptions provides the relevant biographic detail here. See for instance: Antonio Monti (1935), 'Maria Adelaide di Savoia nelle sue prime lettere d'amore e nel dramma di Carlo Alberto', in: Antonio Monti, *Donne e Passioni del Risorgimento*, Milan, 79–107. See also Giovanni Gigliozzi (1997), *Le regine d'Italia*, Rome, 7 sq.
6. Gigliozzi (1997), 26; Rosario Romeo (1990), *Vita di Cavour*, Rome and Bari, 394; Denis Mack Smith (1989), *Italy and its Monarchy*, New Haven and London, 46.
7. Claudio Alberto Andreoli (2010), *Regine e dame alla corte dei re d'Italia*, Città di Castello, 68ff.; Ugoberto Alfassio Grimaldi (1971), *Il re 'buono'*, Milan, 47ff.
8. Frank Lorenz Müller (2011), *Our Fritz: Emperor Frederick III and the Political Culture of Imperial Germany*, Cambridge, MA, 32ff.
9. On representations of Umberto in the context of his assassination see Paolo Edoardo Fiora (2000), *Monza 29 luglio 1900. Il Regicidio dalla cronaca alla storia*, Milan.
10. Andreoli (2010), 48–49.
11. On 8 February 1868 the king writes to Princess Margherita: 'Dieu te bénisse, et bénisse éternellement la chère mémoire d'un frère que j'ai tant aimé'; Francesco Cognasso (1966), *Le lettere di Vittorio Emanuele II*, Turin, vol. 2, 1292.
12. Grimaldi (1971), 45–46; Nino del Bianco (2011), *Margherita di Savoia. Regina di cuori nell'Italia unita*, Genova, 14, 44 sq.
13. Filippo Mazzonis (2003), *La Monarchia e il Risorgimento*, Bologna, 169. For a rare personal account of Margherita's character, though during later years, see the diary of Umberto's *aiutante di campo* during the mid-1890s: Paolo Paulucci (1986), *Alla corte di Re Umberto. Diario segreto*, edited by Giorgio Calcagno, Milan.
14. Giulia Guazzaloca (2009), *Sovrani a metà: monarchia e legittimazione in Europa tra Otto e Novecento*, Soveria Mannelli, 89. See also Catherine Brice (2010), *Monarchie et identité nationale en Italie (1861–1900)*, Paris, 25–38. For a more detailed discussion of the monarch's constitutional position see Mazzonis (2003), 53 sq, in particular 63ff., 107 sq, 118.
15. Paolo Colombo (2004), 'Una Corona per una nazione: considerazioni sul ruolo della monarchia costituzionale nella costruzione dell'identità italiana', in: Marina Tesoro (ed.), *Monarchia, tradizione, identità nazionale. Germania, Giappone e Italia tra ottocento e novecento*, Milan, 21–33, 22; Mack Smith (1989), 4–5, 54–55.
16. On Vittorio Emanuele II's attempts to influence political decisions and events through secret agents see Pierangelo Gentile (2011), *L'ombra del re. Vittorio Emanuele II e le politiche di corte*, Rome. On Umberto's support for his father's war-mongering see Mack Smith (1989), 60. Compared to his father Umberto intervened less in government politics: see Paolo Colombo (2001), *Storia costituzionale della monarchia italiana*, Rome and Bari, 85.
17. Although the *statuto* did not provide a more official role for the queen in representing the monarchy, arrangements were formalized by decree in 1890; Mazzonis (2003), 80, 100.
18. The queen's position did not extend to any political function in the narrow sense, but as Catherine Brice has been able to show, especially in later years Margherita took strong views on political affairs, and she did not hesitate to communicate these views in her private correspondence: Brice (2006), 196.

19. This is despite the fact that Umberto I and his Prime Minister Giolitti hesitated at giving the jubilee too much public attention; Marina Tesoro (2004), 'Prove per un giubileo. Le feste pubbliche per le nozze d'argento di Umberto e Margherita di Savoia', in: Tesoro (ed.) (2004), 95–121.
20. Mack Smith (1989), 71. The war diaries of the liberal politician Michelangelo Castelli, describing the campaign of 1866, suggest a rather distant relationship between father and son: see Michelangelo Castelli (1888), *Ricordi 1847–1875*, ed. Luigi Chiala, Turin and Naples, 378.
21. On the early relationship between Umberto and Crispi see Christopher Duggan (2002), *Francesco Crispi 1818–1901: From Nation to Nationalism*, Oxford, 378.
22. George Mosse (1985), *Nationalism and Sexuality*, New York, 10.
23. The king and his daughter-in-law shared a passion for pets, including exchanges on dogs and parrots. See for instance 'Il Re alla principessa di Piemonte, 16 January 1869 and 17 March 1869', in: *Le lettere di Vittorio Emanuele II* (1966), vol. 2, 1391, 1404.
24. *Monitore di Bologna*, 30 April 1868.
25. Giuseppe Ugliengo (1879), *Re Umberto o l'anno primo del suo regno*, Turin, 33.
26. On Umberto's military career see Grimaldi (1971), 32ff. Giving royalty new meaning through the adaptation of middle-class values also followed the British model after Queen Victoria's accession to the throne: see Bernd Weisbrod (2006), 'Theatrical Monarchy: The Making of Queen Victoria, the Modern Family Queen', in: Schulte (ed.), 238–53.
27. Grimaldi (1971), 51.
28. Anna Tedesco (2008), "'Queste opere eminentemente sinfoniche e spettacolose': Giacomo Meyerbeer's Influence on Italian Opera Orchestras', in: Niels Martin Jensen and Franco Piperno (eds), *The Opera Orchestra in 18th- and 19th-Century Europe, vol. 2: The Orchestra in the Theatre – Composers, Works, and Performance*, Berlin, 185–227, 202.
29. On Meyerbeer's perceived cosmopolitanism see for instance Eduard Hanslick (1875), 'Meyerbeer', in: Eduard Hanslick, *Die moderne Oper. Kritiken und Studien*, Berlin, 138–73. See also Reiner Zimmermann (1998), *Giacomo Meyerbeer. Eine Biografie nach Dokumenten*, Berlin, 321. On Meyerbeer's reception in Italy see Fiamma Nicolodi (2000), 'Les Grands Opéras de Meyerbeer en Italie (1840–1890)', in: Hervé Lacombe (ed.), *L'Opéra en France et en Italie, 1791–1925*, Paris, 87–115; Tedesco (2008), 185–227; Fabrizio della Seta (1988), 'L'immagine di Meyerbeer nella critica italiana dell'Ottocento e l'idea di dramma musicale', in: Maria Teresa Muraro (ed.), *L'opera tra Venezia e Parigi*, Florence, 147–76.
30. Anselm Gerhard (1998), *The Urbanization of Opera: Music Theater in Paris in the Nineteenth Century*, Chicago and London.
31. On music at Margherita's court see Pierangelo Gentile (2013), "'Auliche armonie": cultura musicale alla corte sabauda tra Risorgimento e Italia unita', *Studi Piemontesi* XLII/2 (December), 351–62, 357ff. On Puccini see Paulucci (1986), 87. Puccini is interesting in this context, because for a long time most critics had a rather tense relationship with the composer, while audiences appreciated his works: see Alexandra Wilson (2007), *The Puccini Problem: Opera, Nationalism and Modernity*, Cambridge.
32. Onorato Roux (1901), *La Prima Regina d'Italia nella vita privata, nella vita del paese – nelle lettere e nelle arti*, Milan, 71.
33. For a recent account of the submission of the South see Enrico Dal Lago (2015), *The Age of Lincoln and Cavour: Comparative Perspectives on Nineteenth-century American*

- and *Italian Nation-Building*, New York, ch. 5. See also Paolo Macry (2012), *Unità a Mezzogiorno. Come l'Italia ha messo assieme i pezzi*, Bologna.
34. Quoted in Roux (1901), 71. On Umberto's and Margherita's welcoming in Naples see also Colombo and Villa (2012), 147ff. On Vittorio Emanuele II's lack of consideration for Naples see Valentina Villa (2011), 'La visibilità pubblica del re nella storia costituzionale italiana: elementi di continuità tra età liberale e Fascismo', *Storia Amministrazione Costituzione XIX*, 47–65.
 35. Mack Smith (1989), 18.
 36. Brice (2010), 11.
 37. Giovanni Gigliozzi (1997), *Le regine d'Italia*, Rome, 37–38.
 38. Roux (1901), 81.
 39. Roux (1901), 82–83.
 40. Paulucci (1986), 114–15.
 41. Roux (1901), 87.
 42. Brice (2010), 73 sq, 289ff.
 43. Roux (1901), 76.
 44. Gentile (2013), 357.
 45. Andreoli (2010), 68ff.
 46. Andreoli (2010), 73.
 47. Carlo Casalegno (2001), *La regina Margherita*, Bologna, 26 sq.
 48. For a local perspective on Margherita's efforts to overcome resentment against the monarchy see Axel Körner (2009), *Politics of Culture in Liberal Italy: From Unification to Fascism*, New York, ch. 8.
 49. Felice Venosta (1885), *Umberto I Re d'Italia. Studi biografici popolari*, Milan, 5.
 50. For a recent evaluation see Dal Lago (2015), ch. 5.
 51. *Il pericolo della monarchia e dell'Italia. A sua maestà il Re Umberto. Lettere di un conservatore* (1878), Florence, 9–10. These articles were originally published in the *Gazzetta d'Italia*. A similar expression of anxiety linked to the succession is expressed in Carlo Toscani (1878), *Il 17 Novembre 1878. Ossia Chi in Italia Attenta Alla Monarchia e per quali cause*, Siena.
 52. Venosta (1885), 7. Royalist publications widely circulated the proclamation. See for instance Ugliengo (1879), 17.
 53. Ugliengo (1879), 35.
 54. Venosta (1885), 13.
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 57. Antonio Monti, quoted in Brice (2006), 198.
 58. Paul W. Schroeder (2004), 'Did the Vienna Settlement Rest on a Balance of Power?', in: Paul W. Schroeder, *Systems, Stability, and Statecraft: Essays on the International History of Modern Europe*, New York, 37–58.
 59. David Cannadine (1983), 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the "Invention of Tradition", c.1820–1970', in: Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 101–64, 102. On the connection between symbolic behaviour and the creation of consensus see David Kertzer (1988), *Ritual, Politics, and Power*, New Haven and London, 8–9, 78. See also Paolo Colombo (1999), *Il Re d'Italia. Prerogative costituzionali e potere politico della Corona (1848–1922)*, Milan, 33–34.
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4

Heirs before the Altar: Hohenzollern Marriages in a Bourgeois Age

Daniel Schönplflug

For centuries, princely marriages remained as essential for the survival of Europe's dynasties and the augmentation of their property as they were for marking the social distinction of the high nobility. Marriages served to provide royal offspring with the means commensurate with their status, but they also functioned as tools for creating and maintaining the dynasties' external connections. Royal marriages had legal, religious, diplomatic and emotional dimensions, and wedding celebrations were elaborate rituals serving a variety of purposes, often at the highest level of artistic production. They symbolically represented a royal family's power and prestige; they reflected political and social conditions and concepts; finally, they negotiated and disseminated these concepts among broad public audiences. This astonishing polyvalence makes princely marriage what Marcel Mauss calls a 'total social phenomenon'.¹

Within the Hohenzollern dynasty, marriages of heirs to the throne were in many respects similar to those of other male members of the family. Ever since the Middle Ages, for them, as for all other princely sons, marriage meant undergoing a double *rite de passage*: as a passage in the life-cycle, getting married meant the transition from childhood to adulthood and establishing a household of one's own. As a passage in space, weddings were the occasion for a complex choreography of movements over large distances: starting with festivities in the bride's residence, continuing through different voyages undertaken by protagonists and guests and ending with ceremonial entries and celebrations in the Prussian capital. In Berlin, the ceremony would culminate in the betrothal before the altar of the palace chapel and end with the famous torch dance (*Fackeltanz*).

But even though a crown prince's nuptials can be seen as a continuation and part of a long series of similar events, they highlighted that the heir to the throne occupied a special place within the dynasty: hence the unusual care that went into finding the right spouse for him, the meticulousness with which the marriage contracts were negotiated and, eventually, the lavish splendour of the wedding celebrations. After all, the groom was

the future monarch and the bride the future queen of the realm and they were expected to produce legitimate offspring promptly to secure the future of the dynasty. In many respects, the young couple was the hope of the kingdom; their wedding was proof of the dynasty's vitality and longevity. The festivities were even likely to provide hints at future orientations of the monarchy. This 'promise' guaranteed public attention both inside the realm and beyond, and this was even more the case if the bride came from a foreign country – as happened in 1858, when Prince Friedrich Wilhelm, the future Emperor Friedrich III, married the British Princess Royal Victoria, daughter of Queen Victoria.

Marriages of heirs to the throne in the nineteenth century were not only more complex in preparation, more splendid and politically charged than contemporary weddings of other members of the royal family, but also quite different from marriages in previous centuries. What had been common practice since the Middle Ages was transformed between the French Revolution and the First World War. The nature of these transformations is not easy to grasp. Historians have long been used to interpreting the nineteenth century as a 'bourgeois age', shaped as much by political and economic revolution as by dynamic social change and finally closed down by the downfall of many thrones in Europe.² Against this background, monarchy and dynastic rule have been perceived as regimes on the decline. Dynasties, long at the centre of society and politics, were allegedly forced to cede power and prestige to the emerging bourgeois classes. According to this interpretation, monarchy's only means of survival was adaptation to a new modern world. From this point of view, it is far from astonishing that, in 1917–18, so many ruling houses were swept away by revolution.³

Recently though, the idea of the nineteenth century as a bourgeois age and the concept of an 'embourgeoisement' have been challenged.⁴ With the exception of a few republics such as France or Switzerland, monarchy was and remained the dominant political model in Europe until 1918. Certainly, the role of the crown changed as the Prussian state was challenged by the revolution of 1848, transformed into a constitutional monarchy in 1850 and became the main component of an empire in 1871. Crisis and revolutions had not only shown the fragility of monarchical regimes in the nineteenth century, but had also given an impulse to find new forms of legitimacy, and to look for ways of maintaining public support in the context of a rapidly changing society. The culture of power was changing and had to adapt to a public sphere that did not only reach bigger audiences towards the end of the nineteenth century, but also became pluralistic and critical to an extent that was previously unknown. These changes did not leave the royal dynasty untouched. In nineteenth-century Prussia a process unfolded that can best be characterized as a 'dissociation' of dynasty: alongside the dynasty as a 'state family', that continued to represent the body politic,

there emerged a 'private family' that was composed of individual personalities and connected by emotional bonds.

These changes notwithstanding, dynastic culture did not lose its importance – and the same applied to dynastic representation. In his seminal study *The Transformation of European Politics* Paul W. Schroeder observed that in nineteenth-century international relations, 'dynastic marriages, once the essence of international politics, now only became an ornament to it'.⁵ Over the last two decades research has shown that monarchical celebrations remained far more than just 'ornamental' in nineteenth-century politics. Public festivities created spheres in which social and political relations were not only displayed, but often renegotiated. Royal weddings were occasions of intense public communication: between the dynasty and other reigning houses, on the one hand, and the dynasty and its subjects, on the other. These moments became increasingly important when the bourgeoisie appeared on the political scene and claimed to be a visible and audible part of official celebrations.⁶

The Long Nineteenth Century witnessed the marriages of six Hohenzollern heirs to the throne: the series started with Friedrich Wilhelm III in 1793 and ended with Crown Prince Wilhelm in 1905. The latter never came into his birthright as his throne was swept away by the revolution of 1918. In this *longue durée* perspective, it is possible to detect both continuities and change in the marriage practices of royal heirs. In the following, I will focus on two related questions. Were princely marriages in the nineteenth century transformed by the idea and practices of romantic love? And, how did the political meaning of these events change up to the end of Hohenzollern rule? These questions are closely linked because only by looking at both 'private' emotions and public ceremonial can we substantiate our starting hypothesis that weddings did more than merely serve as facades to veil the gradual shift from a strategically conceived 'state marriage' to a private love match.

Friedrich Wilhelm III and Luise of Mecklenburg-Strelitz: love-letters and changes in the ceremonial in 1793

Prince Friedrich Wilhelm was born in 1770 as the first son of the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm II and his second wife Friederike of Hessen-Darmstadt. Educated by military governors, he was a rather introvert, silent, hesitant and inhibited young man, who was known to speak in short, elliptic phrases. His favourite occupations were military drill, uniforms and parades. In the 1790s, the king had examined the marriage market for both his eldest son, Friedrich Wilhelm, and his younger brother Friedrich Ludwig ('Prince Louis'). Two princesses caught his attention: Luise and Friederike were members of the Mecklenburg-Strelitz family, rulers of a tiny territory in the north-east of Germany. Karl, the princesses' father and a

younger brother of the reigning Duke Adolph Friedrich IV of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, did not receive a sufficient stipend and thus served the English King George III as governor of Hanover, where Luise and Friederike were born. After the deaths of their mother and stepmother, the princesses moved to their mother's hometown of Darmstadt to be raised by their grandmother. Hailing from a rather small court, both princesses were characterized by contemporaries not only as beautiful and gracious, but also as 'natural' and a little provincial.

Friedrich Wilhelm and Ludwig of Prussia met the two princesses in March 1793 at a ball in Frankfurt. The elder of the two brothers had the first choice. His father gave him three days to announce his decision. In his memoirs, Friedrich Wilhelm recalls that he was in love with neither of the princesses. He first leaned towards the younger, Friederike, but in the end he plumed for the elder girl, Luise. This culture of matchmaking might seem rather pragmatic and entirely unromantic. Compared to most eighteenth-century Hohenzollern weddings, though, it was remarkable that the brides and grooms had at least met before walking down the aisle. Many of their predecessors had only seen their future wives for the first time on their wedding day, as 'love' was expected to develop not before the marriage but after it: as a result of good marital cooperation. In the cold light of Hohenzollern family history this expectation was hardly ever fulfilled: Friedrich Wilhelm I (1688–1740) had been a violent, hot-tempered man who preferred his smoking circle to the company of his wife. Friedrich the Great (1712–86) forbade his spouse Elisabeth Christine to enter his favourite palace, Sanssouci in Potsdam. Friedrich Wilhelm II, twice married, was committed emotionally to his mistress Wilhelmine Encke with whom he had several children.

Compared to this longstanding history of unhappy marriages it is quite astonishing that the Prussian Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm and his future wife Luise began to exchange love letters in the nine months between their first meeting in Frankfurt and the double wedding on 24 and 26 December 1793. The tone of this correspondence was deeply romantic: 'I feel like the happiest mortal on earth', wrote the shy prince.⁷ The princess answered: 'I long to see you again, dear prince, be so kind to think of your friend once in a while.'⁸ There was no precedent for this kind of correspondence in the house of Hohenzollern. It was the beginning of a new emotional culture, in which traditional forms of marriage arrangement went along with new expressions of an inner life. Instead of expecting 'love' to develop during marriage, new practices of premarital 'falling in love' made their appearance in the Hohenzollern family. Friedrich Wilhelm and Luise can be designated as the first 'romantic couple' in the family.⁹ It is rather telling that the other couple – Ludwig and Friederike – do not seem to have corresponded, even though the expression of personal sentiment in love letters had become a general fashion among the European elites in the second half of the eighteenth century.¹⁰

At the wedding festivities themselves, this variation in the culture of matchmaking played only a minor role, even though publicly emblazoned mottos marking the two brides' entry in Potsdam referred to the loving couple: 'Heroic brothers! Near peace / will bring you back soon! / Feel, now that you are tired of fighting, / love's happiness.'¹¹ And a commemorative book insisted that the matches between the Prussian princes and their brides were not based on 'reason of state or family strategies, but on the decision of their hearts'.¹²

It was for different reasons, though, that this double wedding had a particular character. The year 1793 was also the one in which the King of France Louis XVI and his wife Marie-Antoinette had died on the guillotine. In Prussia, even though there was hardly any sympathy for this kind of revolutionary justice, the revolution in general was observed with interest and sometimes admiration. Intellectuals had expressed their enthusiasm for liberty, and there had been some revolts amongst the artisanal classes. The celebrations of December 1793 were shaped by this political context which had already coloured the wedding preparations. Princess Luise, who had to flee from revolutionary troops in the summer of 1793, complained to her husband that fabric from Lyon, ordered to make her wedding dress, had not arrived due to the city's annihilation by the Jacobin government.¹³

The sources available for this double wedding in 1793 document how the Prussian crown, without betraying longstanding traditions, allowed the festivities to adapt to a new context. The account of the arrival of the princess in Schöneberg, at that time a village in the outskirts of Berlin, illustrates this clearly. The local burghers, waiting for the festive procession coming from Potsdam, were disappointed that the carriage with the brides travelled at the end of the train. Their complaints were heard and the order of the train was changed. By reacting flexibly to their subjects' demands, the ruling dynasty not only rewarded their love and affection, but also showed its willingness to make concessions at the beginning of a new era. When the future Prussian queen and her sister arrived on the boulevard Unter den Linden, they reacted so naturally and warmly to the cheers and salutes that the public was charmed. On Friederike's wedding day, the king even went so far as to open the castle to the citizens of Berlin. 'The influx of the numerous and joyful crowd was so strong, that those gentlemen and ladies belonging to the court could hardly find room...; but in the happy eyes of the king one could see... that, among all the classes of his people, he was twice as happy.'¹⁴

The message of these scenes was clear. While in France the people storm the Tuileries, the Prussians happily celebrate together with their king in Berlin's royal palace. In revolutionary times, these scenes of harmony were of fundamental political significance; they were perceived as a promise for the gradual transformation of the Prussian monarchy. As the Prussian

court of the time did not have a PR-department, we must imagine that this kind of transformation was put into practice rather spontaneously and instinctively by individual dynastic actors in direct communication with their people, who gathered to be part of the celebration. As these small gestures proved very successful, they became ever more common in the weddings to come.

Friedrich Wilhelm IV and Elisabeth Ludovica of Bavaria: romanticism and confessional harmony in 1823

The wedding in 1793 marked the beginning of a loving marriage; the couple had ten children, seven of whom survived to adulthood. Their first son was born in 1795 and called Friedrich Wilhelm after his father. Even though father and son shared the same names, they did not share the same passions. While the king was happiest on the parade-ground, the crown prince had reservations about any kind of military exercise. The older he grew, the more he was hampered in manoeuvres by his corpulence and short-sightedness, which did not keep him from reading, writing and drawing, though. The prince developed a deep love for literature, architecture and the arts. In 1816–17 he authored the epistolary novel *Die Königin von Borneo*. A child of his time, he was fascinated by the Middle Ages, and he was deeply influenced by the ‘awakened’ Protestantism of the early nineteenth century that eschewed any form of rationalism and critique of religion.

For Prince Friedrich Wilhelm, who later acquired the epithet of ‘the romantic on the throne’, it went without saying that he wanted to choose his future wife by listening only to his heart and so he refused all those princesses the king and his court had in mind for him. Looking for a wife in the south of Germany, he was presented to Elisabeth Ludovica of Bavaria, one of the five daughters of King Maximilian I. The attraction was mutual, but years went by before the wedding was celebrated. First, bride and groom wanted to be entirely sure of the constancy of their emotions; second, Elisabeth was as pious as Friedrich Wilhelm – but a devout Catholic.¹⁵ The Holy Alliance was proof, though, that in the early nineteenth century confessional differences between ruling houses could be bridged politically. The marriage treaty finalized between the courts of Berlin and Munich in 1823 thus stated that Elisabeth Ludovica would be allowed to keep her Catholic faith in the first years of the marriage.

King Friedrich Wilhelm III ordered a festival that resembled his own wedding of 1793. The early 1820s, again, were a time of political turbulence in Germany, in Europe and particularly in the European South. These events undoubtedly posed a threat to the monarchical system, since – in a time of rising democratic aspirations – they were seen as a challenge to legitimacy. As in 1793, love was the answer. It is stunning how omnipresent the

theme of emotional bonds was on this occasion. It was explicitly evoked, for example, in a poem published for the big day:

What, if from one resplendent throne
 To another love's magic takes its effect?
 If not two victims, of whom the reason of state
 And kingly duty – alas! – demands too much,
 No, two happy ones, mutually chosen
 By the most beautiful of motives in a noble human's breast,
 A dear princely couple from throne to throne
 Advances to celebrate the high ceremony?
 If two honoured highnesses' felicity
 Is guarantee of the welfare of two peoples?
 If in their hearts' beneficial bond
 Harmony and love blossom even for the peoples?¹⁶

Even more astonishing is the ease with which the anonymous poet passes from personal feelings of the couple – 'love's magic' – to collective and political emotions. The poem is a telling example of representation on several levels: a textual representation of a gesture of public acclamation, but also a representation of a collective relation in an individual bond – the loving couple was a symbol of the harmonious relations between two territories and two confessions.

The marriage of the future Friedrich Wilhelm IV reiterated this leitmotiv of emotion that was both individual and collective. When, on her voyage to Berlin, the bride reached Potsdam, the masonic lodge Teutonia zur Weisheit decorated its mansion with a banner that displayed a telling inscription: 'For two fraternal people love's beautiful bond builds / a base of happiness on the rock of a holy union.'¹⁷ A comment in the *Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung* emphasized that the union is of global historical importance, because it makes the two major Christian confessions forget their differences 'in the spirit of love and mutual respect'.¹⁸ Similar discourses can be found surrounding the marriage of the crown prince's sister Charlotte five years earlier in 1817.

So far it seems that in the generation of the children of Friedrich Wilhelm III and his wife Louise romantic love had become an inevitable ingredient of a princely wedding. It is not easy to grasp how exactly this change had come about. Certainly, ever since Friedrich Schlegel's programmatic novel *Lucinde* romanticism had provided a popular model for new concepts of gender relations. Without any doubt, the lasting success that the leitmotiv of love provided for Friedrich Wilhelm III and Luise in their communication with the Prussian people in the years following their wedding also played a decisive role. The invocation of tender emotions was obviously not a sign that a process of depoliticalization was taking place. Paradoxically, it seems

that it was not *in spite of* but *because of* romantic love that princely weddings could maintain a high level of political meaning. In an act of identification with the loving couple two collectives felt love for each other – or at least they expressed such feelings on the occasion.

Wilhelm I and Augusta of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach: romantic love and dynastic reason in 1829

Unfortunately, the next couple in our series is likely to blur these first conclusions. It could be argued that the marriage of Wilhelm I of Prussia does not belong to the series at all, as the prince was Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm's younger brother. The future Prussian king and German emperor Wilhelm I was not born to inherit the throne. First and foremost a dedicated officer, he had been appointed a major in a regiment of guards very early in his life – during the second conquest of Paris in 1815. Military excellence was not his only characteristic trait, though. Unlike his older brother he showed no interest whatsoever in the cultural side of romanticism, but without any doubt he had a romantic heart.

In 1819, Wilhelm fell in love with Elisa Radziwill, who hailed from a family with close relations to the House of Hohenzollern. Elisa's father, the Polish nobleman and Prussian politician Anton Radziwill, was married to Princess Luise of Prussia, a niece of Friedrich the Great. Prince Wilhelm was fascinated by the young woman who excelled as an actress in a courtly theatre performance.¹⁹ Even before Wilhelm had expressed his desire to marry her, though, the Prussian minister Sayn-Wittgenstein had commissioned an expert opinion on the status of the prospective bride. Privy Councillor Kurt von Raumer, a specialist in the so-called 'private law of princes', produced a long disputation concluding that the Radziwills, despite their title as princes of the former Holy Roman Empire, were not equal in rank to the members of the Hohenzollern family and could thus not be considered suitable partners.²⁰

Wilhelm was crushed when he learned about this verdict. The king, seeing his son suffer, consulted further specialists, and Wilhelm himself turned to Friedrich Carl von Savigny, professor of law at Berlin University, who was the only jurist openly to speak up for the marriage. In February 1822, Wilhelm gave in to pressure from the court and his family and forsook Elisa. Deeply depressed, he tried to find distraction in travelling to the Netherlands. Away from home, the pain grew ever bigger and on his birthday the prince broke down with a strong fever. After his return to Berlin, his love for Elisa was as strong as before. When the prince asked his father to take a final decision about the marriage question, Friedrich Wilhelm III hesitated, as was his nature. Finally, he agreed to a new idea: Elisa should be adopted by the member of a family of equal rank, such as the tsar or August of Prussia, youngest son of Prince Ferdinand of Prussia

and a nephew of Friedrich the Great. Wilhelm could hope again, and he was even allowed to visit his great love in Posen, feeling like a groom-to-be. An accident put an end to the romantic trip, though. Wilhelm, seriously injured, had to return to Berlin, and the public got wind of the affair. To make matters worse, the Saxe-Weimar family started to exercise pressure on the Hohenzollern family. They insisted that they would only betroth their daughter Marie to Wilhelm's younger brother Carl if the match between Wilhelm and Elisa were concluded merely as a morganatic marriage. In the end, the adoption plan was abandoned, and Friedrich Wilhelm III wrote a touching letter in which he asked his son to accept his fatherly verdict and to respect the duties of his high status. This decision was taken in June 1826, and soon after the king urged Wilhelm to look for a suitable wife.

She came in the shape of Augusta of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach. Wilhelm's marriage with his sister-in-law's sister was thus anything but a love match. Wilhelm treated her with due respect, but went to see Elisa even shortly before his wedding. It is hardly astonishing that after the wedding and until the end of his life the prince remembered Elisa, who died of a haemorrhage in 1833, in the most nostalgic way.

The wedding celebrations for Wilhelm and Augusta, held in June 1829, were formal and without unnecessary expenditure. This was facilitated by the fact that even though his elder brother's marriage had been childless so far, Wilhelm had not officially been appointed heir to the throne. It comes as no surprise that no commemorative books, engravings or collections of poems marking the event in 1829 have survived in the archives. Without romantic love a royal wedding was hard to stage in nineteenth-century Prussia. The marriage of the future German emperor is thus suited to provide a better understanding of the complex relationship between love and politics in the nineteenth century. It seems that even though both the dynasty and the public saw romantic love as a precondition for a good marriage, it was unacceptable to place emotions above the formal rules of the house. Romantic feelings were appropriate as long as they fitted into a social, political and legal framework that had been the basis of the rise of the Hohenzollern family ever since the Middle Ages.

Friedrich III and Victoria Princess Royal of Great Britain: 'the law to rule the earth is love' in 1858

Strictly speaking, Prince Friedrich Wilhelm, the future Emperor Friedrich III, only became crown prince when his father, the unhappy groom Wilhelm I, acceded to the throne in 1861. In practice, he was raised as the heir presumptive to the throne, and – as had been the case with his father – with a strong focus on the military. His education was also influenced by his mother Augusta, who was a cultured woman from the liberal Weimar court.

As a 16-year-old he experienced the revolution of 1848, when his father fled to London to secure dynastic continuity.

Friedrich Wilhelm's marriage is a good example of the complicated interplay of dynastic and political strategies on the one hand and the imperative of romantic love on the other. When it came to finding a spouse, Wilhelm I, who had experienced the weight of dynastic duties, did not leave it all to his eldest son. The idea of a marriage to the British Princess Royal Victoria had been prepared by both families for many years. On the British side, Prince Albert, Victoria's father, and Baron Stockmar, his physician and trusted adviser, were the driving forces. Albert prepared his daughter Victoria for a life as the wife of the king of Prussia. His idea was to make the Princess Royal a missionary for his plan to liberalize Prussia and thereby separate it from its Russian ally.²¹

When the Hohenzollern family visited London in 1851 to see the Great Exhibition, first tentative moves were set in train. It was not by chance that the 11-year-old Princess Royal guided the 19-year-old prince through the Crystal Palace that housed the exhibits. Four years later, a visit by Friedrich Wilhelm to Balmoral, Queen Victoria's new palace in Scotland, was arranged. The Highlands were the stage for a romantic scene. On an excursion to Craig-na-Ban Friedrich Wilhelm and Victoria found an unobserved moment. 'Fritz' plucked a sprig of heather and gave it to Victoria with a kiss and allusions to a common future. She blushed and did not refuse. The couple had fallen in love, just as expected. The letters between Balmoral, Berlin and Koblenz, where Friedrich Wilhelm's parents resided, were enthusiastic. Prince Albert wrote to Stockmar about 'deep and visible revolutions in the souls of the two young people'²² which filled him with thankfulness towards God.

In this case, it seems that strategies and emotions were in perfect harmony. In the eighteenth century, princes and princesses of the Hohenzollern family had been expected to obey their parents' orders. Their emotions towards a future partner were of no concern. The pressure on the royal offspring in the nineteenth century was arguably even greater: not only did they have to follow the families' decisions, but they even had to exalt them by 'falling in love' with exactly the person that had been chosen for them. As long as all those involved were ready to participate in the game, these proceedings were the perfect preparation for the staging of a wedding, in which 'love', as a personal and as a political emotion, played a central role.

This was exactly what happened in 1858 when the Princess Royal left England, crossed the Channel and arrived in Berlin. The public interest in the event was gigantic – and the reports show that the composition of this very public had started to change. The honourable burghers of Berlin traditionally played their part in the celebrations. With decorations, additional festivities and as participants in the staging of the bride's entry, but even more so as authors of newspapers, leaflets and poems, they had always left

their mark on the events. But in 1858, we find first traces of new social groups claiming participation and visibility. The mayor of Berlin, Heinrich Wilhelm Krausnick, emphasized that even the factory workers reacted enthusiastically when asked to contribute to the staging of the bride's entry and were eager to show their attachment to the royal house.²³ The court authorities had to turn down a number of proposals, for example the idea of a group of commercial assistants to organize a march with lanterns or the proposal of 'one hundred honourable young people' to pull the bride's carriage with their hands like the schoolboys at Eton.²⁴ The visibility of the petty bourgeoisie and the working classes increased gradually, as more and more factories, social institutions and associations proudly participated in the celebration.

The success of the wedding was rather surprising, as in the years before there had been lively public protests, particularly in Britain, against a marriage that – in the tense atmosphere of the Crimean War – was likely to make a British princess a hostage of a potential enemy of her mother's realm. But when the war was over and the festivities started, 'love' was omnipresent in the newspapers, leaflets, celebratory books and poems printed for the wedding. A British pamphlet insisted that a 'Royal marriage... is commonly suspected to be a private misfortune... and therefore the first point for congratulation in the marriage of the Princess Royal must be that it is not a diplomatic scheme'.²⁵ On the other side of the Channel, Berlin's *Vossische Zeitung* mused on the effects that young love had on the public. Here, the marriage was portrayed as a 'moment, the enormous pleasure of which can only be felt by a father's, a mother's heart, and which breaks with enormous force the lustrous, but restrictive shell of princely highness and lifts pure humanity as an irrefutable and emotional ruler above the rigidity of any kind of formality'.²⁶ The *Illustrierte Montags-Zeitung* confirmed that the event united 'all people in the same thought, the same emotion'.²⁷ It was thus personal feeling turning into collective emotion that gave wedding festivals political meaning – just as in the poetic fairy tale that H. R. Lumley published on the occasion:

Love is triumphant, and has bound,
 In two young hearts and hands, two lands
 Your sages long have wished to see
 Joined in good faith and unity.

England and Prussia are those lands,
 Victoria – Fred'rik join their hands;
 This union now must surely prove
 The law to rule the earth is love.²⁸

Newspapers in Great Britain were also convinced that the rejoicing of the Prussian public at the sight of Victoria was a first sign that the plan to

open the country to liberal ideas was starting to work. The happy couple itself appears to have been fully aware of the political dimension of their union. The young bride carefully analysed the popular enthusiasm that had greeted her arrival in Berlin. In March 1858 she informed her father that it sprang from the people's belief that the marriage heralded the waning of Prussia's attachment to Russia, which they deemed to be a source of evil. The marriage of 1858 was thus a classic example of the way in which thorough and strategic planning could trigger not only romantic love, but also the broad public diffusion of positive political messages.²⁹

Wilhelm II and Auguste Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein-Glücksburg-Augustenburg: 'amorous turn' (*Amourschwung*) and national reconciliation in 1881

Like his father Friedrich III and his grandfather before him, Wilhelm II was not yet crown prince when he married in February 1881. Prince Wilhelm was an unstable character who changed his opinion frequently, found it hard to focus, easily lost his temper and was permanently looking for admiration. His parents thus were uncertain if it was better to marry him off early in order to guarantee the continuity of the house or to give him some more time to mature.

A most interesting source documents his parents' complex reflections concerning the best match for their son. It was a memoir that Friedrich Wilhelm and Victoria wrote in order to attain the emperor's consent to the marriage. In the opening paragraph the crown prince and his wife insisted that a marriage decision should merely be based on the 'inclination of the hearts' of those concerned. But the discussion of no fewer than 19 nubile candidates for their firstborn son, in which his future wife Auguste Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein-Glücksburg-Augustenburg occupied the number-one spot, is solid proof of the opposite being the case. At some length, the memoir discusses the problem of Auguste Victoria's equality in rank – an issue that was not beyond doubt. Since Prussia had annexed Schleswig-Holstein in 1866, an even bigger challenge was her father's intransigent position towards the Prussian court. The character and physical health of all the princesses in question were also discussed. A daughter of the House of Mecklenburg-Strelitz was disqualified because her health was weak, she was not beautiful and 'entirely Russian'. Princess Thekla of Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt was dismissed on account of appearing mentally disturbed and her unpleasant appearance. Two daughters of the House of Waldeck were excluded because consumption ran in their family. The document, which arrived at the conclusion that Augusta Victoria was by far the best match, is certainly not a proof of romanticism – for all its reference to the 'inclination of the hearts'.³⁰

This impression is confirmed by the history that lay behind the document.³¹ Wilhelm's choice of his future wife was largely dominated by his

mother Victoria. For some time, she had directed him towards a princess from the House of Hesse, and Wilhelm actually fell in love with Ella von Hessen. When Victoria realized, though, that haemophilia was present in the Hessen family, she rooted for Auguste Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein. Prince Wilhelm first resisted such a redirection of his feelings. When he met Auguste Victoria for the first time, however, he quickly changed his mind. In his letters to the princess and to his family he used an emotional vocabulary to describe the matters of his heart. What Balmoral had been for his father, the palace of Primkenau in lower Silesia became for Prince Wilhelm: the setting for his falling in love. The Kaiser was surprised, though, when he heard about this *'Amourschwung'* (amorous turn-about). He realized all too clearly that this change of emotions was prepared and triggered on purpose.³²

Despite this unromantic history, love was a central leitmotiv in the wedding celebrations of 1881. Again, the press rejoiced that 'marriages which are concluded by the throne, more and more lose the character of cold political conventions, and the principle that one heart finds another is becoming ever stronger'.³³ The *Illustrierte Zeitung* emphasized that 'German people think with their heart; their political life is closely linked to their feelings'.³⁴ This is why the marriage of the grandson of the Kaiser with a daughter of Schleswig-Holstein is perceived by the public as a symbol of the inner pacification of the Reich, the author concluded. The marriage was bound to calm the painful memories of the wars of unification, by means of which Wilhelm I and Bismarck had forged the Reich. A poem published in the *Illustrierte Frauenzeitung* on 12 March 1881 expressed this very idea. By alluding to the Grimm brothers' fairy tale of Sleeping Beauty, Wilhelm is depicted as the prince who frees the princess from her captivity – like his grandfather had 'freed' Schleswig-Holstein. The parallelization of courting and annexation was politically insensitive, but the message was all too clear: Prussia wanted to overcome the act of violence by a gesture of love.

Crown Prince Wilhelm and Cecilie of Mecklenburg-Schwerin: another love match and the transformation of the public sphere in 1905

In 1905 the last ever Hohenzollern heir to the throne stood before the altar to say his marriage vows: Crown Prince Wilhelm, Kaiser Wilhelm II's eldest son, was joined in holy matrimony to Cecilie of Mecklenburg-Schwerin (see Figure 4.1). Despite the tense international atmosphere, destabilized by the first Russian Revolution and the Morocco Crisis, distinguished guests arrived from all corners of the globe: not just members of the closely related royal families of Russia, Denmark, Sweden, Greece, Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium and Romania, but more distant relatives – like Franz Ferdinand of



Figure 4.1 To commemorate the marriage of the German Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia and Cecilie, Duchess of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, on 6 June 1905 (Zur Erinnerung an die Vermählung des deutschen Kronprinzen Friedrich Wilhelm von Preussen mit Herzogin Cecilie von Mecklenburg-Schwerin am 6. Juni 1905, private collection Heidi Mehrkens)

Austria-Este and the Duchess of Aosta – also honoured the couple with their presence. With Prince and Princess Arisugawa of Japan and Prince Chow Fa Charaongse of Siam, Berlin even welcomed extra-European royalty. Never before on the occasion of a Prussian wedding, an event that usually united a restricted circle of close relatives, had there been such a splendid guest list.

Addressing a huge international public, commentators again insisted on the emotional authenticity of the match – the weekly *Der Deutsche* emphasized that one could ‘answer the worried question of hundreds of thousands of German women who have heard about *raison d’état* and marriages of convenience: “Are they really fond of each other”, with a cheerful Yes, from the very bottom of their hearts!’.³⁵

By 1905, winning over the hearts and minds of the Germans was even more important because by then the world was in the throes of what Martin Kohlrausch has called a ‘media-revolution’.³⁶ After decades of tight control over the press, the public sphere in Prussia and Germany had entered a dynamic phase in which, on the one hand, the media reached ever bigger mass audiences, and, on the other, criticism of the monarch and the court was no longer impossible. It comes as no surprise that royal ceremonial and festivities, for a long time the high points of harmony between the regime and its subjects, were transformed by this process of pluralization. In 1905, for the first time, some critical voices could openly be heard. The *Berliner Tageblatt* pointed to the weak position of women in Prussia and expressed the hope that Cecilie of Mecklenburg-Schwerin would serve as a model for all those women who wanted to be fully fledged personalities by the side of their husbands.³⁷ The same newspaper indulged in a deep sigh – ‘Uff’ – when the festivities were over. The left-wing press, such as *Vorwärts*, even sought to torpedo the message of love and harmony that the crown tried to communicate on the dynasty’s wedding days. ‘They say, that the joy about the festivity is great in the city, and some people believe it, but those people are simpletons.’³⁸ The newspaper also printed a reproduction of a medieval painting depicting the wedding of a margrave of Brandenburg, laced with an acerbic caption: ‘It always stays the same!’.³⁹

Conclusions

The six cases discussed here illustrate a particular interplay of love and politics in royal marriage festivities in nineteenth-century Prussia. There can be no doubt that new discourses of love and marriage evolved around 1800, inside the Prussian court and beyond.⁴⁰ At the same time courtly actors played a prominent role in a general process of emotionalizing the public sphere, stimulated by sentimentalism and romanticism in the artistic sphere. Emotions often contributed to the success of a public festival; but we should not imagine the gradual transformation of dynastic festivals as the result of a premeditated strategy. It rather seems that kings and queens, princes and princesses experienced again and again that emotional gestures were likely to trigger positive responses in the media, amongst the elites and in the wider world of their subjects. This gradually led to a change in habitus that was probably neither conscious, nor planned. As part of this transformation and ever since the wedding of Friedrich Wilhelm III with Louise,

falling-in-love came to be seen as a precondition for a good match. Practically, this meant that future brides and grooms had to be given an opportunity to meet before their wedding day. This new practice did not mean, though, that political and social strategies no longer played a role in making the perfect match. Confession, equality, political motives and fertility remained crucial. But instead of just accepting their parents' choices, the princes and princesses of the nineteenth century had to seal them with the expression of intense feelings – an expectation that was equally expressed by their own milieu and by the wider public.

Paradoxically, this reconfiguration of strategies and emotions and the insistence on the 'private' character of princely weddings allowed the dissemination of different kinds of messages to the public in Prussia and beyond. In all examined cases, the personal bond between bride and groom was generalized and interpreted as a representation of a collective bond between their families, courts, countries of origin and peoples. Wedding festivals were thus transformed into 'scenarios of love', as Richard Wortman has put it.⁴¹ It can be shown that it was the very staging of royal marriages as 'romantic' which attracted, enthralled and charmed mass audiences. The ostensibly private was, in reality, essentially political. Heirs to the throne, who agreed to suffer the restriction of their personal choices in matters of the heart, walked down the aisle as agents of monarchical stabilization and foreign politics. Schroeder's hypothesis that royal marriages were only an 'ornament' to politics is thus problematic. Certainly, after the age of Napoleon no state could claim a territory because of pretensions deriving from a marriage. But even before 1800 royal weddings had never been more than a ritual confirmation of diplomatic practices, and in the nineteenth century they certainly remained more than a matter of private inclination between two individuals who happened to occupy exalted positions.

Notes

1. Marcel Mauss (2005), *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, London, 3–4.
2. Manfred Hanisch (1989), 'Nationalisierung der Dynastien oder Monarchisierung der Nation? Zum Verhältnis von Monarchie und Nation in Deutschland im 19. Jahrhundert', in: Adolf M. Birke and Lothar Kettenacker (eds), *Bürgertum, Adel und Monarchie. Wandel der Lebensformen im Zeitalter des bürgerlichen Nationalismus*, Munich, 71–91; Manfred Gollwitzer (1989), 'Die Funktion der Monarchie in der Demokratie', in: Birke and Kettenacker (1989), 147–57; Monika Wienfort (1993), *Monarchie in der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, Göttingen.
3. Lothar Machtan (2008), *Die Abdankung. Wie Deutschlands gekrönte Häupter aus der Geschichte fielen*, Berlin; Martina Fetting (2013), *Zum Selbstverständnis der letzten deutschen Monarchen. Normverletzungen und Legitimationsstrategien der Bundesfürsten zwischen Gottesgnadentum und Medienrevolution*, Frankfurt/M.

4. David Cannadine (1984), 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the "Invention of Tradition"', in: Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 101–64; Volker Sellin (2011), *Gewalt und Legitimität. Die europäische Monarchie im Zeitalter der Revolutionen*, Munich; Volker Sellin (2014), *Das Jahrhundert der Restaurationen. 1814 bis 1906*, Munich.
5. Paul W. Schroeder (1996), *The Transformation of European Politics 1763–1848*, Oxford, 579.
6. Johannes Paulmann (2000), *Pomp und Politik. Monarchenbegegnungen in Europa zwischen Ancien Régime und Erstem Weltkrieg*, Paderborn; Matthias Schwengelbeck (2007), *Die Politik des Zeremoniells. Huldigungsfeiern im langen 19. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt/M.; Daniel Schönplflug (2013a), *Die Heiraten der Hohenzollern. Verwandtschaft, Politik und Ritual in Europa 1640–1918*, Göttingen.
7. Friedrich Wilhelm to Luise, 26 March 1793, in: Karl Griewank (ed.) (1929), *Briefwechsel der Königin Luise mit ihrem Gemahl Friedrich Wilhelm III. 1793–1810*, Leipzig, 48.
8. Luise to Friedrich Wilhelm, 1 May 1793, in: Griewank (1929), 66.
9. Daniel Schönplflug (2013b), *Luise von Preußen. Königin der Herzen*, Munich, 59–62.
10. Anette C. Anton (1995), *Authentizität als Fiktion: Briefkultur im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart; Tanja Reinlein (2003), *Der Brief als Medium der Empfindsamkeit. Erschriebene Identitäten und Inszenierungspotentiale*, Würzburg.
11. 'Helden-Brüder! naher Friede/Bring Euch bald zurück! Fühlet jetzt, der Waffen müde,/Ganz der Liebe Glück.' ('Ausführlicher Bericht von der Einholung und dem Einzuge der...Prinzessinnen zu Potsdam, den 21. und Höchstdero Abreise nach Berlin den 22. Dezember', in: (1794) *Louisens und Friederikens ...Ankunft und Vermählung in Berlin, Im December 1793*, Berlin, 112.)
12. (1794) *Louisens und Friederikens ...Ankunft und Vermählung*, 11.
13. 'Das Zuströmen der unzähligen, freudetrunkenen Menge war nun freilich so äußerst groß, dass die zum Hofe gehörigen Herren und Damen nur mit Mühe Platz finden konnten...; aber man sah in den freudigen Blicken des Königs... dass Er sich jetzt, mitten unter allen Klassen seines Volkes, doppelt glücklich fühlte.' (Schönplflug (2013b), 66–86.)
14. Schönplflug (2013b), 84.
15. David E. Barclay (1995), *Anarchie und guter Wille. Friedrich Wilhelm IV. und die preußische Monarchie*, Berlin, 70.
16. 'Wie, wenn von einem glanzumstrahlten Thron/Zum andern hin der Liebe Zauber wirkt?/Wenn nicht zwei Opfer, die der Staaten Wohl/Und Königspflicht, ach! Oft zu schwer, erheischt, /Nein, zwei Beglückte, gegenseits erwählt/Vom schönsten Trieb in edler Menschenbrust, /Ein theures Fürstenpaar, von Thron zu Thron/Sich nah'n die hohe Feier zu begeh'n?/Wenn zweier hochverehrter Häupter Glück/Uns Bürgerschaft wird für zweier Völker Wohl?/Wenn in der Herzen segenvollem Bund/Eintracht und Lieb' auch für die Völker blühn?' ((1824) *Beschreibung der Feierlichkeiten, welche bei der Vermählung des Kronprinzen von Preussen... mit der Prinzessin Elisabeth von Bayern...stattgefunden haben*, Berlin, 15.)
17. 'Zwei Brudervölkern baut der Liebe schöner Bund/Auf heil'ger Eintracht Fels des Glückes Grund.' ((1824) *Beschreibung der Feierlichkeiten*, 53.)
18. 'im Geiste der Liebe und der wechselseitigen Achtung' (*Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung*, 21 December 1823, quoted in Hubert Bastgen (1930), *Der Heilige Stuhl und die Heirat der Prinzessin von Bayern mit dem Kronprinzen von Preußen*, Freiburg, 361.

19. Kurt Jagow (ed.) (1939), *Jugendbekenntnisse des Alten Kaisers. Briefe Kaiser Wilhelms I. and Fürstin Luise Radziwill, Prinzessin von Preußen, 1817–1829*, Leipzig.
20. Kurt von Raumer, 1 March 1819, in: Jagow (1939), 21.
21. Hanna Pakula (1995), *An Uncommon Woman: The Empress Frederick*, New York, 74ff.; Frank Lorenz Müller (2011), *Our Fritz: Emperor Frederick III and the Political Culture of Imperial Germany*, Cambridge, 67ff.
22. 'tiefe, sichtliche Revolutionen in den Gemütern der jungen Leute' (Prince Albert to Stockmar, 2 October 1855, quoted in: Kurt Jagow (ed.) (1937), *Prinzgemahl Albert. Ein Leben am Throne. Eigenhändige Aufzeichnungen 1831–1861*, Berlin, 307.
23. Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz (GStPK), Hauptabteilung I, Rep. 100, no. 2287, 146–50: Krausnick to Hausministerium, 16 January 1858.
24. GStPK, Hauptabteilung I, Rep. 100, no. 2287, 261: Max Jenisch to Graf Dohna.
25. *The Marriage of the Princess Royal, on Jan. 25, 1858. To His Royal Highness Frederick William of Prussia*, London 1858.
26. 'diese Augenblicke, deren Freudenfülle nur ein Vaterherz, ein Mutterherz ermessen kann, die mit gewaltiger Kraft die, wenn auch glänzende, doch beengende Prunkhülle der Fürstenhoheit durchbrechen und das Rein-Menschliche zur unabweislichen Gefühlsherrscherin über die Strenge jedweder Förmlichkeit erheben' ('Feierlicher Einzug ihrer Königlichen Hoheit', *Königlich privilegierte Berlinische Zeitung*, 9 February 1858).
27. 'Vereinigung aller Menschen in demselben Gedanken, demselben Gefühl' ('Wochenschau', *Berlin. Illustrierte Montags-Zeitung*, 15 February 1858).
28. H.R. Lumley (1858), *A Piece of the Royal Wedding Cake: A Fairy Tale upon the Occasion of the Princess Royal's Marriage*, London, 39.
29. Victoria to Prince Albert, 5 March 1858, in: Roger Fulford (ed.) (1964), *Dearest Child: Letters between Queen Victoria and the Princess Royal 1858–1861*, London, 74.
30. GStPK, Brandenburgisch-Preußisches Hausarchiv, Rep. 53, N I, no. 1a, fol. 9–24: 'Mémoire des Kronprinzenpaares vom 30. April 1879'.
31. John Röhl (1993), *Wilhelm II. Die Jugend des Kaisers*, Munich, 339–78.
32. 'eine vorbereitete u. instigierte, zum Zünden gebrachte Absichtlichkeit': Röhl (1993), 375.
33. 'daß die Ehebündnisse, die auf Thronen geschlossen werden, mehr und mehr den Charakter von kalt berechneten politischen Konventionen verlieren, und daß an Stelle derselben maßgebend der Grundsatz tritt, daß sich das Herz zum Herzen findet.' ('Dem hohen Brautpaar zur Feier des Einzuges in Berlin', *Berliner Tageblatt* 96, 26 February 1881.)
34. 'Das deutsche Volk denkt mit dem Herzen; sein politisches ist mit seinem Gemüthsleben auf das engste verwachsen.' ('Die Vermählungsfeier in Berlin', *Illustrierte Zeitung*, 12 March 1881.)
35. 'Und ebenso ist es schlichte, lautere Wahrheit, wenn man auf die bange Frage Hunderttausender von deutschen Frauen, die von Staatsräson und Konvenienzheiraten etwas gehört haben, auf die Frage: „Haben sie sich auch wirklich lieb“, frohgemut antworten kann; Ja, von Herzen!' (quoted in: *Tägliche Rundschau, Morgen-Blatt*, 11 June 1905).
36. Martin Kohlrausch (2005), *Der Monarch im Skandal. Die Logik der Massenmedien und die Transformation der wilhelminischen Monarchie*, Berlin.
37. 'Gruss an die Kronprinzessin', *1. Beiblatt des Berliner Tageblatts*, 3 June 1905.
38. 'Die Festesfreude ist groß in der Stadt, so heißt es, und manche Leute glauben es, aber das sind die Einfältigen im Geiste.' ('Berliner Nachrichten. Das jubelnde Berlin', dritte Beilage des *Vorwärts*, 1 June 1905).

39. 'Es ist das Ewig-Eine!' ('Die Prinzessin-Braut', dritte Beilage des *Vorwärts*, 1 June 1905).
40. Silke Marburg (2004), "'Das Ansehen hat man umsonst". Gattenwahl und Heiratskalkül für die Kinder König Johanns von Sachsen (1801–1873)', in: Winfried Müller and Martina Schattkowsky (eds), *Zwischen Tradition und Modernität. König Johann von Sachsen 1801–1873*, Leipzig, 357–404; Peter Gay (1999), *The Tender Passion: The Bourgeois Experience from Victoria to Freud*, New York.
41. Richard Wortman (2006), *Scenarios of Power: Myth and Ceremony in Russian Monarchy. From Peter the Great to the Abdication of Nicholas II*, Princeton, 189–204.

Part II

Courtly Contexts

5

Education and the Rituals of Monarchy in the Kingdom of Württemberg: Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm, Crown Prince Karl and Prince Wilhelm Compared

Eberhard Fritz

In as highly specialized an area of education as the preparation of a prince or princess for their status as future king or queen, the question of the continuity of educational ideals through the centuries appears to be very important. A traditional institution like monarchy requires a certain conservative element that insists on the behaviour and values of the past, even if some of them prove to be archaic. At the same time the education of a future heir or heiress cannot be regarded entirely as a private matter of the reigning family because interests of the state are also concerned. In an instruction concerning 'my children's supervision', Duke Friedrich of Württemberg wrote in 1792 that his offspring were at the same time 'children of the state'.¹ Times change, though, and monarchy develops. In an interview in 2009 Crown Prince Frederik of Denmark revealed that he had been educated in a very traditional fashion, rather distant from his parents:

My mum [Queen Margarethe] had me brought up by nannies and governesses. I didn't have much to do with my parents until I was 21. When I was small, I was presented to them, washed and brushed, before I was put to bed. I still see Nanny – she came to our wedding – but there is no way our two [children] will be brought up like that.²

Queen Margarethe and her husband, Prince Consort Henri, had followed the traditional ideal of noble families by avoiding intimate relations with their children. But this no longer seems to appeal to a new generation.³ The upbringing of future heirs to the throne in the European monarchies of today's Great Britain, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and Norway still

poses the kinds of question that Duke Friedrich had to grapple with in the eighteenth century.

There are two principal reasons for why the education of crown princes has always been a difficult undertaking. On the one hand, there are two contradictory basic goals for the future monarch. While he or she was expected to be popular amongst the subjects, it was also clear that, at the same time, monarchs should represent something otherworldly, conveying the mystical quality of the crown. In the constitution of the kingdom of Württemberg of 1818, the king is characterized as 'holy and inviolable', and he was explicitly placed above the law.⁴ Heinz Dollinger described the other crucial problem facing the 'bourgeois monarchy' of the nineteenth century right up to the abolition of many of the monarchical systems at the end of the First World War. The monarchies established in the early nineteenth century under the influence of Napoleon I were no longer strictly based on the appeal to tradition or to religious legitimation. New monarchs, in particular, had to find their role. As Dollinger pointed out these monarchs struggled to fill a legitimacy gap.⁵ Lothar Machtan identifies the same problem during the final years before the German monarchies were abolished in 1918. Although they had always emphasized their role as commanders-in-chief during the countless parades and manoeuvres before 1914, hardly any monarch or any other male member of a reigning family took an active role as a military leader during the war.⁶

Against the background of these challenges confronting the monarchical system in the course of the nineteenth century, it is interesting to ask how the heirs to the throne were educated, not only at the most important courts but also in smaller countries. After 1871, the German Empire was a confederate system of monarchs, and although Emperor Wilhelm II always claimed a supreme status, the rulers of the German states played an important political role. Generally they were considered by their people as representatives of their own narrower community (*Stamm*), as a native of the kingdom of Württemberg would consider himself first and foremost a *Württemberger* and not a subject of the German Emperor. Even after the German sovereigns had lost important rights to the emperor they were still determined to continue the separate existence of their own ruling dynasties.

The education of the members of the reigning family, especially that of the heirs, mirrored the changes of the monarchy more broadly. Therefore, a comparison of the education received by three future kings of Württemberg must take into consideration the different periods during which these heirs to the throne were brought up. Moreover, it must allow for the specific family situation and the individual character of each prince. But at the same time it is important to explore transpersonal elements in the purposes and forms of education. The nobility as a class remained strongly traditional and conservative, making it highly probable that consistencies and continuities played a prominent role.⁷

In the kingdom of Württemberg, there were three generations of heirs to the throne to be educated for their future task: King Wilhelm I, who reigned from 1816 to 1864; his son, King Karl, who reigned from 1864 to 1891; and King Wilhelm II, who ascended the throne in 1891 and abdicated in 1918. Of these, only Karl was raised to be king.

Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm

When Prince Friedrich Wilhelm was born in 1788 Württemberg was still a Duchy and so he was educated as a future duke. However, certain elements in his education were very similar to the upbringing of other heirs to the throne. Although Friedrich Wilhelm's father, Duke Friedrich, left his son's education to nannies and governors – as was common practice – he made detailed plans and carefully monitored whether they were being carried out. Following the example of King Friedrich Wilhelm I of Prussia, who had famously written such an instruction in 1722, the Duke of Württemberg laid down regulations regarding the education of his two sons in writing.⁸ The entire concept of education was based on the children's obedience which they were expected to learn through a strict daily schedule. Duke Friedrich II can indeed be considered a bona fide control freak because hardly any detail in the reports the governors were required to submit at regular intervals escaped his attention. However, Prince Friedrich Wilhelm suffered from his parents' unhappy marriage which ended in their separation and was then followed by his mother's mysterious death (see Figure 5.1).

In any case, Duke Friedrich was certainly a very harsh, sometimes even cruel father.⁹ King Wilhelm's first biographer, Johannes Grauer, characterized the young prince's education as 'youth without childhood',¹⁰ and another biographer, Paul Sauer, described Duke Friedrich as an 'over-rigid father', a tyrant who did not show much empathy and feelings towards his children.¹¹ The boy was obviously deprived of love and security. Although the duke was looking for governors equipped with both educational abilities and solid practical skills, Paul Sauer regarded his goals as highly controversial. The duke claimed his sons' education as his own very important task and saw the teachers as mere servants who were expected to execute the father's intentions and not to develop any initiative of their own. In general the duke intended that the prince should have little formal learning yet a plain heart. He never wanted his heir to become a scholar, and the hereditary prince was supposed to learn only the subjects necessary for his position as reigning duke. Yet in a society where French was standard, an excellent command of this language was also deemed crucial. That academic standards did not count for much should be seen as an important element of noble education, because the nobility's exclusive role was not based on achievements or efficiency but on their mythical position that elevated them above the bourgeois.



Figure 5.1 Prince Friedrich Wilhelm (later King Wilhelm I) of Württemberg © Archiv des Hauses Württemberg, Altshausen

In April 1788 the Protestant pastor and philosopher Karl Heinrich von Gros (1765–1840) was appointed governor of the prince and of his younger brother Paul.¹² However, he never managed to live up to the duke's expectations and after four years he gave up his position – not least because the duke had treated him like a servant: 'I will not only have to educate my son but his governor as well.'¹³ Gros was never allowed to develop any initiative of his own. In his instruction of 1792 the duke demanded obedience from his sons' governor because he thought that Gros should give the boys an example for the obedience they owed their own parents. The governor was expected to appear fully dressed when the boys awoke at 6.30 a.m. He supervised their dressing, paying particular attention to their personal hygiene. The duke reprimanded Gros because he frequently found the boys' rooms untidy. At 7.00 the boys prayed aloud before going to breakfast, followed by memorizing lessons from 7.30 to 9.00. The older Prince Friedrich Wilhelm spent the next hour with different activities and then had a writing lesson between 11.00 and 12.00. Before lunch and regardless of the weather conditions both boys took a walk with their governor. Lunch at court was served at 1.00 p.m., followed by another walk in the garden, most likely for recreation. Then Prince Friedrich Wilhelm worked on translations, presumably from French into German and vice versa. Between 4.00 and 6.00 p.m. both boys were allowed free time. When the Duke was absent, dinner for the governor and the boys was served at 8.00, otherwise the princes dined at the court table. The duke expressly prohibited 'thoughtless talk' during meal times. From early childhood on the princes were coached in polite conversation as one of the most important abilities required at court. They went to bed at 9.00.¹⁴

Duke Friedrich II never hesitated to criticize Gros very harshly. Over and over again he reprimanded him and asked for more reports on his sons' education. The tutor never felt that he could meet the duke's expectations and felt insulted by the constant admonishments. Finally he gave up his position as governor because he considered himself humiliated by not being allowed to take any independent decisions concerning the heir's education. He was frustrated, and nobody could be found to replace him. Because of the duke's reputation as a stern authoritarian father it proved impossible to recruit an adequate teacher. Duke Friedrich obviously believed that only a very strict education would enable the prince to rule the country one day. The results were devastating. When he was 15 years old, young Friedrich Wilhelm wrote submissive letters to his father, but this made no difference, because once the latter had ascended the throne of Württemberg in 1797, he treated his son even more harshly. Keen to establish himself as the only authority in his son's life, the duke made sure that any possible competitors – including teachers – were kept at bay. At the same time he nurtured his son's sense of dynastic status: even though Friedrich frequently humiliated the prince, he never allowed others to infringe his

son's exclusive position as a noble of high rank and royal heir. He would bar the prince from establishing contacts with his (socially acceptable) future subjects and never permitted the prince to be educated even in the most prestigious public school.

After Friedrich Wilhelm had become hereditary prince of Württemberg in 1797 the conflicts with his father escalated. When the duke discovered that his son was reading explicit literature he humiliated him in public. In 1803 the hereditary prince fled to Paris where he lived with a woman below his rank whom he could never have married officially if he wanted to succeed as the reigning duke. Therese von Abel gave birth to twins who died in infancy. Had they survived, it might have been more difficult for the prince to find a suitable bride. Although Wilhelm Friedrich separated from Therese von Abel, he obviously stayed in touch with her throughout his life and even granted her a high pension in his secret will.¹⁵ Later on, when Duke Friedrich was proclaimed Elector in 1803 and then declared himself King of Württemberg in 1806 he and his son were partially reconciled. The king's second wife, Queen Charlotte Mathilde, née Princess of Great Britain and Ireland, managed to establish a very good relationship with her stepson. Father and son never succeeded in establishing mutual trust and affection, though.

For Johannes Grauer the strict education to which the prince was subjected in order to turn him into a future king even produced a positive, if romanticized, outcome:

A shadow of juvenile melancholy is cast over his personality, probably the feeling of being alone among the multitudinous court society where only his father's will mattered. And that deep loneliness would accompany the hereditary prince throughout the years, through the decades, interrupted only by the very short period of his second marriage. Perhaps this loneliness helped him to find the strength for his royal position because he shared his many sorrows only with one companion – his people.¹⁶

Crown Prince Carl

When King Friedrich died in 1816 his son succeeded him as King Wilhelm. His second wife, Queen Katharina, a Russian grand duchess by birth, bore him two daughters. She died, aged just 30, three years after King Wilhelm had ascended the throne.¹⁷ In 1823, his third wife Queen Pauline, a princess of Württemberg, finally gave birth to a son, Crown Prince Carl. He was the only crown prince in the history of the kingdom of Württemberg who was specifically educated one day to succeed as king (see Figure 5.2).¹⁸

As heir to the throne, King Wilhelm I had suffered so much at the hands of his stern father that, according to Baron Ernst von Pfuhl (1768–1828), he later criticized his education very harshly: 'I'd like to let the hereditary



König Karl als Kind.

Figure 5.2 Crown Prince Karl of Württemberg, wood engraving, B 6610 © Stadtarchiv Stuttgart

prince speak himself when he told of his youth', Pfuhl recalled a conversation with Friedrich Wilhelm: 'We had hardly passed our childhood when beating and maltreatment was our daily routine. Later on we had to pass an exam every three months, but very frequently one was scheduled eight to ten times a year. Every time we were punched so hard that our heads had to be bound up, and let us not speak of other punishments. Gradually my father planted slavish fears into my heart, most naturally accompanied by hatred.'¹⁹ Obviously the hereditary prince had sent a long letter containing complaints about his father to Baron Pfuhl. The original letter seems to be lost but Friedrich Wilhelm ended with a final request, 'If I may ask you for a favour, it is the following: Please return that letter to me on the day when I am going to be duke and remind me by that letter and by your friendship of all the maltreatments I have suffered by my father so that I will never torment my children in a similar way'.²⁰

Yet did the king actually learn from his own experience, particularly in the case of his only son and heir? The biographies show that King Wilhelm resembled his father more than he would have wished. On the positive side the king truly took an honest interest in his son's education.²¹ Initially, he had every hope that Crown Prince Karl would fulfil his expectations, and in his early youth he was a willing and intelligent child. The boy already knew how to read and calculate at the age of five. Following the example of his father King Wilhelm worked out detailed instructions for the teachers and was eager to hire suitable men for the task. The king commissioned a high educational official, Studienrats-Direktor Sueskind (1767–1829),²² to work out a plan for the education of his five-year-old son. The course of instruction was to commence at the age of six and should end when the crown prince was 18 years old. Sueskind proposed that the formal education should start with 24 to 26 hours of instruction per week, and by the final stage there would be 36 weekly lessons. He made plans for distinct phases lasting three to four years. Of course, the young boy should learn basic skills like writing and drawing, but at the age of eight French lessons would begin, and Sueskind's plan also included first steps in history and geography. Naturally, religion and moral instruction were to form constant elements of this educational programme. In his further explanations Sueskind stated that he regarded history 'as the real teacher of life, and therefore most important for the future ruler'. The French language, for which Sueskind had planned six hours a week from age nine on, was as prominent and time-consuming as the German lessons. Other languages were not taught because the Crown Prince would be able to learn English and Italian after he left school, if necessary. Describing the general principle of his education schedule Sueskind wrote: 'the academic lessons of the future ruler are not intended to make him a scholar'. Thus, the education was intended to prepare the crown prince mainly for his political and official duties. This required a broad range of subjects instead of thorough academic skills. In a court where small talk,

courtesy, ceremony and many casual meetings were the norm, a deeper academic interest may have seemed somewhat out of place.

After soliciting opinions on Sueskind's education plan from two other court officials, Privy Counsellor Karl Heinrich von Gros, his own former governor, and Minister of Justice Eugen von Maucler (1783–1859), King Wilhelm I approved an educational memorandum for the governor of the crown prince in December 1828. It laid down the general principle that 'a prince's education must be focused towards a varied and steady development and perfection of the abilities and powers of the pupil, and at the same time on the active acquisition of those general material skills and personal characteristics which his position and determination require'.²³

Every six months the governor had to present the king with an agenda for examination and approval. The daily routine for the young crown prince was to consist of nine to ten hours of sleeping, four to five hours of lessons, and the rest of the time was spent dressing, eating, walking and communicating with the family and society. King Wilhelm I asked the governor to follow the daily schedule strictly except for extraordinary occasions so that the crown prince would learn 'punctuality, regularity, and order'. Moreover, the governor was expected to be present at other teachers' lessons.

Later in his education, the crown prince was joined in his lessons by a number of pupils from a prestigious grammar school, the Stuttgarter Gymnasium. The boys were to present themselves at the palace at 5.00 p.m. every day. This group was taught music, dancing, fencing, gymnastics, riding and swimming. The other boys were not regarded as equal, though, and visitors noticed that most of his fellow pupils behaved in a rather servile manner during those lessons. Outside the classroom, the governor took daily walks with the crown prince. These were not intended as leisure but as a training for the young man's eyes and ears. During these walks he was expected to estimate the length of distances, the height and depth of hills and valleys, the size of areas, and to orientate himself geographically. In essence, these outings were intended to cultivate and enhance the skills necessary for a future military leader.²⁴

King Wilhelm I wanted his heir to become an exemplary military commander, but the boy's physical condition proved rather problematic in that respect. Karl was clumsy and frail, and the king – in a regrettable repetition of his father's practice – treated his teacher, a young man named Jules de Trembly from Geneva, like a servant. Trembly had no freedom to educate the boy in a more compassionate manner. King Wilhelm I thought that the crown prince tried to evade serious work. 'Instead of encouraging the boy, instead of treating him with love and understanding he made him feel again and again that he considered him a failure. The sensitive child suffered from his father's humiliating treatment.'²⁵

Another serious problem for the crown prince was that – even by the standards of the nobility – his parents' marriage was a particularly unhappy

one. More than once they were on the brink of divorce. Like his father before him, Karl suffered considerably, yet Queen Pauline failed to convince the king to moderate his strict educational methods. The king claimed control over his son's education exclusively for himself and accused the queen of pampering the boy. When King Friedrich Wilhelm of Prussia visited the royal family of Württemberg in 1836 he described the 13-year-old crown prince as 'weakly, small, and timid'.²⁶ His teacher de Trembly criticized his pupil's low motivation and lack of dedication, as well as his arrogance and distrust towards his teacher. He thought that the queen supported these tendencies when she took Karl's side in the conflicts between the king and the teacher. King Wilhelm obviously treated his son as distantly and as coldly as his father had behaved towards him, regarding him as a failure. His own sad youth had not resulted in a changing of methods used for his son's education, and the general principles to which he subscribed proved to be stronger than individual attitudes.

A comparison with the education of the crown princes Ludwig of Bavaria (1845–86),²⁷ Rudolf of Austria (1858–89)²⁸ and Wilhelm of Prussia (1859–1941)²⁹ shows that general motifs in the education of crown princes in the German states and in Austria need to be taken into account, though. These heirs to the throne were much younger than Prince Karl, but there appear to be striking similarities in their character. The only remarkable difference between the education of the crown princes of Bavaria and Württemberg is that Ludwig of Bavaria never underwent any military training.³⁰ As king, however, Ludwig's official duties required him occasionally to appear in the uniforms of Bavarian and foreign regiments. Like Karl of Württemberg, Ludwig of Bavaria and Rudolf of Austria were described as very sensitive boys who did not match the tough ideal of a soldier, and Prince Wilhelm of Prussia had a disability – a crippled arm – which his instructors sought to overcome by resorting to especially tough and pitiless training. Both Karl and Ludwig did not like the military, loved the arts and showed a clear tendency towards homosexuality.³¹

These examples point to an almost standardized programme for the education of an heir to the throne that was applied to boys who grew up distant from their parents. And their teachers appear very similar as well, not only in their role as servants but also in their general lack of any educational soft skills. 'Jules de Trembly...as a governor was completely dependent on King Wilhelm's benevolence. Therefore it is no wonder that he saw himself one-sidedly as an agent of the King's educational concepts. He did not have the necessary understanding to deal with the sensitive, somewhat clumsy and fragile boy under his care. Moreover he did not have any experience in the field of education.'³² Although de Trembly was a civilian, the emotional coldness of his social interaction with the boy resembled that of Crown Prince Ludwig's governor Major-General Count Theodor Basselet de la Rosée and of Crown Prince Rudolf's governor Major-General Count Leopold Gondrecourt.

On the other hand the heir was expected to rule one day, to become the head of state and a monarch conscious of his duties. The revolutions of 1830 in France and across much of Europe in 1848–49 had reinforced the notion of monarchy as a precarious and potentially fragile institution. The ability to suppress emotions, coupled with a strong sense of duty, was thus regarded as indispensable for a reigning monarch. Such skills seemed necessary to enable a king to fulfil the plethora of official duties that came with his position, and this could be a reason why the military played such an important role even after many monarchs could no longer imagine taking on a position of effective military leadership. Of course, the military always provided a colourful yet disciplined backdrop for all kinds of splendid ceremonies. Any specific military activities aside, the soldiers and brass bands performed a decorative role, and the monarch was presented as a martial hero even though he never experienced any actual fighting. This is especially true for Karl of Württemberg and Ludwig II of Bavaria in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71. Neither king was interested in the war itself, and when King Wilhelm I of Prussia was proclaimed German Emperor in January 1871 at the palace of Versailles they refused to attend the ceremony.³³

Mirroring his father's second marriage, Crown Prince Karl married a Russian grand duchess. Princess Olga, a daughter of Tsar Nicholas I, frequently outshone her husband. But the couple had no children and it became apparent that the eldest male member of another branch of the royal family would ascend the throne. Since there were two branches in question and other pretenders had a stronger right to the throne, the prince who would eventually succeed as king had not been raised specifically as a royal heir.

Prince Wilhelm

Prince Wilhelm was born in 1848 as the only son of Prince Friedrich of Württemberg and his spouse, Princess Katharina, who was a daughter of King Wilhelm I.³⁴ The couple faced the problems of many of the more junior members of the House of Württemberg. Although they belonged to the royal family and were regarded as privileged, they always struggled to maintain an adequate lifestyle. Their income hardly covered the expenses necessary for the upkeep of a palace and its staff, and so many of those members of the wider family ended up seriously indebted. Moreover, the couple also shared the fate of many of their class: an unhappy marriage. Prince Wilhelm remained his parents' only child, and therefore his mother adored and spoiled him (see Figure 5.3). His father, Prince Friedrich, has remained a very mysterious figure, and little is known about the relationship between father and son. At least he seems not to have been particularly strict, and so the prince grew up rather differently from the other Württemberg heirs.



Figure 5.3 Prince Wilhelm (later King Wilhelm II) of Württemberg © Archiv des Hauses Württemberg, Altshausen

His biographer, Paul Sauer, characterized Prince Wilhelm's early years as a 'childhood free from worries', and in his education some civil elements became apparent. Wilhelm did not only study academic subjects but his parents followed the example of the House of Hohenzollern where

the princes also learned crafts. Therefore Wilhelm was taught carpentry and bookbinding.³⁵ At the age of nine a number of pupils of the Stuttgart Grammar School were invited to join him as classmates, and they did not have to address the prince with 'Your Royal Highness' but merely called him 'Prince Wilhelm'.³⁶ His privileged status was thus minimized, and his teachers praised him as very polite and committed. They acknowledged his industriousness and his enthusiasm for learning. Moreover, Wilhelm's parents engaged teachers who treated their son with empathy, and even his military governor did not limit his role to simply drilling the young man. Outside lessons in the form of excursions played an important role as the prince was supposed to learn by his own experience. Wilhelm I had sent his daughter a note about noble duties as basic standards for his grandson's education (*Fürstenspiegel*),³⁷ but Princess Katharina and Prince Friedrich managed to organize an education free of such pressures and fears. Anyway, King Wilhelm I took an active interest in his grandson's education. When the ten-year-old Wilhelm sent him a letter in French, Wilhelm I replied with a very nice letter of thanks. He particularly praised the progress in the French language which he considered important for the prince's future, because it was spoken everywhere at the courts and many political affairs were conducted in French.³⁸

Later on, the young man attended dancing lessons and finally after finishing school, he went on to study at university, both at Tübingen and, outside of Württemberg, at Göttingen. It became more and more apparent that he would succeed to the throne, yet although he pursued a military career at Potsdam and participated in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–71 he was never truly a passionate soldier. Essentially, he did not like wearing uniforms and decorations.

When Wilhelm eventually succeeded to the throne in 1891 as King Wilhelm II of Württemberg he was well prepared for his position. Some contemporaries, however, described him as lazy and somewhat indecisive, and he certainly took advantage of the fact that he was no longer a truly sovereign monarch since the foundation of the German Empire had led to many functions of the smaller monarchs being transferred to Berlin.³⁹ Others criticized him because he twice married princesses from rather insignificant German states, which contrasted unfavourably with King Karl's prestigious marriage to a Romanov grand duchess. But although he always remained aware of his position the king's lifestyle was more in tune with that of the upper bourgeoisie.⁴⁰

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries two more members of the House of Württemberg were educated as successors to the throne, Duke Albrecht (1865–1939) and his son Duke Philipp Albrecht (1893–1975). King Wilhelm II's only son, Prince Ulrich, had died in infancy and therefore the right of succession passed to a branch of the family which had become Catholic in the mid-nineteenth century. Little is known about the

dukes' education but they appear to have been prepared very well. Duke Albrecht's mother, Duchess Maria Theresia, an Austrian archduchess, was the daughter of Archduke Albrecht, the wealthiest member of the House of Habsburg next to the emperor.⁴¹ She certainly was very conscious of her position as a member of the most prominent noble family in Europe besides the Romanovs.⁴² As far as we know, her three boys were prepared for a military career which was regarded as the highest goal they could aim for, and therefore the eldest son Duke Albrecht only studied for two semesters at the University of Tübingen. His mother influenced him thoroughly by her strict, conservative Catholicism. In fact, Duke Albrecht carved out a steep military career, and during the First World War he was promoted to field marshal. As the official successor to the throne of Württemberg he obviously never truly won the hearts of his future subjects, not only because he was a fervent Catholic, while many leading officials were Protestants, but also because he always gave the impression of strongly emphasizing his noble status.⁴³ In this respect he was very different from King Wilhelm II.

Conclusion

This discussion has shown that Duke Wilhelm and Crown Prince Karl were educated in line with standards which were common to many reigning families at the time. Their fathers never seriously attempted to establish an emotional relationship with their sons. Instead they worked according to a template that was in line with contemporary standards of princely education. Indeed, they only wanted their sons to be taught what was deemed important for their future position as monarchs – skills such as languages, dancing and, first and foremost, military drill. Most probably the royal fathers believed that a cold sense of duty was necessary to fulfil the tasks of a monarch and never expected their heirs to have to develop a meaningful relationship with their subjects.

It is striking that the mothers did not exercise any significant influence on the male-dominated education of the heirs. This was partly due to the fact that the fathers regarded the formation of their successor as an intrinsic part of their jealously defended duties as dynastic rulers. But personal factors played a part, too. Queen Charlotte Mathilde was not Prince Friedrich Wilhelm's biological mother, but merely the stepmother of the future king and deferred to her husband in every respect. Even though her relationship with the prince was rather good and provided the boy with a sense of emotional stability, the queen did not involve herself in any decisions regarding his formal education. The situation concerning the future King Karl was rather similar, but in this instance it was, above all, her unhappy marriage which barred Queen Pauline from shaping her son's education.

As a young man King Wilhelm II underwent a process of socialization that differed profoundly from the experiences of his two predecessors, because

he was not born the son of a monarch or future monarch. Even though it soon became clear that he would eventually succeed to the Württemberg throne, he was not raised as a crown prince. His education was clearly influenced by bourgeois elements and was much less narrow than would have been the case for a future king. His ability to embody a modern type of bourgeois kingship after 1891 may well be due to this serendipitous set of circumstances. It is questionable, on the other hand, whether he would have been able to cope adequately with the demands that a more powerful royal role would have placed on him. He thus benefited from the limitation of his monarchical prerogatives that was the result of Württemberg's membership of the German Reich, where central political decisions were taken in Berlin.

It is quite astonishing how some characteristic features of nineteenth-century monarchy are still in evidence today. For all the apparent adaptation of middle-class attitudes there remained something profoundly distinct about the culture of the high aristocracy. This becomes apparent in a German journalist's comment on the birth of Prince George Alexander Louis of Cambridge, who will in all probability become king of Britain one day:

Nevertheless, the monarchies are endangered. The danger does not originate in their exclusivity, but, on the contrary, it comes from the desire of their followers among their people and in the media who want them to behave like civil or petty bourgeois, like the common people, that is – like themselves. It is simply ridiculous to reproach a king because of his big game hunting or his erotic adventures (as happened in Spain or in Sweden). Such 'educational' ideas contradict the monarchs' privileged social position and cut off the connection with the past, where kings used to have mistresses and hunt big game. And nobody should be rejoicing about marriages with commoners because in this way the monarchy mixes with social classes from which it actually should be elevated. It is becoming a party. The best example is the mother of the celebrated British heir to the throne who comes from a family of self-made millionaires, a Margaret Thatcher background that has damaged so much of Britain's social conscience. Once a king is part of a posh posse of upstarts, he can no longer fulfil the task of representing an entire nation – including its losers.⁴⁴

Notes

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1. Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart (HStA), G 268 Bü 8: Duke Friedrich's instruction about his two sons' education, 10 October 1792.
2. Simon Winchester (2009), 'What is Royalty in the 21st century?', *Parade Magazine*, 19 April, <http://parade.com/104507/simonwinchester/what-is-royalty-in-the-21st-century/>, accessed 11 February 2015.
3. Monika Wienfort (2006), *Adel in der Moderne*, Göttingen, 125.

4. Robert von Mohl (1840), *Das Staatsrecht des Königreichs Württemberg*, Tübingen, 187. See also Otto von Sarwey (1883), *Das Staatsrecht des Königreichs Württemberg*, Tübingen, 77–81; Karl Göz (1908), *Das Staatsrecht des Königreichs Württemberg*, Tübingen, 72.
5. Heinz Dollinger (1985), 'Das Leitbild des Bürgerkönigtums in der europäischen Monarchie des 19. Jahrhunderts', in: Karl Ferdinand Werner (ed.), *Hof, Kultur und Politik im 19. Jahrhundert*, Bonn, 325–62.
6. Lothar Machtan (2008), *Die Abdankung. Wie Deutschlands gekrönte Häupter aus der Geschichte fielen*, Berlin, 92–107.
7. Johannes Rogalla von Bieberstein (1998), *Adelsherrschaft und Adelskultur in Deutschland*, Limburg, 164–95.
8. HStA, G 268 Bü 8: Duke Friedrich's instruction about his two sons' education, 10 October 1792.
9. See Paul Sauer (1997), *Reformer auf dem Königsthron. Wilhelm I. von Württemberg*, Stuttgart, 14–32.
10. Johannes Grauer (1960), *Wilhelm I., König von Württemberg. Ein Bild seines Lebens und seiner Zeit*, Stuttgart, 71.
11. Sauer (1997), 22.
12. E. Ullmann (1879), 'Gros, Carl Heinrich von', *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 9, 740–41, www.deutsche-biographie.de/ppn118967711.html?anchor=adb, accessed 11 February 2015.
13. Sauer (1997), 18.
14. HStA, G 268 Bü 8: Duke Friedrich's instruction about his two sons' education, 10 October 1792.
15. Archiv des Hauses Württemberg, Altshausen (AHW), Hofdomänenkammer, Bü 886.
16. Grauer (1960), 83.
17. It should be kept in mind that during these years a constitution was being worked out for the kingdom of Württemberg which was decreed in 1819. The education of the heir to the throne was therefore considered an important public affair. In 1817, for instance, Baron Christian von Massenbach published a memorandum on 'the education of princes in representative constitutions' ('Über die Fürsten-Erziehung in repräsentativen Verfassungen' (http://reader.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/fs1/object/display/bsb10763505_00005.html), accessed 11 February 2015), but this appears to be a satire rather than an actual proposal to be considered by the Württemberg chambers.
18. For his biography see Paul Sauer (1999), *Regent mit mildem Zepter. König Karl von Württemberg*, Stuttgart.
19. HStA, G 268 Bü 10: Copies of Baron Pfuhl's letters, 30 December 1798. Baron Pfuhl wrote these letters in an apologetic manner when he had been interned at the fortress of Hohenasperg for helping the Hereditary Prince Friedrich Wilhelm to escape from Württemberg and flee to Paris.
20. HStA, G 268 Bü 10: Copies of Baron Pfuhl's letters, 24 January 1799. See Grauer (1960), 84.
21. See Sauer (1999), 15–31: 'A Careful Education'.
22. Theodor Schott (1894), 'Süskind, Friedrich Gottlieb', *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 37, 184–86, www.deutsche-biographie.de/ppn117371823.html?anchor=adb, accessed 11 February 2015.
23. HStA, E 14 Bü 61: King Wilhelm I's instruction for the crown prince's governor concerning education and teaching, 28 December 1828.

24. HStA, E 14 Bü 61. See also Sauer (1999), 20.
25. Sauer (1999), 30.
26. Sauer (1999), 24.
27. Oliver Hilmes (2013), *Ludwig II. Der unzeitgemäße König*, Munich. On Crown Prince Ludwig's education see 31–34.
28. Brigitte Hamann (2005), *Kronprinz Rudolf. Ein Leben*, Wien, 21ff.
29. John C.G. Röhl (1993), *Die Jugend des Kaisers 1859–1888*, Munich. See also Christopher Clark (2009), *Wilhelm II. Die Herrschaft des letzten deutschen Kaisers*, Munich, 15–23.
30. Franz Herre (1986), *Ludwig II. Bayerns Märchenkönig – Wahrheit und Legende*, Stuttgart, 82.
31. See Heinz Häfner (2008), *Ein König wird beseitigt. Ludwig II. von Bayern*, Munich, 68–74, where Kings Karl and Ludwig II are compared, especially in relation to their homosexuality.
32. Sauer (1999), 23.
33. Sauer (1999), 191.
34. Paul Sauer (1994), *Württembergs letzter König. Das Leben Wilhelms II.*, Stuttgart.
35. Sauer (1994), 19–20.
36. Sauer (1994), 17, 21.
37. Sauer (1994), 25.
38. HStA, G 268 Bü 8: King Wilhelm I to Prince Wilhelm, 22 January 1859.
39. Sauer (1994), 169.
40. Sauer (1994), 177.
41. See Matthias Stickler (1997), *Erzherzog Albrecht von Österreich. Selbstverständnis und Politik eines konservativen Habsburgers im Zeitalter Kaiser Franz Josephs*, Husum.
42. See Ilse Feller and Eberhard Fritz (1990), *Württemberg zur Königszeit. Die Fotografien des Herzogs Philipp von Württemberg*, Stuttgart, 11–32.
43. See Hans Philippi (1972), *Das Königreich Württemberg im Spiegel der preußischen Gesandtschaftsberichte 1871–1914*, Stuttgart, 152, 160.
44. Jens Jessen, 'Mehr Mätressen wagen! Lob des kleinen Prinzen – warum die Briten um ihre Monarchie zu beneiden sind', *Die Zeit* 31, 25 July 2013, 8.

6

Travels with a Camera: The Prince of Wales, Photography and the Mobile Court

Sophie Gordon

The relationship between the British royal family and photography is a long and sometimes difficult one. It began shortly after the discovery of the medium in the late 1830s and continues to evolve today alongside rapidly changing technology and new methods for disseminating and storing photographic images. The importance of the photographic portrait was recognized at an early stage in this relationship, but attempts to control the messages within the images have not been an unalloyed success, leading to a mistrust of the medium that became all too apparent in the twentieth century.

In the early decades of the history of photography the royal family enthusiastically embraced the camera.¹ Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were both photographed in the 1840s and began to collect photographs in the same way that they acquired prints – usually as souvenirs and aides-memoires for notable places and significant events. Photographs were pasted into albums, often alongside drawings and watercolours. The royal couple commissioned photographers to make portraits of their children and others within their household, and they encouraged Prince Albert's librarian, Dr Ernst Becker (1826–88), to engage with the wider photographic community that was growing in Britain at this time.² Becker was to connect the royal family with members of the newly formed Photographic Society of London, and through this link, the queen and Prince Albert began to assemble a remarkable collection of photographs, one of the few early collections that still remains largely intact today, cared for by their descendants. In 1855 Becker wrote to his mother in Hesse, 'it is not only that the magnificent collection formed by the queen and the prince is growing larger every day – they are also constantly making use of photography for all kinds of different purposes, wherever they want to have nothing but a true representation of the progress of the new house at Balmoral, or the wounded soldiers from the Crimea, or a painting by Raphael in Rome'.³

As a result Victoria and Albert's children – all nine of them born after the first photographic processes were made available to the public in 1839 – grew up as 'photographic natives', familiar and far more at ease with the camera than their parents ever would be. All of them were photographed hundreds of times whilst they were children, and as they grew up and established families of their own, they continued to commission and acquire photographic works. Some of them also learnt to take their own, often very successful, photographs – something that eluded both Queen Victoria and Prince Albert. Albert Edward Prince of Wales had learnt the rudiments of photography alongside his brother Prince Alfred Duke of Edinburgh, and both of them sustained an interest in photography for many decades, using photographers to record their private and public lives.⁴ Sometimes these photographs were for the eyes of their family and friends alone, but on other occasions they were exhibited or published for all to see.⁵

In this chapter I consider the role of photography and court photographers within the context of the Prince of Wales's travels. The prince made four highly significant overseas tours as heir to the throne, representing the monarchy and Britain in Canada and the US (1860); in Egypt and the Middle East (1862); in Egypt, Constantinople and Greece (1869); and finally in India (1875–76). He also undertook numerous, less significant visits to many European and British locations, several of which were undertaken in a private, or semi-private, capacity, such as the visit to Russia in November 1866 for the marriage of his sister-in-law Princess Dagmar with the Tsarevitch (later Emperor Alexander III).⁶ Even during the shortest trip abroad, such as to the spa in Baden-Baden in Germany, the prince would usually have his portrait taken in a photographic studio; during his official tours which often lasted several months, he would be photographed many times (and often sketched and painted as well) by different photographers. The surviving photographs, taken during the prince's tours, show how effective photography was in helping the British royal family achieve their aim of extending the reach and influence of the court through the circulation of images and also what the consequences were of doing, or attempting to do, this.

A new world: Canada and the US, 1860

Aged 18 and hence now allowed to play an official role in his country's affairs, the Prince of Wales was sent on a tour of Canada and the US, departing Britain on 10 July 1860 and arriving 13 days later in Newfoundland. Over the next three months, the prince visited 41 separate places in Canada and the United States, before finally starting the journey home on 20 October.⁷

In 1860 the public knew almost nothing of the Prince of Wales. The scandalous reputation he was to gain in the coming years did not yet exist, and very few representations of the prince, in any medium, had been viewed

in a public context. Some images of the royal family, depicting the queen and Prince Albert with their children, had been on display or reproduced as engravings, but most showed the ideal domestic family unit. Until a momentous decision taken by Queen Victoria in mid-1860, almost no-one would have seen a photograph of a member of the royal family. Following a photographic session with John Mayall on 15 May 1860 the queen allowed the publication of a set of Mayall's photographs depicting her and Prince Albert.⁸ The images would be displayed not only publicly, but also issued as cartes-de-visite for members of the public to purchase individually or as a set. The carte de visite was a small photograph pasted onto a piece of card, about the size of a modern business card. It was easy to produce and cheap, and became the focus of a mid-nineteenth-century collecting craze. Once the queen allowed her portrait to be issued in this format, it opened up expectations over the depiction of the royal family and the access that photographers, and by extension the general public, would receive.⁹

The desire for photographs of the royal family can be measured to a certain extent by examining the copyright registers. Following the introduction of a new copyright bill on 29 July 1862, photographers could register their photographs for copyright at The Stationer's Hall. Using these records, it is possible to see how many photographs of royal sitters were being taken (although this does not indicate how successfully the photographs sold). Between 1862 and 1901, the most popular individuals in Britain were the Princess of Wales and the Prince of Wales, followed by the actress Ellen Terry and then Queen Victoria.¹⁰

On the eve of his departure to North America in 1860, a new photograph of the Prince of Wales was taken by John Watkins. It was not intended for general sale, but could be viewed at the photographer's studio.¹¹ The prince was presented to the public as a young gentleman, seated, leaning slightly forward and looking into the camera, perhaps to create an impression of seriousness and confidence for the journey ahead. It was the first time that the public were presented with a photograph of the prince, and perhaps one of the first occasions when the prince was not shown as part of the wider royal family unit. The image marked the beginning of the prince's new identity as heir to the throne.

When the Prince of Wales departed for Canada, he was accompanied by seven gentlemen from the royal household, as well as a reporter from *The Times* and an artist, George Henry Andrews, who was working for the *Illustrated London News*. There was no official photographer attached to the party, but photographers greeted the prince at most locations. Albert Edward was also presented with photographs as gifts, the best known of these probably being the 'Maple Box' containing stereoscopic views of Canada by William Notman (1826–91).¹² The photographs received by the prince were usually topographical views depicting cities, towns, architecture and landscape, selected primarily to demonstrate to the royal heir (and

therefore by extension Queen Victoria and Britain) the success, stability and progress of Canada and the US, particularly the former given its status as a British colony.

In contrast, there were few photographs of the prince and his companions. It took time and advance planning to take a photograph, and while the prince did halt proceedings on a few occasions to allow a photographer to work, it was unreasonable to expect this to happen frequently. The photographs depicting the official elements of the tour are therefore highly staged. Of greater interest are the few group portraits taken in less formal circumstances, one of which shows the prince with Sir John Rose, the commissioner of public works, who was responsible for many of the practical arrangements of the tour (see Figure 6.1).¹³



Figure 6.1 William Notman (1826–91), HRH the Prince of Wales, with Sir John Rose and companions, Montreal, Canada, 1860, albumen print, 2106465, Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015

The Prince of Wales stands with three senior members of his entourage and Sir John at the latter's home in Montreal. The photograph, by the professional photographer William Notman, was taken as a stereoscopic image, a format that suggests it was intended for wide public consumption. Stereoscopic photographs were, like *cartes-de-visite*, relatively cheap to produce and became extremely popular in the 1860s. Two almost identical images would be pasted side-by-side onto card which, when looked at through a hand-held viewer, would give the impression of a three-dimensional image (one photograph for the left eye, and one photograph for the right eye). The prominent position of the prince in the centre of the group would have allowed the viewer to get a good impression of the Prince of Wales. Although his relative youth is striking when compared to his companions, the prince stands out with confidence and assurance whilst his companions step back to give him prominence. This is undoubtedly a picture of the 'heir to the throne' surrounded by his courtiers. Today this group portrait is the most frequently encountered photograph from the 1860 trip, suggesting it was successfully widely circulated. It would have presented the public with the image of a prince fulfilling his duty and representing Britain abroad.

In 1860, the royal family were still exploring the potential of the camera to present a particular image of themselves to the public. Allowing photographs to be seen and distributed in public was a recent development for the royals. The few of the Prince of Wales that were taken during the 1860 tour were carefully produced but there was little sense of any overall strategy to present the prince to the world. The royal family and their advisors would have seen, however, that the photographs allowed a particular image of the prince to be widely circulated, showing him fulfilling his duties as heir to the throne in far-flung parts of the British Empire and thus extending the reach of the court. These images were evidently regarded as successful because when the prince was sent on his next extended overseas tour in 1862, it was decided that a professional photographer – Francis Bedford – should accompany the royal party for the entire duration of the journey.

Francis Bedford (1815–94) and the Middle East tour, 1862

It was Prince Albert's idea that his son, the Prince of Wales, should undertake an educational tour of the Middle East. This would include Egypt, the Holy Land, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and Greece, encompassing the culture, religion and history of the region, as well as meeting prominent rulers and British representatives. Most of the region was nominally under the control of the Ottoman Empire, ruled from Constantinople by Sultan Abdülaziz. The tour was designed to occupy the prince for several months between the end of his formal studies and the arrangements for his marriage, which was eventually to take place in March 1863. Notwithstanding the sudden and unexpected death of Prince Albert in December 1861, the plans for the tour

went ahead and the Prince of Wales bade his mother farewell on 6 February 1862. The Queen wrote in her journal, 'talking with Bertie, who seems nervous at the thought of leaving for this long journey. He came up later again, to take leave & was low & upset, poor Boy. So was I'.¹⁴ Accompanied by a small entourage (several of whom had accompanied him to Canada and the US), he travelled across Europe by train before finally joining the royal yacht *Osborne* at Trieste. From here, the party made their way to Egypt where the journey properly began.

The tour was intended to be private, but the request for the professional photographer Francis Bedford to accompany the party suggests that from the outset there were plans to present the tour in the public sphere.¹⁵ Bedford travelled with the royal party from the beginning of the journey and began taking photographs as they made their way along the Dalmatian coast. He worked continuously without any specific brief, although he concentrated on architecture and landscape views, the formats in which he was already highly skilled. He also made a small number of portraits and group studies which included the Prince of Wales and his travelling companions. Compared to the architectural views these group photographs would have taken a relatively long time to set up and produce. The exposure time was, according to Bedford himself, around 10–12 seconds, a long time for a group of people to remain completely still.¹⁶ Any movement during the exposure would result in a blurring on the negative. This may partly explain why so few photographs of the prince were produced, but we also have to remember that there was still very little precedent for displaying photographs of the royal family so there was no requirement or expectation that Bedford would follow the prince's every move.

At the end of tour, the Prince of Wales acquired two sets of Bedford's photographs which contained, between them, 191 unique images. Of these, 172 were displayed at the German Gallery at 168 Bond Street, London.¹⁷ The exhibition opened to the public on 23 July 1862, about one month after the royal party returned to Britain, and was widely praised in the press.¹⁸ Copies of the photographs were for sale to the public either as a complete set of 172 images, or in sections divided by geographical region. Three group photographs appear to have been part of the set seen by the public: one showing the prince on a camel in front of the pyramids with his travelling companions; one showing the group seated in the ruins of a temple in Karnak, Egypt; and the third depicting the group resting under a fig tree, having just eaten lunch, in Capernaum, on the northern edge of the Sea of Galilee.¹⁹

The prince is hard to spot in the first photograph taken in front of the pyramids. He sits on a camel slightly to the left of centre. The figures have been placed too far away from the camera and this makes it difficult to identify anyone without close inspection. Additionally, the inevitable movement of the camels blurs the image. Out of the three group portraits described, the prince is the least recognizable in this photograph, but this is surprisingly the

photograph that was the most reproduced. For example, it was subsequently used in 1868 as the first photograph in a publication by W. M. Thompson, *The Holy Land, Egypt, Constantinople, Athens ... photographed by Francis Bedford for HRH Prince of Wales during his tour in the East*, which incorporated 48 of Bedford's photographs. This volume is often described as a 'popular' version of Bedford's work – that is, a smaller and cheaper format compared to the photographs sold in 1862. With the image reproduced at almost half the size of the original photograph, it is almost impossible to identify the prince but this suggests that it was not necessary to show the prince himself in front of the pyramids. The association alone within the context provided by the rest of the book was enough for the Victorian public.

It is the power of this association that makes all the subsequent architectural and landscape photographs special and differentiates them from earlier photographs of the region. From the point of view of the audience, the photographs were taken while the Prince of Wales was present and this presence is part of the final image, whether the prince is physically present or not.²⁰ This combination of the young prince having travelled to an exotic location and the relatively youthful photographic technology was a way of presenting to the Victorian public a modern, forward-looking royal who could engage with new ideas and scientific progress, which in turn signalled a capable and reliable heir.²¹

Albert Edward is more visible in the other two group photographs. The photograph taken in the famous hypostyle hall in the temple of Amun at Karnak clearly presents the prince amongst the ruins of ancient Egypt. The two enormous columns, against which some of the prince's party recline, are carved with hieroglyphs. The inscriptions are immediately visible and instantly locate the prince geographically. As with the photograph taken at the home of Sir John Rose in Montreal, the prince is pushed to the front of the photograph. The others in the group circle him, stepping back slightly so the prince becomes the most prominent person. Slightly to the side of the group are two women and another man who have joined the prince for a few days in Egypt: the artist Jemima Blackburn, and the prince's uncle and aunt, Ernst II Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha and Princess Alexandrine. Their position at the side of the group indicates that they are not quite full members of the royal party.

In the third photograph, taken at Capernaum, the prince is wearing a fez and some sort of kaftan, apparently relaxed after lunch – food and what look to be bottles of wine sit in the foreground. While both garments have an Ottoman heritage, the fez had been introduced only relatively recently by Sultan Mahmud II in 1829. It was seen as a modern, egalitarian item at the time and was adopted across much of the wider Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century. It serves as a reminder of where in the world the prince is in a photograph that is otherwise lacking any indication of place. Capernaum is mentioned in the New Testament as the home of several

of Jesus's disciples and the place where Jesus performed miracles. This association is only apparent however once the title of the photograph is revealed.

In each of the three photographs, the prince is central but quite hard to place because of the composition and the placement of each group in the middle ground. The portraits that the prince had made in the studio of the photographers Abdullah Frères, however, are in complete contrast. These cartes-de-visite, which would not have been available to the public at the time, show a bold, energetic, confident young man trying out a variety of poses and backgrounds (as shown in Figure 6.2). In some of the portraits the prince stands in front of a painted backdrop, leaning on a chair. In another portrait he is shown seated on the reversed chair, an unusual pose for the time.

There are at least eight different poses from this particular sitting which show the prince alone, as well as others which include some of his companions and also his uncle Ernst Leopold, Prince of Leiningen. Without the expectation that the images would be available for public consumption, the prince evidently felt more comfortable to adopt different poses, to each of which can be ascribed a slightly different interpretation: confident; conventional; sophisticated; serious; cautious; studious; and so on.²² None of the Frères portraits presents the prince with an Oriental theme unlike all of Bedford's group portraits, which achieve this effect either through surroundings or costume. Once he had returned to Britain, Bedford used this royal patronage to his advantage, advertising himself as 'Photographer to HRH the Prince of Wales', although he never received an official royal warrant for his work.²³ Having fulfilled three direct royal commissions, he occupied a unique status, though.

It was more usual at the time for photographers to solicit sittings from members of the royal family rather than the other way round. Once the photographs had been taken, the photographer would usually then describe himself as 'by royal appointment' or similar. This led to resentment in the trade and confusion with the general public. Earlier, in the 1850s, the relationships the royal family had with photographers, who were largely upper-middle-class gentlemen such as Roger Fenton, mirrored the role fulfilled by painters and sculptors. By the mid-1860s, however, the shift into a more commercial arena led to disputes and instances of misuse of the royal arms. As a result the royal family slowly began to distance themselves from photography.

Return to the East, 1869

The 1862 tour had been the first royal tour to be documented by an official photographer. Despite the public popularity of Bedford's photographs it also appears to have been the last, at least until the twentieth century.



Figure 6.2 Abdullah Frères, HRH The Prince of Wales, Constantinople, 27 May 1862, albumen carte-de-visite, 210649, Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015

This may have been due to a realization in the course of the intervening years that it was increasingly difficult to control a photographic image once it had been released publicly. For example, arguments over the ownership of photographic negatives of Prince Albert resulted in a court case in February 1862, which meant that members of the royal household ended up having to give evidence through letters and in person.²⁴ Such an experience would undoubtedly have affected how the commercial photography world was viewed by the royal family and the court. The work of an artist, by contrast, unique and private, could remain unknown and unseen in a library for decades. When the Prince of Wales returned to Egypt in 1869 with his wife Princess Alexandra, he was accompanied by a small group which included Oswald Walters Brierly (1817–94). Brierly, a professional artist who had worked for the *Illustrated London News* during the Crimean War, was patronized by the royal family from 1856, later accompanying Prince Alfred Duke of Edinburgh on his overseas tour on HMS *Galatea* in 1867. For the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1869, Brierly produced almost 90 watercolours documenting the tour. The Princess of Wales also sketched throughout, often alongside Brierly.

The royal party left Trieste on 27 January 1869, sailing for Alexandria on HMS *Ariadne*. The tour continued onwards to Cairo, where they remained for several days before travelling up the Nile as far as Abu Simbel, Wadi Halfa and the Second Cataract. After returning to Cairo, the prince and princess went to Suez by train in order that the prince might officially open the dam of the first section of the canal on 25 March. This occasion, as well as the arrival of the Prince and Princess of Wales at Suez, was sketched by Edouard Riou, a French artist working for the *Illustrated London News*.²⁵ The sketches present the prince in the distance, amongst a group of people. To date, no photographs have been found of this particular occasion.

After Suez, the royal party reboarded HMS *Ariadne* and sailed towards Constantinople. From there, a brief four-day visit to the Crimea was undertaken. The prince had wanted to visit the battlefields during his 1862 tour but for various reasons (including political sensibilities) it had not proved possible then. In early April 1869, the situation had changed sufficiently to allow the prince to visit the region. He was guided by the reporter William Howard Russell, who had covered the Crimean War in 1855 for *The Times*, and accompanied by Brierly. After leaving the Crimea, the party set sail for Greece, visiting Athens and meeting the king of Greece, before heading to Corfu and then finally ending the tour at Brindisi from where the prince and princess took a train to Paris.²⁶

Brierly's watercolours do not depict the Prince of Wales at all, although one is of the Princess of Wales riding a camel. The few photographs that were taken (judging by what has survived) appear also to be private, coming from the Prince of Wales's own family photograph albums. In Egypt, a handful of images by an unknown photographer show the Princess of Wales

on a camel with her companion Mrs Theresa Grey (who later published an account of the tour). There are also two formal group portraits of the prince and princess with their entourage.²⁷ In addition, at least two cabinet card portraits of the Prince of Wales were taken in the Abdullah Frères studio at Constantinople – companion portraits of the Princess of Wales were also taken.²⁸

These portraits contrast with those taken in the same studio seven years earlier. The energy which is so apparent in the 1862 portraits is seemingly lacking, and instead we see a calm, relaxed and level-headed young man, now sporting the facial hair that makes him so instantly recognizable in later life, wearing what looks to be a tweed suit. The prince had married and become father to four children during the previous seven years, and had begun to undertake more duties representing Queen Victoria. These included attendance at the marriage of his wife's sister Princess Dagmar to the heir to the Russian throne in November 1866 and a formal visit to Ireland in April 1868, both of which were reported in Britain, particularly in the illustrated newspapers. These few photographs suggest that the prince no longer needed to experiment with his photographic portrait as he was by now quite adept at posing and creating the public image that he desired.

As with the 1862 tour, it does not seem to have been particularly important that photographs were produced to show the prince carrying out his duties. General images of events alongside a thorough reporting of the prince's activities were sufficient, even though by now photographic technology would have allowed for a relatively quick exposure time which would not inconvenience the prince. However, the photographic studio still offered far greater control over the final image which, should the photograph be made available in the public sphere, was reassuring and necessary.

Exploring the Empire: India 1875–76

The prince was asked to represent Queen Victoria on a four-month tour of India to take place between 8 November 1875 and 12 March 1876. With travelling time, the whole journey was to occupy seven months, even with HMS *Serapis* navigating the Suez Canal. The itinerary also included Sri Lanka and Nepal, and several countries on the way out and the way back, including the strategically important island of Malta.

As with the 1860 tour to Canada and the US, a 'departure portrait' was taken on the eve of the journey. The Bassano studio produced an image that was made available to the public. This was a way of highlighting the tour and beginning the narrative that would present the prince as heir not only to the British throne but also as a future ruler in India. In 1875, Queen Victoria had not yet been officially pronounced Empress of India (this was to take place in May 1876) but the prince's tour was designed to impress upon the rulers of India as well as the people of Britain that the prince, as

representative of the ruling country, was to be deferred to and acknowledged as the heir apparent. One of the titles that he was given while travelling in India was *shahzadah* which translates as ‘child of the shah’, a title previously only used to refer to the sons of the Mughal emperor.²⁹

The tour was covered extensively by reporters and artists. William Howard Russell was officially part of the prince’s suite as his ‘Hon. Private Secretary’, whilst also sending reports back to *The Times*. Several artists produced sketches, including Herbert Johnson for the *Graphic* and William Simpson for the *Illustrated London News*. In addition, the artist Sydney Prior Hall (1842–1922) was appointed ‘Special Artist’ on the tour, producing 270 works from rough sketches to highly finished watercolours. He was also paid a fee for photographs to assist him in finishing his work, but unfortunately there is no further information about who took the photographs or where they are today.³⁰ Hall’s watercolours were exhibited after the tour alongside the works of art and other gifts received by the prince while travelling. The exhibition was held at the India Museum, South Kensington, before touring to various locations including Paris, Glasgow, Edinburgh and York.

The prince also acquired six finely bound albums containing photographs documenting the tour. Many of these photographs were taken by an employee of the firm Bourne and Shepherd, established in the mid-1860s by Samuel Bourne, and which by the 1870s was the pre-eminent photographic business in the country. Most of the topographical photographs in the albums are stock images taken by Samuel Bourne in the 1860s and reprinted in the 1870s. The use of previously published photographs to depict the locations visited suggests both a lack of patience for photography to take place during the tour, and the desire to exert some control over the presentation of the material. There were also many photographs taken en route, depicting people, animals, welcome arches and elements of a tiger hunt as well as photographs of several of the gifts received.³¹ A photographically illustrated book containing a selection of these photographs was published in 1876 as *Royal Photographic Album of Scenes and Personages* and was available for the public to purchase.³² The circulation of these photographs of imperial sites and events between diverse audiences, consisting of the colonists, the colonized and the public at home in Britain, contributed to the creation of an imagined imperial community that not only connected the furthest reaches of the empire but also linked the court with its subjects.³³

In contrast to the artist Hall, who was named in the press and accompanied the prince everywhere, the photographer travelling with the royal party remains unknown. This suggests a change in the status of the ‘royal photographer’, when compared with the publicity received by Francis Bedford in 1862. Bluntly speaking, Hall was a gentleman who could travel alongside the prince, whereas a commercial photographer was not. In the years between the first and the last royal tour, photography had moved a long way from its roots as an amateur gentleman’s pastime and became a

middle-class, or even working-class, trade. This undoubtedly affected the relationship between the court and the photographers, the latter now men who would be unfamiliar with the necessary protocols and the expectations that would come from royal patrons.

As with previous tours, the photographs of the prince are few. There are some carefully composed studio portraits, including one taken by Ram Singh II, the Maharaja of Jaipur, a keen photographer, which would not have been seen in public but which was used as the first image in the first of the six albums, suggesting that it held some significance for the prince.³⁴ There are also a few group portraits showing the prince with his entourage and British dignitaries, all strangely similar even though they were taken on opposite sides of the country. Several of these were included in the published book, and were also available to the public to purchase as individual photographs. Each group portrait has the prince at the centre, surrounded by men often in uniform standing in front of a colonial-style building. There is little to suggest that the prince is in India.

As with the 1862 tour, it is the context created by the sequence of photographs that gives each image its significance. While the topographical photographs were not taken at the time of the tour, they represent the places visited by the prince, creating the narrative of the route travelled. The prince's presence is associated with all of the views, and at the same time India is present in the often bland portraits through the context in which they are presented. More significant are the portraits of the Indian rulers who gathered for an audience with the prince. Bourne and Shepherd took portraits of most of the maharajas, princes and begums who were greeted at the *durbars* held on 9 November in Bombay and 27 December and 1 January in Calcutta. The latter event was a gathering of the Order of the Star of India, the creation of the order being an attempt to organize the princely rulers into a hierarchy to suit British political purposes. The gathering together of the Indian rulers and their compilation into the prince's photograph albums was a small part of the grander narrative to subsume them into a vision of the British Raj which placed the prince at its apex.

One of the group portraits was sold as a cabinet card to the public. Titled 'The Prince's First Tiger', it shows the prince holding a rifle with a few of his companions and a dead tiger at their feet (see Figure 6.3).

Tiger hunting was an elite sport in India undertaken by the rulers and their associates. It was appropriate that the prince was depicted engaging with this activity as it presented him as an equal to the Indian rulers. There was a historical tradition in India of depicting rulers on tiger hunts, and some rulers closely associated themselves with the tiger as a symbol of power. This cabinet card, along with the many engravings of the prince participating in the tiger hunts in India and Nepal, presented the prince as part of the Indian ruling class. His identity was slowly being enmeshed with the narrative of the Raj that ultimately led to Queen Victoria becoming



Figure 6.3 Bourne and Shepherd, *The Prince's First Tiger*, 1876, albumen cabinet card, 2701970, Royal Collection Trust/© Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2015

Empress of India on 1 May 1876, the same month that the prince finally returned to Britain.

Conclusion

The four main overseas tours undertaken by the prince were documented visually through drawings, watercolours, paintings and photographs. They were also written about and described at length. The purpose of the overseas tours was primarily to extend the reach and influence of the court beyond Britain. The Prince of Wales travelled to engage with new audiences and the photographs from the tours were intended to achieve just that. The few photographs from the 1860 tour provided an example to the court of how these images could be widely circulated beyond the normal reach of the royal circle. This led to the appointment of Francis Bedford in 1862 as the official photographer for the prince's Middle Eastern tour. The resulting photographs, which were displayed in public and circulated through subsequent publications, served two purposes – the images could be circulated internationally, demonstrating the significant contribution made by the heir to the throne, as well as speaking to a largely domestic audience by making images of the prince and ideas associated with him available in Victorian drawing-rooms. Bringing the royal family into the homes of the

public was designed to create a familiarity with a middle-class audience (or at least those who could afford to purchase photographs) and lessen the distance between monarch and subjects. The apparently unmediated nature of photography combined with the lack of any royal regalia in the photographs allowed viewers to see the royal family as just like them.³⁵

The changing status of photography and photographers, however, combined with the direct experiences that courtiers had when dealing with commercial photographers, created a greater distance between the royal patron and the photographers. Portraits, never numerous, became increasingly formal and the ease of the photographs from the early 1860s disappeared. Portraits from the Indian tour demonstrate this whilst at the same time their formality underlined the new imperial role that the queen and her heir were destined to fulfil.

Attempts were also made to formalize the role of 'royal photographer'. Following decades of unlicensed use of the royal coat of arms, an act of Parliament was passed in 1883 making it an offence to use the royal arms (or anything resembling them) with the intention to make the public believe a trader was operating with royal authority.³⁶ This was further formalized with the creation of the Association of Warrant Holders in 1895 which prevented the unauthorized use of the royal arms, a function which it still fulfils today.³⁷

As a response to the professionalization of photographers, royal photographic portraiture became increasingly formalized and controlled by the court. Queen Victoria and the Prince of Wales each had their favoured studio photographers to turn to for official portraits. The photographers were expected to produce images that reflected their sitters in the best possible light, both literally and metaphorically. Negatives were often 'improved' through retouching, and many would have been rejected, before prints were finally issued to the public. The control that the Prince of Wales was able to exert over his photographic image at the turn of the century and subsequently into his reign (1901–10) represents the last opportunity that a member of the royal family has had to control completely his or her photographic image in the public domain, before the widespread development of 'snapshot' photography in the twentieth century.

Notes

1. See Anne M. Lyden (2014), *A Royal Passion: Queen Victoria and Photography*, Los Angeles; Sophie Gordon (2010), *Roger Fenton – Julia Margaret Cameron: Early British Photographs from the Royal Collection*, London; Frances Dimond (2009), 'Prince Albert, the Society of Arts and the beginning of the Royal Photograph Collection', The William Shipley Group for RSA History Occasional Paper 11, London; and Frances Dimond and Roger Taylor (1987), *Crown & Camera: The Royal Family and Photography 1842–1910*, London.
2. Gordon (2014), 'Queen Victoria's Private Photographs', in: Lyden (2014), 110–13.

3. Windsor, Royal Archives (RA), VIC/Add.U/105/86: Becker to his mother, 15 March 1855. The documents in Windsor are typewritten transcriptions of the German originals, which are in the Hessisches Staatsarchiv, Darmstadt.
4. There are over 100 photographs taken by Prince Alfred Duke of Edinburgh in the Royal Collection, dating between 1860 and 1866. The prince learnt photography prior to his visit to South Africa in 1860. During the tour he took a number of photographs, as well as giving away photographic portraits of himself to local rulers (Dimond and Taylor (1987), 201). A group of portraits by Albert Edward Prince of Wales from the late 1850s have also been identified in Queen Victoria's *Photographic Portraits* albums.
5. John Mayall's photographs of members of the royal family began to be circulated in 1860. Very little work has been done on how photography was used by Albert Edward Prince of Wales and his brother Prince Alfred. See however Stiftung Schloss Friedenstein (2008), *Ein Prinz entdeckt die Welt: die Reisen und Sammlungen Herzog Alfreds von Sachsen-Coburg und Gotha (1844–1900)*, Gotha.
6. The prince had a number of portraits taken in the St Petersburg studio of Karl Bergamasco (1830–96) which survive in the Royal Collection, Inventory Numbers (RCIN) 2901540–2901547.
7. The most comprehensive account of the tour is Ian Radforth (2004), *Royal Spectacle: The 1860 Visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada and the United States*, Toronto.
8. RA, invoice PPTO/PP/QV/PP2/71/5146; Gordon (2010), 7.
9. John Plunkett (2003), *Queen Victoria First Media Monarch*, Oxford, 144–98.
10. Plunkett (2003), 157–58.
11. A version of this portrait is in the Royal Collection, RCIN 2107320.
12. Colleen Skidmore (1998), "'All that is interesting in the Canadas": William Notman's Maple Box Portfolio of Stereoscopic Views, 1860', *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32/4, 69–90.
13. For an account of photography during the 1860 tour, see Chantal-Christine Valkenborg (2012), 'Creating a Good First Impression: Nineteenth-Century Photography and the Royal Tour of the Prince of Wales, 1860', MA thesis, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario.
14. RA, Queen Victoria's Journal, VIC/MAIN/QVJ, 6 February 1862.
15. Sophie Gordon (2012), *Cairo to Constantinople: Francis Bedford's Photographs of the Middle East*, London.
16. *Photographic Journal* 13/200, 15 December 1868, 188.
17. German Gallery (1862), *Mr. Bedford's Photographic Pictures Taken during the Tour in the East*, London.
18. The exhibition was reviewed by *The Times* and the *Illustrated London News*, for example. It was described as 'perhaps the most important photographic exhibition that has hitherto been placed before the public' by the *British Journal of Photography*, 171/IX (1 August 1862), 288.
19. These photographs can be found in the Royal Collection, respectively RCINs 2700867, 2700887 and 2700947.
20. Bedford's photographs of the 1862 tour were also used in Mrs Augusta Mott (1865), *The Stones of Palestine: Notes of a Ramble through the Holy Land*, London.
21. The *Illustrated London News* reproduced as an engraving a sketch of the Prince of Wales examining Bedford's negatives (40/1143, 10 May 1862, 466).
22. For example, see RCINs 2106492–2106499.
23. There has never been an official post of 'court photographer' at any time. Photographers have always been hired when required on a case-by-case basis.

The only in-house photographers in the royal household have been inventory photographers, employed to document the Royal Collection and royal residences.

24. Plunkett (2003), 161–63.
25. A watercolour of the opening of the dam by Riou is in the Royal Collection, possibly acquired by the prince directly from the artist. See RCIN 921013.
26. Aside from the photographs taken of the prince and his companions, he also acquired a significant album of early topographical photographs by Abdullah Frères of views of Constantinople (album RCIN 2861919) and another album entitled *Eastern Journeys* (RCIN 2700775) which contained views of Egypt, Constantinople, Athens and the Crimea.
27. Royal Collection RCINs 2108741–6.
28. Prince of Wales RCINs 2107142 and 2107171; Princess of Wales RCINs 2106165 and 2106206.
29. Ruth Brimacombe (2007), 'Imperial Avatars: Art, India, and the Prince of Wales in 1875–6', PhD thesis, University of Melbourne.
30. Delia Miller (1995), *The Victorian Watercolours and Drawings in the Collection of Her Majesty The Queen*, London, 410, 805.
31. The six albums compiled for the Prince of Wales are RCINs 2701566–2702018.
32. Bourne and Shepherd (1876), *Bourne and Shepherd's Royal Photographic Album of Scenes and Personages Connected with the Progress of HRH the Prince of Wales through Bengal, the North West Provinces, the Punjab and Nepal*, Calcutta, containing 141 photographs.
33. Xavier Guégan (2015), 'Transmissible Sites: Monuments, Memorials and their Visibility on the Metropole and Periphery', in: Dominik Geppert and Frank Lorenz Müller (eds) (2015), *Sites of Imperial Memory: Commemorating Colonial Rule in the 19th and 20th centuries*, Manchester, 21–38.
34. Royal Collection RCIN 2701567. The maharaja's collection of his own photographs survive in the Jaipur City Palace museum. See Yaduendra Sahai (1996), *Maharaja Sawai Ram Singh II of Jaipur, the Photographer Prince*, Jaipur.
35. Plunkett discusses the reception of cartes-de-visite of the Prince and Princess of Wales, taken in 1863 on the occasion of their marriage. The immediacy of the photographs, combined with the informality of the poses when compared to more formal state portraits, was highly successful amongst the general public, but critics found the informal intimacy distasteful; Plunkett (2003), 177–78. This highlights the dichotomy between the familiarity and separateness that the royal family have always been expected to embody simultaneously.
36. J.E. Crawford Munro (1884), *Patents, Designs and Trade Marks Act 1883*, London, section 106, 138–39.
37. Dimond and Taylor (1987), 212.

7

The Spatial and Architectural Presence of Heirs to the Throne: The Apartments of the Habsburg Crown Princes in the Viennese Hofburg in the Long Nineteenth Century

Richard Kurdiovsky

In the summer of 1858 the competition for the Ringstraße, the biggest city-enlargement project in nineteenth-century Vienna, was just under way. Court officials were discussing plans concerning the erection of two new court-buildings flanking the Äußerer Burgplatz (literally outer Hofburg square) and facing the Ringstraße. These buildings should either house new court theatres or new apartments for the imperial family and their highest guests. Only once was a different use suggested – and abandoned immediately afterwards: to turn one of the two buildings into a ‘prince’s palace’ (Prinzenpalais). The realization of this plan would have completely changed the traditional concept of housing Habsburg’s crown princes.

According to delegates of the Lower Austrian regional government, architectural and functional reasons as well as safety concerns – especially the danger of fire – meant that no theatres could be erected in front of the Hofburg. For the area in question, they suggested either the enlargement of the palace or building the already mentioned Prinzenpalais. Museums or galleries were also considered.¹ Yet a report written for one of the subsequent meetings in September 1858 nevertheless allowed for the building of theatres. It stated that it was for the emperor alone to decide what should be built in front of his palace: museums, buildings for the different court collections, an enlargement of the palace or a separate building for the crown prince.² Eventually, in February 1859 Emperor Franz Joseph I opted for an extension project including a new building to house further imperial apartments and another building for the court library.³ The Prinzenpalais was not mentioned again.

The design of the Prinzenpalais and its functions were never discussed in detail. No drafts were ever produced. Would this Prinzenpalais just have served the heir to the throne? Or should all future sons of the emperor live in this building? Or was this proposal simply a reaction to the recent birth of Franz Joseph's son Rudolf in August 1858? None of these questions were discussed in public. But it seems worth noting that it was somebody from outside the court sphere, a delegate from the regional government, who proposed that a separate palace be built for the Habsburg princes.

The building of a Prinzenpalais would have shown remarkable analogies to contemporary monarchical palace architecture. In Brussels for instance, work on the Palais de la rue Ducale or the Hertogsstraat for Prince Willem of Orange and his wife Anna Pavlovna had started in 1815 according to designs by Charles Vander Straeten. Continued by Tileman François Suys after 1825, this palace was financed by the nation, since according to a constitutional law the future king was entitled to reside in his own palace.⁴ This building was a free standing unit, separate from the actual royal palace to the west of it. Both buildings shared the position next to the Warande, the main Brussels park, and they showed certain formal analogies in the choice of a neo-classicist style for their facades. To accentuate the subordinate status of the palace of the crown prince, his palace was built in a lateral position to the king's palace and was not decorated with columns but just with pilasters.⁵

In London, subordinate palace buildings for members of the royal family were located close to the main royal palace. Particularly around St James's Palace there developed a residential landscape especially for the sons of George III.⁶ Henry Holland's famous Carlton house, begun in 1783 for the future king George IV, was renowned for the crown prince's exquisite taste in architecture and interior decoration.⁷ George's brothers Frederick, Duke of York, and William, Duke of Clarence and later King William IV, started building their individual town residences only after their father's death: from 1825 onwards, Benjamin Dean Wyatt built Lancaster House⁸ for Frederick, while John Nash undertook remodelling works on Clarence House for William and his wife Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen.⁹ The Mall, where a significant number of palaces were erected, formed a kind of royal residential district for close family members. Marlborough House was also included, which was the home of the widowed Leopold of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha until 1830, then of the widowed Queen Adelaide and finally of Edward VII then Prince of Wales. Thus in Brussels and London the two main representatives of a monarchical system, the current monarch and his or her successor, were clearly visible 'from the outside', because both of them were represented by individual buildings in the capital.

A comparable situation could be found at the Hohenzollern court in Berlin. The Kronprinzenpalais along the boulevard Unter den Linden, an independent palace building some blocks to the west of the Schloß and originally built as a noble town residence, was used by Friedrich II until

the beginning of his reign. The next crown prince who used this palace was the future Friedrich Wilhelm III. The Kronprinzenpalais remained his home even as king – so that its name changed to Königliches Palais (royal palace). Until the end of the monarchy in 1918 a number of crown princes would live there. In 1886 the *Neue Illustrirte Zeitung* provided an illustrated description of the capital and distinguished between the Altes Schloß, the most important Hohenzollern palace in Berlin, and the palace of the crown prince (the later Friedrich III).¹⁰ The paper even assessed their symbolic value. The Altes Schloß (literally old castle) is described as ‘severe and strict’ (*ernst und streng*), but at the same time ‘dignified in its simplicity’ (*würdig in seiner Einfachheit*). The word ‘gay’ (*heiter*) is chosen as the epithet of the home of the crown prince. ‘One could say, the one symbolizes the hard past of the state, the other symbolizes the bright present and – God willing – also the future of Germany.’¹¹ The appearance of a palace was therefore closely connected with a visual representation of the political development of the monarchy – at least as it was hoped that it would develop. This also characterized the role of the ruling dynasty and of the individual destined to become the successor of the present monarch. The palaces of the dynasty and of their successors acted as *architecture parlante*, as a highly visible source that was decipherable and could be read by the people – at least by the people visiting the capital of the German Empire.

The architectural situation in Vienna

Turning to the Hofburg in Vienna, it might be useful to give a short description of the site.¹² The Hofburg is located on the border of Vienna’s inner district. Viewed from the city, its main facade faces St Michael’s square (Michaelerplatz). Having crossed the wing of the imperial chancellery (Reichskanzleitrakt), one finds oneself in the inner courtyard (Innerer Burghof), opposite three facades: firstly, the Schweizerhof, the oldest of the palace buildings and of medieval origin. Here, the main entrance to the state rooms, the so-called Schweizerter (Swiss Guards’ Gate) was located – the entrance that for instance ambassadors would take on their way to their first audience with the emperor at the Habsburg court. Secondly, the Leopoldine wing, erected in a line with the demolished ramparts from the early modern period and housing the ceremonial apartments or state rooms and the private apartments of the imperial couple. That is why this wing was also called the Regierender Trakt (governing wing). Finally there is the Amalienburg wing. Outside the Leopoldine wing, the outer Hofburg square (today called Heldenplatz, literally Heroes’ Square) is enclosed by two park areas on the narrow sides (Burggarten, literally Castle Garden, and Volksgarten, literally People’s Garden) and by the outer Hofburg gate which extends alongside the Ringstraße thoroughfare. Across this boulevard there

are the two court museums that form the outer parts of what was then called the Kaiserforum (imperial forum).¹³ Planned in 1869–71 as a large-scale extension of the Hofburg, this project was never completed, since – apart from the museum buildings – only one more building was realized. This was the Neue Burg (new castle), which today separates the Heldenplatz from the Burggarten.

The royal actors in Vienna: a short historical overview

In 1784, the widowed emperor Joseph II, who was certain not to have a son, sent for his nephew Franz. The young archduke immediately moved from Florence to Vienna to become the heir to the Habsburg throne. But when Joseph II died in 1790, the crown first passed to his brother Leopold. His son Franz succeeded to the throne two years later. In 1793, Franz's first son, the future Ferdinand I (the Benign), was born. The question of his succession to the Habsburg throne was fraught, though, as Ferdinand suffered from epilepsy. There were powerful forces at court who wanted to see a member of another line of the house of Habsburg designated as the future monarch. Ferdinand did, in the end, ascend the throne, but would remain childless. Yet again, it was a nephew who would succeed his uncle: during the turmoil of the revolution of 1848, Ferdinand abdicated in favour of his 18-year-old nephew Franz Joseph I.

At first, his line of succession appeared quite uncomplicated since, in 1858, his son Rudolf was born. After Rudolf's suicide in 1889, however, there was nearly a decade of uncertainty as to who would become the future emperor: the emperor's eldest brother, Archduke Karl Ludwig, had precedence, yet the health of Karl Ludwig's eldest son, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, appeared rather fragile, which made some observers think that his younger brother Otto would one day inherit the crown. It was not until 1898 that Franz Ferdinand was appointed the emperor's deputy in all military matters and designated heir presumptive. Franz Ferdinand's marriage to Countess Sophie Chotek was deemed morganatic, though, and this made their children ineligible for the succession. The question as to who would one day succeed Franz Ferdinand was thus open again. All of this meant that there were often real difficulties, even including how to define with a degree of certainty who would officially assume the position of crown prince. It was also unclear precisely when someone would officially be proclaimed heir to the throne and be called crown prince. As had been the case with young Franz Joseph, the person in question could remain an ordinary member of the dynasty for some time. This difficulty had a real bearing on the question of how the possible candidates should be accommodated, which thus impacted on their spatial and symbolic representation at court and in the public eye.

Localizing the crown princes' apartments in the Vienna Hofburg

Franz II/I

As has already been mentioned, the Regierender Trakt of the Hofburg complex was marked by an imperial character since it was the seat of monarchical power. The sovereign resided on this wing's *piano nobile*. Up to the reign of Joseph II the official state rooms, where ceremonies were performed in front of a court public, and the private living quarters, where access was tightly restricted, were situated next to each other. They formed a spatial unity.¹⁴ When Joseph's successor Franz arrived in Vienna in 1784, he moved into an apartment in the Schweizerhof situated on the same floor and next to the emperor's rooms; his suite of rooms was called the Kronprinzenappartement since young Joseph himself had lived there when he was the crown prince (see Figure 7.1).¹⁵ Two years before Franz's arrival, his future bride, Elisabeth of Württemberg, had come to Vienna. Her newly decorated apartment was situated on the floor above the crown prince's apartment – to avoid any appearance of indecency between the future couple. After the wedding in 1788, Franz's apartment was transferred to the upper floor since the apartment of the crown prince and his wife needed to be arranged in the same way as the apartment of the imperial couple: with a shared bedroom in the middle between the wife's suite of rooms and those of her husband forming the centre of the two apartments.



Figure 7.1 The facade of the Schweizerhof towards the Innerer Burghof © Bundesdenkmalamt, Vienna. Photograph by Bettina Neubauer-Pregl (2013)

The Regierender Trakt was always clearly visible and recognizable as the seat of imperial power; the Leopoldine wing showed off an impressive, virtually never-ending facade stretching towards the suburbs where identical axes were repeated monotonously. On the opposite side, towards the inner courtyard, one of Vienna's biggest squares, the architectural division is much more reduced. The emperor would use just a few rooms behind this facade. From the outside it could thus never be read with any accuracy where exactly these rooms were located, behind which windows the emperor actually lived or granted audiences. Only the floor was clearly indicated: the *piano nobile* with its tall windows. Even the balcony on the facade facing the suburbs did not indicate the imperial apartment, and there were no avant-corps to accentuate a centre piece of the whole facade where the rooms of the emperor could be located – not even theoretically.

How can one describe the architectural representation of the crown prince? The facade of the Schweizerhof counts among the highest ranking facades of the Hofburg since it gave access to the core of the palatial complex – its medieval nucleus. The main gate (Schweizertor) stands out against the rest of the facade due to its three-dimensional articulation and accentuation in terms of colour. But on the facade there are no columns, no entablatures, no cornices, just an enormous number of identical windows on several floors. For an onlooker it was not obvious where the *piano nobile* was located. The crown prince may well have resided anywhere behind this sequence of windows. In sharp contrast to the situation in Brussels or Berlin, the publicly visual presence of the heir to the throne disappeared behind the seemingly endless row of windows. It was clear, though, that his apartment was located within the Hofburg, the traditional, centuries-old residence of the Habsburg dynasty in their capital.¹⁶

When Franz became emperor in 1792, the situation did not change because he stayed in the apartments he had used as a married crown prince. So the visual presence towards the outside remained unaltered. But now another remarkable phenomenon occurred. Since public audiences, that every citizen regardless of rank could attend, were granted in the audience room of Franz's apartment it became common knowledge where and on which floor these rooms were located. Additionally, Franz Xaver Schweikhardt von Sickingen published a written report on the Hofburg, its history and interiors in 1832.¹⁷ This provided detailed descriptions of the different private and state rooms and indicated their precise position within the Hofburg complex. It appears that knowledge about the spatial situation inside the Hofburg existed and could be acquired, but it was not provided as visual information via the facades. From the outside the Habsburg emperor as well as the crown prince remained invisible.

Ferdinand I

Crown Prince Ferdinand was born in 1793. When he received his own household he moved into the apartment on the *piano nobile* that his father

had occupied as unmarried crown prince – the very rooms which could not be discerned from the outside with any degree of precision.¹⁸ When Ferdinand married Maria Anna Carolina Pia of Savoy in 1831, the couple moved into the Amalienburg wing where two full apartments were available for the crown prince and the crown princess. By doing so, they renewed an eighteenth-century plan since Joseph II should already have resided in this wing as king of the Holy Roman Empire. For the first time in the nineteenth century, a whole wing now served as the residence of the crown prince. Thus, theoretically at least, the residence of the heir to the throne became recognizable. When he succeeded to the throne in 1835, Ferdinand and Maria Anna moved into the governing wing, and now, also for the first time in the nineteenth century, the ceremonial apartments and the private living quarters of the imperial couple were again situated next to each other.¹⁹

Franz Joseph I

Born in 1830 as the son of Archduke Franz Karl and his Bavarian wife Sophie, Archduke Franz Joseph was Emperor Ferdinand's nephew. In 1836 he was given a separate apartment which he would share with his younger brothers.²⁰ But he did not move into the apartment on the *piano nobile* that the former crown princes had occupied. This apartment remained untenanted or was used by house guests. Neither did he move into the apartment in the Amalienburg wing, recently vacated by Emperor Ferdinand. There may have been dynastic reasoning behind this decision: it was very probable that Franz Joseph would become the next emperor, but, theoretically at least, the ruling emperor may yet have a son who would then need an appropriate lodging (on the *piano nobile* and close to the emperor's apartment). Consequently, Franz Joseph was never officially called crown prince – even his accommodation was never officially listed as that of the crown prince and his brothers. Even in 1847, one year before Franz Joseph's accession to the throne, it was just called '*Kammer Ihrer kais. [erlichen] Hoheiten der durchl. [auchtigsten] Prinzen und Herren*'²¹ (chamber of their Imperial Highnesses, the Most Serene Princes and Lords). Franz Joseph was lodged like a regular archduke, even though his future higher position was already foreseeable. His position in the line of succession to the throne could not be taken for granted, though, which made it impossible for him to reside in an official crown prince's apartment without the danger of creating a *fait accompli*. Franz Joseph and his brothers therefore shared the former apartment of the late emperor Franz II/I on the second floor of the Schweizerhof wing. This apartment was thus downgraded to the ordinary status of an apartment on the lower ranking second floor, but the young men still resided within the time-honoured Hofburg and close to their parents. There appears to be a strong symbolic capital invested in those suites of rooms or floors that were sufficiently dignified to house the future monarch – especially in relation to lower ranking members of his family. When Franz Joseph followed his uncle

to the throne in December 1848 and became emperor himself, he immediately took over the imperial apartment of his predecessor on the *piano nobile* of the Leopoldine wing.²²

Rudolf

Crown Prince Rudolf, the son of Franz Joseph I and his wife Elisabeth, spent his childhood in several different lodgings right above the apartments of his parents.²³ In 1869, when Rudolf was 11 years of age, the architects Gottfried Semper and Carl Hasenauer developed drafts for the Kaiserforum, the gigantic extension project of the Hofburg.²⁴ The official aim of these plans was to solve the problem of the allegedly permanent shortage of space within the Hofburg. In 1869, only the ground plan of the *piano nobile* was drawn with the apartments of the imperial couple overlooking the garden. This plan did not provide a suite of rooms specifically for the use of the crown prince. In 1871, the ground-floor plan was completed, yet still no rooms were set aside to house the crown prince. Plans for other floors, where his new lodgings might have been located, were never drawn. Thus, the crown prince disappeared not only behind facades, but was not even taken into consideration at the planning stage.

Two years later, after the death of the widowed empress Carolina Augusta, Rudolf could finally move into this newly vacated apartment on the second floor of the Schweizerhof wing (where the rooms of his father and his ancestor Franz II/I had also been located).²⁵ This apartment was not visible from the outside since it was screened by the monotonous facade of the Hofburg towards the Heldenplatz.

After his abdication in 1848, Ferdinand I had taken up residence in Prague where he lived in Hradčany castle until his death in 1875. Three years later, Rudolf moved to the Bohemian capital as colonel of the 36th infantry regiment garrisoned there. Now the most impressive skyline of Hradčany castle overlooking the whole city stood for the crown prince, who was the only member of the Habsburg family to reside here. He thus gained a visual presence like never before, but only in the provincial capital Prague, not in the imperial capital Vienna. It was only in 1883, two years after Rudolf's marriage to Stéphanie of Belgium, that the couple moved back to the Hofburg. There they occupied Rudolf's former apartment on the second floor of the Schweizerhof that had just recently been enlarged and newly decorated. But this apartment still remained hidden behind the Hofburg's facade.

With regard to one individual room of this apartment, the study (also called the Turkish room, as shown in Figure 7.2), a different aspect of Rudolf's visual presence seems noteworthy. In 1886, most probably as a result of the crown prince's close contact with the liberal press, an article on this very room appeared in the magazine *Über Land und Meer. Allgemeine Illustrirte Zeitung*. The piece was accompanied by a woodcut after a drawing of the



Figure 7.2 Wilhelm Gause: The Turkish room of Crown Prince Rudolf in the Schweizerhof-wing, 166.515 © Wien Museum, Vienna

room's interior by Wilhelm Gause.²⁶ This illustration is one of the extremely rare examples of an occasion where a broad public and wider spectrum of readers could catch a glimpse of the private living atmosphere and spatial working conditions of members of the imperial family. As early as 1846, during the summer sojourn, when the court moved to the palaces in the countryside and left the Hofburg deserted, visitors and tourists were shown round the state rooms.²⁷ But the general public was never allowed to enter the private living quarters of the emperor and his family.

The illustration showing the Turkish Room offered a deep insight into Habsburgs' living environment and provided a view of Crown Prince Rudolf as an individual – because unlike the official state rooms, this room was Rudolf's 'true home' (*das wirkliche Heim*) which did not only shed light on his real personality, but also represented the 'activity of his pure human individuality' (*das Walten seiner rein menschlichen Individualität*) as a private citizen.²⁸ His personal taste and his interest in foreign cultures became apparent because the room was equipped with souvenirs from Rudolf's travels abroad and full of exotic objects.²⁹ Seen from this perspective, the article takes on quite a remarkable character. It was not architecture, though, that helped to communicate this insight into the life of a member of the imperial family but a printed publication. From an architectural point of

view, Rudolf remained as invisible as any other crown prince before him. The readers of the *Allgemeine Illustrirte Zeitung* were even misled topographically: it was mentioned that Rudolf's study was located right above the Schweizertor, when his apartment was actually situated diagonally opposite on another floor and in another wing.

The situation at the Hohenzollern court in Berlin was very different. Even if the following relates to the governing monarchs and not to the crown princes, it becomes apparent how differently the contact between the ruling dynasty and their subject could be staged. It also suggests that the explicit distance between the monarch and his subjects was of major importance for the Habsburg dynasty. In Berlin, the famous Eckfenster (corner window) of Wilhelm I's palace on the boulevard Unter den Linden turned into a symbol of the monarch and his relationship with his subjects. Through this window, situated nearly on ground-floor level, the emperor could be watched working at his desk (either virtually in illustrations and descriptions or in reality) while on the other hand this window could be activated as a mechanism of interaction between the monarch inside and the public outside (for instance the subjects acclaiming their monarch when he stepped up to the window to watch the changing of the guard).³⁰

There was a comparable occasion in Vienna: the changing of the guard in the Innerer Burghof about noon, one of the main attractions taking place in the Hofburg that was visible in public. Emperor Franz Joseph would usually watch the performance from a window of his apartment. But since it was located on the *piano nobile* high above street level with the crowd below and the emperor above, communication could never develop reciprocally, as in Berlin, but only unilaterally. This preserved an aura of aloofness around the Habsburg monarch. Illustrations of imperial interiors were published both in Vienna and Berlin, but in Berlin, the very existence of the corner window made it possible to verify the validity of these illustrations. In Vienna, readers were deliberately kept uninformed.

Returning to the issue of locating Crown Prince Rudolf's study right above the Schweizertor: if this portal were regarded as a synonym or a *pars pro toto* of the whole Hofburg, the explanation given in the article would be correct. But in reality, the public's desire to determine visually where the crown prince actually resided was only partially satisfied as the exact location of his domicile remained hidden. A related case occurred in 1881, when a new set of plans was drawn for the Neue Burg wing that was to house new apartments for the imperial family. Since plans for all floors were prepared it definitely became clear that no apartment would be provided for the crown prince. Does this circumstance reflect the tensions between the emperor and his son whom his father doggedly kept away from any involvement in governmental business? Or should all future heirs to the throne reside in the ancient part of the Hofburg, so that all of its historicity would help legitimize their status? These historical parts of the Hofburg would have been

completely hidden, though, after the completion of the enormous extension wings of the Kaiserforum. The Habsburg heirs to the throne would have completely disappeared from public sight if they remained in the same apartment. There is no indication at all of what the apartments of the crown prince might have looked like after the completion of the Kaiserforum. Neither plans nor descriptions have survived – if they ever existed in the first place.

Franz Ferdinand

After Crown Prince Rudolf's suicide in 1889 Archduke Franz Ferdinand became heir presumptive to the throne. With him the traditional Habsburg system of housing successors in an apartment within the Hofburg changed completely. Built in the first quarter of the eighteenth century as a summer garden palace for the famous general Prince Eugene of Savoy, the Belvedere Palace (consisting of a palace at the bottom and another one on top of the hill) was bought by the Habsburg dynasty in 1752. The upper palace was used as a picture gallery from 1776 onwards and the lower palace served as a sometime summer residence for members of the family. After the new art museum, today's Kunsthistorisches Museum, had opened in 1891, the Upper Belvedere stood empty for some years. Renovation works were carried out there as early as the mid-1890s, probably with the intention of turning it into an official residence.³¹ In 1896, however, the emperor ordered that the palace be adapted for residential use and in 1897–98 plans were prepared to turn the building into a residence for the future crown prince (see Figure 7.3). The work was completed in spring of 1899.

When Franz Ferdinand moved into the Upper Belvedere the heir to the Habsburg throne was no longer housed within the Hofburg, but for the first time in a remote, autonomous building. Moreover, this palace was strongly associated with a person who counted among the iconic figures of the baroque Habsburg court: Prince Eugene of Savoy, one of the most successful military commanders of the Habsburg monarchy, the man who defeated the Ottoman Turks and fought alongside the Duke of Marlborough in the War of Spanish Succession. Also, the Upper Belvedere had a distinctive silhouette and visually dominated the city of Vienna because of its outstanding urban setting on one of the highest hills of Vienna's suburbs. Aside from its visual presence in the city, its gardens were open to the public as recreation grounds. And this use did not cease when Franz Ferdinand moved in. This heir to the throne had a symbolic and visual presence within the capital that no crown prince had ever had before him. He could be identified with one single building (that stood out against its environment due to its elevated position) and was not subsumed in the Hofburg.

It is tempting to suppose that the outstanding character of the Belvedere might reflect Franz Ferdinand's oppositional attitude to the government of his uncle Franz Joseph.³² After all, 'the Belvedere' became synonymous with



Figure 7.3 Panorama from the Albertina palace towards the suburb Wieden with the Church of St Charles to the right and the Upper Belvedere in the middle background, photograph by Franz Antoine the Younger, 1860, Foto GLV2000/6471 © Albertina, Vienna – on permanent loan from Höhere Graphische Bundes-Lehr- und Versuchsanstalt, Vienna

a form of peripheral counter-government consisting of Franz Ferdinand's followers around the nucleus of his military chancellery.³³ That his residence was set apart from the Hofburg and contained all important offices of the archduke might well have been influential for the development of his political ideas. The importance of the building's political-symbolic expressiveness should not be exaggerated, though: when Franz Ferdinand moved into the Belvedere, it was only at the beginning of his career as the future ruler.

Nor was it the first time that a building owned and inhabited by a member of the imperial family was situated outside the perimeter of the Hofburg, but at a certain distance. Especially after the construction of the Ringstraße a number of palaces were built for Habsburg family members on this prominent street, probably in order to raise the aristocracy's interest in buying up building plots there.³⁴ It was not just more remote family members, like Archduke Wilhelm, who built their palaces along this new boulevard

(Parkring 8, built 1863–68), but even the emperor's youngest brother, Ludwig Victor, chose a prominent site for his palace on the Ringstraße (Schwarzenbergplatz 1, built 1863–69). Around 1864 Archduke Karl Ludwig, Franz Ferdinand's father, seems to have bought a palace in the district of Wieden (Favoritenstraße 7), an area where soon afterwards the number of aristocratic building sites began to increase significantly. If even the emperor's closest relatives had their homes at a distance from the imperial palace itself, then we should not be surprised that their sons would do likewise: Archduke Otto occupied a palace in the Augarten (2nd district), while his elder brother Franz Ferdinand owned the Modena Palace in Beatrixgasse (3rd district) which he used during his early stays in Vienna. In fact, there appears to have existed a certain convention that brothers and nephews of the emperor, especially within the Karl Ludwig branch of the dynasty, chose houses in different city-quarters as their homes so that members of the Habsburg family would reside in nearly every elegant district of the capital.

The precise reason why the Belvedere site was chosen for Franz Ferdinand remains uncertain. There might have been logistical problems with providing the archduke with adequate living quarters inside the Hofburg. The hierarchical rank of the Leopoldine wing would definitely have been too high for a crown prince. The *piano nobile* floors of the remaining wings were already occupied by other members of the family, namely the imperial couple.³⁵ The former apartment of crown prince Rudolf was still occupied by his widow, and several other floors or wings would probably not have met the courtly demands of a crown prince. The Belvedere simply was available.

Furthermore, there was the delicate issue of the social status of Franz Ferdinand's wife, Sophie Countess of Chotek, whom he married in 1900. The Viennese court was reputed to be the most exclusive and elitist in Europe, allowing only members of the *hoffähige* (presentable) nobility to appear at court.³⁶ But Franz Ferdinand's marriage wasmorganatic and his wife Sophie was of lower aristocratic rank than other female members of the Habsburg family. This caused problems because, for instance, it affected the privilege of the highest ranking female member of the family to accompany the ruling emperor at the opening of court balls. Occupying an apartment located at the very centre of court life under these circumstances of social inequality would inevitably have caused tremendous problems. This would have been even more the case since the court ceremonial was supervised by the Lord Chamberlain Alfred Prince Montenuovo, Franz Ferdinand's personal *bête noire*. In the Upper Belvedere, the couple's life would not be directly subjected to the strict Habsburg protocol and would most probably have been much easier for the married couple and their households.³⁷

It was also telling that the plans for the apartments in the Neue Burg, which Franz Ferdinand (and his family) were to inhabit after his accession, underwent constant changes between 1909 and 1914. Would the imperial

apartments be located on the *piano nobile* or just on the mezzanine floor below? Would there be apartments for the use of the future imperial family at all or just exhibition rooms for Franz Ferdinand's collections?³⁸ Since the archduke was responsible for the construction of the Neue Burg from 1906 onwards, it looks as if he and his wife tended to choose the historic parts of the Hofburg as their future home and not a newly erected building – thus legitimizing their own position by adopting historical traditions.³⁹

Locating crown princes

Where the apartment of a Habsburg crown prince was situated turned out to be, above all, a logistical problem. As in a hotel, practical questions were crucial. Which space was available for whom, when and on what floor? What were the facilities of an apartment? Certain floors, especially the *piano nobile*, and certain wings and apartments were particularly suitable for a future monarch and came charged with a specific symbolic capital – especially in relation to the location of the housing of lower-ranking members of the dynasty. Architectural visibility, by which is meant the visual presence seen from the outside, was only a secondary consideration. In fact, the dynasty's self-conception seems to have been orientated towards historical references offering political legitimacy. The public was pointed to this historical legacy.

The accommodation of a crown prince always depended on the availability of suitable candidates and on precedence. In staff lists of Archduke Rudolf's lodgings he is regularly referred to as '*des Kaiserthums Oesterreich Kronprinz[en] und Thronfolger[s]*' (the Austrian empire's crown prince and heir to the throne).⁴⁰ By contrast and significantly enough, those of Franz Ferdinand was listed just as '*kaiserl. Prinz[en] und Erzherzog[s]*' (imperial prince and archduke).⁴¹

The apartment of a crown prince was almost inevitably situated within the Hofburg – with the remarkable exception of Franz Ferdinand. His extraordinary lodgement in the Belvedere palace might have been chosen in line with a tradition of his branch of the family, which meant that it was common practice to live individually in palaces apart from the Hofburg. It may also have been a reflection of the complicated position arising from his morganatic marriage. The situation in Vienna concerning the accommodation of the crown prince stood in marked contrast to other courts. In London, as well as in Berlin, even a quick glance at the central royal building made it possible to locate the two main monarchical personages by discerning both the residence of the current monarch and that of his or her successor, clearly differentiated by separate architectural structures. One should be cautious, though, to infer that with Franz Ferdinand's accommodation, the Habsburg court had converted to a specifically Western European model.

In Vienna, the Hofburg was not, on the whole, just the simultaneous home to the emperor and his successor, but represented the ruling house of Habsburg with all its political and social dignity and all its history. In relation to the emperor as patriarch, every member of the imperial family was subordinate, and this highly symbolic palace that represented above all the status of the dynasty expressed this hierarchical relationship. As individuals, the heirs to the throne disappeared behind the Hofburg's facades – as did all other members of the dynasty during court festivities taking place in the Hofburg. A separate palace building for the imperial heir would have been an absolutely novel, probably even unimaginable, innovation in mid-nineteenth-century Vienna. For the visual impression of the general public, the Hofburg's history over several centuries and its time-honoured status (as reflected in the cautious preservation of old plaster decorations on certain facades) were more important than spectacular new building campaigns or an ostentatious alluding to individuals like the crown prince.⁴² Hence the enlargement project of the Neue Burg never performed the tasks assigned to it and never became the new seat of power. The ancient parts of the Hofburg remained the centre of the imperial state until the dissolution of the monarchy in 1918. Regarding the visibility of the Habsburg's heirs to the throne by means of architecture, their position and that of their apartments were not only subordinate to the emperor, but also to the dynasty. This recalls the statement of the politician and journalist Leopold Baron Chlumecky that in the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, unlike anywhere else, it was the dynasty that supported the state – and not the other way round.⁴³ And this dynasty was symbolically expressed in its main residence – the historical Hofburg.

Notes

In 2005, the Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW) started a six-year research project, financially supported by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), on one of Vienna's most prominent buildings, the Hofburg, once the main residence of the Habsburg dynasty as emperors of the Holy Roman Empire and of Austria. The main focus of attention was placed on the history of the planning process and on the actual construction activities in this huge palatial complex. Furthermore, questions concerning functionality and use as well as meaning and recognition from the Hofburg's origins in the thirteenth century until the present were considered. Two of a series of five volumes have already been published: Herbert Karner (ed.) (2014), *Die Wiener Hofburg 1521–1705. Baugeschichte, Funktion und Etablierung als Kaiserresidenz*, Vienna; Werner Telesko (ed.) (2012), *Die Wiener Hofburg 1835–1918. Der Ausbau der Residenz vom Vormärz bis zum Ende des 'Kaiserforums'*, Vienna.

1. Österreichisches Staatsarchiv (ÖStA), Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (HHStA), Obersthofmeisteramt (OMeA), rub. (Rubrik, that is column) 89/17, without no. ex 1858: II: 'Auszug aus dem Referate des Statthaltereirates v. Zigrovič über die Vorbesprechung'.

2. ÖStA, HHStA, OMeA, rub. 89/17, without no. ex 1858: III: 'Für die Commission am 9. Sept. 1858'.
3. ÖStA, HHStA, OMeA, rub. 89/3, 867 ex 1859: 'alleruntertänigster Vortrag' by Obersthofmeister Karl Prince Liechtenstein dated 10 February 1859 with the emperor's approval dated 13 February 1859.
4. Martine Vermeire (1991), 'De koning en zijn meubelen', in: Arlette Smolar-Meynart, André Vanrie, Micheline Soenen (eds), *Het paleis van Brussel. Acht eeuwen kunst en geschiedenis*, Brussels, 303–44, 315.
5. Following nearly 25 years of military use, renovation works were carried out from 1853 onwards to turn the palace into the official seat of the then crown prince Leopold who later became Leopold II. But soon afterwards, this project was abandoned. From 1858 onwards, a new wing for the crown prince was added at the west of the royal palace by Alphons Balat (Liane Ranieri (1991), 'Het gebouw en zijn omgeving', in: Smolar-Meynart (ed.) (1991), 269–302, 275–77). And following designs by Gustave De Man that were commissioned by the government, the old Palais de la rue Ducale was altered to house exhibitions by the Académie des Beaux-Arts, a modern museum and the seat of the Académie royale de Belgique (Albert Duchesne (1977), 'Quelques projets du Duc de Brabant, futur Léopold II, au sujet de la transformation de Bruxelles et en particulier des residences royales (1853–1865)', *Revue Belge d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'Art* 45/2, 33–50, 36–39).
6. Neville Williams (1960), *The Royal Residences of Great Britain: A Social History*, London, 134; David Souden, Lucy Worsley and Brett Dolman (2008), *The Royal Palaces of London*, London, 139.
7. John Summerson (1993), *Architecture in Britain 1530 to 1830*, ninth edn, New Haven, CT, 422; more recently: *Carlton House: The Past Glories of George IV's Palace*, exhibition catalogue, The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace, 1991–92, London, 1991.
8. Earlier called York or Stafford House (James Yorke (2001), *Lancaster House: London's Greatest Town House*, London).
9. Howard Montague Colvin (ed.) (1973), *The History of the King's Works*, vol. 6 by Joseph Mordant Crook and Michael Harry Port: 1782–1851, London, 323–25.
10. 'Bilder aus Berlin', *Neue Illustrirte Zeitung* 14 (1886), 667.
11. 'Bilder aus Berlin', *Neue Illustrirte Zeitung* 14 (1886), 667.
12. On the Vienna Hofburg: Moriz Dreger (1914), *Baugeschichte der k. k. Hofburg in Wien bis zum XIX. Jahrhunderte*, Vienna; Alphons Lhotsky (1941), *Die Baugeschichte der Museen und der Neuen Burg*, Vienna; Telesko (2012).
13. On Gottfried Semper (including the Kaiserforum) see Harry Francis Mallgrave (1996), *Gottfried Semper: Architect of the Nineteenth Century*, New Haven, CT.
14. Herbert Karner (2014), 'The Quarters of the Emperor and Empress in the Vienna Hofburg in the Seventeenth Century', in: Monique Chatenet and Krista De Jonge (eds), *Le prince, la princesse et leurs logis. Manières d'habiter dans l'élite aristocratique européenne (1400–1700). Actes des septièmes rencontres d'architecture européenne Paris 27–30 juin 2011*, Paris, 301–10; Anna Mader-Kratky (2014), 'Zwei Herrscher unter einem Dach. Herausforderungen an Raum und Zeremoniell in der Wiener Hofburg in mariatheresianischer Zeit', in: Georg Satzinger and Marc Jumpers (eds), *Zeremoniell und Raum im Schlossbau des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts. Akten des Studententages vom 29. Juni 2012 am Kunsthistorischen Institut der Universität Bonn*, Münster, Göttingen, 79–90.
15. I am grateful to my colleague Anna Mader-Kratky for providing this newly discovered information on the location of archducal apartments in the Vienna

- Hofburg during the eighteenth century. The results will be published in detail in a volume on the eighteenth-century Hofburg edited by Hellmut Lorenz and Anna Mader-Kratky.
16. On the value of tradition for monarchical residences see Matthias Müller (2005), 'Warum die Könige von ihren Architekten beim Schloßbau soviel Rücksicht auf die Geschichte forderten', in: Bernhard Jussen (ed.), *Die Macht des Königs. Herrschaft in Europa vom Frühmittelalter bis in die Neuzeit*, Munich, 326–49.
 17. Franz Xaver Ritter von Sickingen (1832), *Darstellung der k. k. Haupt- und Residenzstadt Wien. 3. Abtheilung: Beschreibung der Merkwürdigkeiten der innern Stadt und der 34 Vorstädte*, Vienna, 9–13.
 18. Sickingen (1832), 17.
 19. Eva B. Ottillinger (1997a), 'Das Appartement Kaiser Ferdinands I. – vom Zeremonial- zum Fremdenappartement (1835–1900)', in: Eva B. Ottillinger and Lieselotte Hanzl, *Kaiserliche Interieurs. Die Wohnkultur des Wiener Hofes im 19. Jahrhundert und die Wiener Kunstgewerbereform*, Vienna, Cologne, Weimar; Bernadette Reinhold (2010), "'...wobey ich von dem Grundsatz ausgehe, den gegenwärtigen Styl beizubehalten...". Zur Wohnkultur und imperialen Repräsentation in der Wiener Hofburg unter Kaiser Ferdinand I. (1835–1848)', in: Werner Telesko, Richard Kurdiovsky and Andreas Nierhaus (eds), *Die Wiener Hofburg und der Residenzbau in Mitteleuropa im 19. Jahrhundert. Monarchische Repräsentation zwischen Ideal und Wirklichkeit*, Vienna, Cologne, Weimar, 37–61.
 20. Eva B. Ottillinger (1997b), 'Das Kronprinzen-Appartement Franz Josephs', in: Ottillinger and Hanzl, 125–28.
 21. *Hof- und Staats-Handbuch des österreichischen Kaiserthumes*, Vienna 1847, 166.
 22. After his wedding to the Bavarian princess Elisabeth in 1854, the imperial couple continued to reside here until 1857–58 when they finally moved to the Amalienburg and the Reichskanzleitrakt where their apartments are still shown as a tourist attraction (Richard Kurdiovsky and Dagmar Sachsenhofer (2012), 'Die Wohnsituation der allerhöchsten kaiserlichen Familie zwischen 1848 und 1857', in: Telesko (2012), 116–32).
 23. Telesko (2012), 131.
 24. For what follows, see Richard Kurdiovsky (2010), 'Der lange Weg zum Kaiserforum. Gottfried Sempers und Carl Hasenauers Idealplanungen zum Ausbau der Wiener Hofburg von 1867 bis 1871', in: Telesko, Kurdiovsky and Nierhaus (2010), 87–113.
 25. Ottillinger (1997b), 130–34.
 26. Balduin Groller (1886), 'Das Arbeitszimmer des Kronprinzen Rudolf von Oesterreich', *Ueber Land und Meer. Allgemeine Illustrierte Zeitung* 55/1, 7–8.
 27. Realis (i.e. Gerhard Dützele von Coeckelberghe) (1846), *Die kaiserliche Hofburg in Wien. Ein Wegweiser für Fremde und Einheimische*, Vienna, 85.
 28. Groller (1886), 7.
 29. Eva B. Ottillinger (2003), 'Kronprinz Rudolfs "Türkisches Zimmer" und die Orientmode in Wien', in: Erika Mayer-Oehing and Elke Doppler (eds), *Orientalische Reise, Malerei und Exotik im späten 19. Jahrhundert*, exhibition catalogue Hermesvilla Vienna, Vienna, 94–109.
 30. Alexa Geisthövel (2005), 'Wilhelm I. am "historischen Eckfenster": Zur Sichtbarkeit des Monarchen in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts', in: Jan Andres, Alexa Geisthövel and Matthias Schwengelbeck (eds), *Die Sinnlichkeit der Macht. Herrschaft und Repräsentation seit der Frühen Neuzeit*, Frankfurt/M., New York, 163–85.

31. Also for what follows see Gertrude Aurenhammer (1969), 'Geschichte des Belvederes seit dem Tode des Prinzen Eugen', *Mitteilungen der Österreichischen Galerie* 13/57, 41–183, 90–116.
32. Robert A. Kann (1976), *Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand Studien*, Vienna; Jean-Paul Bled (2013), *Franz Ferdinand. Der eigensinnige Thronfolger*, Vienna, Cologne, Weimar.
33. Compare the opening illustration of Leopold Freiherr Chlumecky (1913), 'Unser Thronfolger', in: Österreichische Rundschau (ed.), *Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand unser Thronfolger. Zum 50. Geburtstag*, Vienna, Berlin, 5–8, 5.
34. Andreas Nierhaus (2009), 'Wiener Paläste und die Repräsentation urbaner Eliten im Historismus', *Documenta Pragensia* 28, 713–36, 717–18 and 722–24.
35. Even though the rooms of the assassinated empress Elisabeth stood empty after 1898, Habsburg protocol would not allow their use for Franz Ferdinand because these rooms formed an integral part of the imperial apartment that was still inhabited by Franz Joseph.
36. Victor von Fritsche (1914), *Bilder aus dem österreichischen Hof- und Gesellschaftsleben*, Vienna, 251.
37. This may well have been the reason why the couple deliberately preferred to stay in their castles in the countryside, first and foremost Konopiště in Bohemia or Blühnbach in Salzburg, where there was no court ceremonial to be followed.
38. Andreas Nierhaus (2012), 'Die Appartements der Neuen Burg', in: Telesko, *Die Wiener Hofburg*, 341–46.
39. Compare the passages on the future status of Sophie as 'Kaisers- und Königs-Gemahlin' (emperor's and king's consort) in Franz Ferdinand's government programme (Annex for p. 76, in: Theodor von Sosnosky (1929), *Franz Ferdinand. Der Erzherzog-Thronfolger. Ein Lebensbild*, Munich, Berlin, 78–105, 80.
40. *Hof- und Staats-Handbuch des Kaiserthumes Österreich für das Jahr 1868*, Vienna 1868, 29.
41. *Hof- und Staats-Handbuch der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie für 1899*, Vienna 1899, 37; *Hof- und Staats-Handbuch der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie für 1900*, Vienna 1900, 37.
42. Richard Kurdiovsky (2012), 'Der "Alterswert" der Hofburg – die Renovierung der Schweizerhof-Fassade (1856)', in: Telesko (2012), 97–99.
43. '... es trägt nicht, wie anderwärts der Staat die Dynastie – hier trägt die Dynastie den Staat' (Chlumecky (1913), 5).

Part III

Overcoming Succession Crises

8

Domesticating a German Heir to the Danish Throne

Jes Fabricius Møller

'May the good Lord give the king a Danish heart – if it is possible.'¹ These words were spoken from the pulpit by the parish priest Vilhelm Birkedal in a small church on the island of Funen on Sunday 4 September 1864. Priests were meant to say a traditional prayer for the monarch, Christian IX, who had ascended the throne the year before, and for the royal house, but Birkedal's intentions were obviously quite different. He was questioning the legitimacy of the new king. The whole of Funen was then crowded with soldiers and officers. They had been evacuated from the Jutland peninsula and the island of Als, where, two months earlier, the Danish army had suffered a crushing defeat against the Prussians, which had brought the Second Schleswig War to a close. An officer reported Birkedal's breach of protocol and the priest was reprimanded. His comments, however, indicated an underlying sentiment present among the Danish population at the time. The new king was a stranger to his people and – to make matters worse – a German. Like Birkedal many saw in him a representative of the enemy. Over time, however, the relationship between the monarch and his people would evolve into something more settled and stable and, one might say, mutually appreciative: a process of domestication, involving the reshaping of the public image and the political functions of the royal family in general and of Christian IX in particular.

When Prince Christian of Glücksburg was elected heir to the Danish throne in 1853, he appeared to be the best solution for the so-called Schleswig-Holstein or Schleswig problem. The last of the Oldenburg kings of Denmark, Frederik VII (1808–63), was without a legal heir, and a new king had to be found among the descendants of Frederik I, who had died in 1533. First in line were members of the Oldenburg cadet branch, Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp, the head of which was the tsar, since a century earlier a Gottorp prince, Peter III, had succeeded to the Russian throne. Of course, none of the other Great Powers would accept a personal union between Russia and Denmark, since it would give Russia full control of the entrance to the Baltic. Tsar Nicolas I thus renounced his succession rights, but he certainly

did not give up his right to be heard in this question. In order to secure the stability of the Concert of Europe the Great Powers wanted to maintain the integrity of the Danish monarchy – that is of the Oldenburg composite state comprising the duchies of Lauenburg, Schleswig and Holstein as well as Denmark proper – all tied together into a personal or dynastic union by their common monarch. Among a handful of other dynastically acceptable candidates Prince Christian, the younger son of the head of another Oldenburg cadet branch, Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg,² was de facto appointed by the tsar. At a conference in London in 1852 Prince Christian was accepted by the other Great Powers and Sweden-Norway and he was then officially elected heir to the Danish throne by act of parliament (*Rigsdagen*) in 1853.

When Frederik VII died in November 1863, however, the national liberal Danish government had taken a course that jeopardized the coherence of the monarchy. Seeking indirectly to incorporate Schleswig into Denmark proper the government weakened the link between Schleswig and Holstein. This breach of the settlement reached by the Great Powers in 1852 after the first Schleswig War was hollowing out the mandate of the new king, Christian IX. His efforts to halt the government's nationalist policies which threatened to dissolve his realm were unsuccessful, though. The result was the war of 1864 against Prussia and Austria and the loss of the duchies.³ Almost overnight, the king's job description had changed radically. Christian was now the monarch of a Danish nation state and no longer the dynastic head of a conglomerate union. To make a success of their changed circumstances, King Christian and Queen Louise had to reinvent themselves almost entirely. While war and loss of territory made the case of Christian IX and his consort exceptional, their situation was broadly mirrored in the development of European – and some non-European – monarchies in the nineteenth century who also came to experience what may be termed the pressure towards *domestication*.

'The domestication of majesty' is a phrase coined by Simon Schama. He observed that in the course of a process which took place between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries, royal portraiture in Europe became less regal, less dynastic and more intimate, accessible and mundane. The image of a reigning dynasty was transformed 'from a clan of deities to a domestic parlor group'. Schama's observation was a response to David Cannadine, who pointed to the increasing ritualization of the monarchy in the same period. Schama concluded that monarchs had begun to realize that their survival and longevity depended on living up to two different – and even seemingly opposing – standards:

In so far as the survival of monarchy into the twentieth century has depended on its success at embodying a patriotic mystique, it came to be important that the institution should be seen to be the family of

families, at once dynastic and domestic, remote and accessible, magical and mundane.⁴

This process was aligned with the decline of the idea of aristocracy and the rise of the bourgeoisie as such. In the nineteenth century the notion that status or privilege could be legitimately acquired by birth suffered a severe decline. This was one of the main reasons why traditional forms of monarchical legitimacy were undermined. Monarchs and royalty – as well as the aristocracy – had to shift strategies and imitate meritocratic modes of behaviour. High nobility and royalty needed to become educated. Until the eighteenth century the king's more or less symbolic role as supreme commander of the armed forces was portrayed using symbols taken from Roman emperors. This Caesarist image was abandoned in the nineteenth century, when the kings and princes of Europe not only dressed as officers but actively pursued military careers.⁵ Some of them even led men into battle, like Prince Umberto (later Umberto I) in the Battle of Villafranca in 1866. Of course, royalty still had to act in a 'dynastic' and 'regal' manner. This was especially the case where dynasties had bourgeois origins – such as the Bernadottes of Sweden – but they, like so many other members of royal families, also conformed to bourgeois patterns of comportment, for example by joining the freemasons, a thoroughly meritocratic and non-aristocratic institution.⁶

An important aspect of the domestication of monarchy was that the monarch ceased to define the state. The fact that most European states adopted written constitutions in the first half of the nineteenth century changed their centres of gravity. A constitution can be more or less monarchical and it can be based on the principle of popular sovereignty or be granted as a royal charter, but it always imposes limitations, conditions and definitions. Typically a constitution would prescribe rules of succession, limit the monarch's access to other thrones, regulate the recruitment of a new monarch to a vacant throne and determine the *modus operandi* in the case of a monarch being incapacitated.⁷ The dynastic and patrimonial basis of the state slowly eroded: the monarch no longer defined the realm. Rather, he was defined by the constitution, or as Immanuel Kant predicted towards the end of the eighteenth century, 'the state acquires a monarch, not the other way around'.⁸

In the course of this process the nation emerged as the greatest ally of monarchs. During the Long Nineteenth Century monarchs ceased to be primarily members of a dynasty and instead became representatives of their state and members of a nation.⁹ This was most famously illustrated by the invention of the title 'House of Windsor' during the First World War, when the British King George V, a descendant of the German dynasties Hanover, Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, Hessen-Kassel and Glücksburg, simply converted this not very popular pedigree by giving it a name that spelled 'Britain' rather than 'Germany', 'domestic' rather than 'foreign'.¹⁰

In order to build an alliance with their subjects and fellow-nationals, crowned heads needed to strengthen ties of affection. Monarchs have always sought the love and devotion of their subjects, but as subjects turned into citizens and citizens into the people, royal houses found themselves under increasing pressure to become popular. This quality was, by definition, not determined by popular vote, but by affection. Bagehot observed in 1867 that in monarchies the relation between the head of state and the people was emotional, not rational as in republics.¹¹ The mass media played an important role in bringing this about. As Peter Burke has shown, the representation of Louis XIV in the shape of images on coins and equestrian statues in public spaces can be interpreted as an early form of mass media.¹² Even today a parade might have hundreds of thousands of spectators, and a statue an even bigger audience over time, but the mass media formats that emerged in the nineteenth century, such as magazines and newspapers, were much better at facilitating the idea of a personal, albeit imagined or asymmetrical, emotional relationship between the family of families and the individual citizen.¹³

The Schleswig question

Taking its cue from the revolutions in other European cities the Danish national liberal movement took to the streets of Copenhagen in March 1848 and coerced King Frederik VII to form a new government and to give a liberal constitution (*fri Forfatning*). There was no outbreak of violence in the Danish capital, but the political turmoil triggered an armed conflict with the Schleswig-Holstein independence movement, the so-called First Schleswig War (1848–50).

The Danish constitution, signed by the king on 5 June 1849, was relatively democratic for its time since the right to vote was independent of personal income and landownership. It was a so-called male-head-of-household suffrage. As was the norm in nineteenth-century Europe, women, servants and paupers were disenfranchised, but the absence of privileged suffrage gave peasants and small-holders influence on legislation – an opportunity that they only gradually managed to capitalize on. The official form of government was taken from the Norwegian constitution of 1814, the *monarchia limitata*, or *indskrænket monarki*, which, in theory, granted the king wide-ranging authority.¹⁴ Frederik VII, who reigned from 1848 to 1863, generally kept a low political profile, though. During the debate on the rules of succession, one of the key members of the Constitutional Assembly, A. F. Tscherning, came close to quoting Kant when he declared that the state was no longer the property of the monarch. It was the other way around: ‘the Monarch is now being appointed by the state’.¹⁵ This was to be the case very soon, since no feasible heir to Frederik VII had yet been designated at that time. However, this applied only to a part of Denmark. Geographically

the constitution covered what was called 'The Danish Realm' (*Danmarks Riges Grundlov*), which was generally thought to be a combination of Denmark proper and Schleswig. The definition was ambiguous, though. The Schleswig-Holstein movement had successfully formed a separate state with its own constitution in August 1848, but was defeated by the Danish army in 1850; the independent and short-lived Schleswig-Holstein state was dismantled and the conglomerate or composite state (*Gesamtstaat* or *Helstater*) was re-established.

The Schleswig-Holstein question had not been settled, though. There were various elements to address. The first was the constitutional question. During the 1850s several attempts were made to establish a common constitution for the whole state, but they failed, which meant that only Denmark proper was constitutionalized while absolutism was still obtained in the duchies. The second was the national question. The Schleswig-Holstein movement claimed that Schleswig was German, and they wanted to draw the border between a Danish nation state and the Schleswig-Holstein nation state at the Gudenå River, the border between Schleswig and Denmark proper. The Danish National Liberal Party, on the other hand, regarded Schleswig as Danish and wanted the border at the Ejder River between Schleswig and Holstein. '*Danmark til Ejderen!*' ('Denmark to the Ejder River') was their slogan.

But the core of the Schleswig-Holstein question was neither constitutional nor national: it was dynastic. By the 1840s it was obvious that Frederik VII, with two failed marriages behind him, would not have any natural heirs. Denmark faced a problem very similar to the succession crisis of 1837 when the personal union between Hanover and Britain was dissolved. In German countries like Holstein and Hanover the purely agnatic Salic law of succession applied, but in Britain and Denmark the rules were agnatic/cognatic and allowed for the succession in the female line. As mentioned above, for diplomatic reasons the first in line of succession, the head of the Gottorp cadet branch, was not an eligible candidate for the Danish throne.

In 1848 members of the Augustenburg cadet branch of the Oldenburg dynasty excluded themselves from the succession by siding with the Schleswig-Holstein movement and claiming the Schleswig-Holstein throne. The elder brothers of Prince Christian of Glücksburg had also supported the insurgents as they were called in Copenhagen. Christian himself served on the Danish side. He had been a favourite of King Frederik VI (1768–1839) and was married to the niece of King Christian VIII (1786–1848). All this meant that, when he was elected heir to the Danish crown in 1852–53, Christian of Glücksburg was the only candidate upon whom everybody could eventually agree. The decision was based on an explicit understanding by the European pentarchy that 'the integrity of the Danish monarchy' had to be maintained in order to uphold 'the European equilibrium' and peace in general.¹⁶

Initial challenges

As heir to the throne, Prince Christian had kept out of politics but it was clear that his sympathies were not with the national liberals who wanted to integrate Schleswig into Denmark proper and were prepared to jettison Holstein. He sided with conservative forces insisting on maintaining the status quo of the *Gesamtstaat*. His lack of influence amongst the politicians as well as the scant support he enjoyed from the general public rendered him almost powerless, though. The press criticized him openly. Describing him as very remote and an unsuitable candidate for the throne, a newspaper article in 1856 blamed the prince – who, according to the newspaper, ‘was not the first among the spiritually and intellectually gifted’ – for his lack of gratitude and loyalty towards the freedom of the nation. Instead, it was pointed out, the prince felt more gratitude towards the tsar than towards the constitution.¹⁷

Christian IX’s objections to the national liberal policies of his government continued until Denmark’s defeat in 1864 when the duchies were lost and eventually ceded to Prussia. The new king fought to the best of his abilities to uphold the *Helstat*. He even secretly offered for all of Denmark to join the German Confederation. The Austrians were receptive to the suggestion, but Bismarck refused.¹⁸ After the loss of the duchies of Lauenburg, Holstein and Schleswig, Denmark was suddenly reduced to a small nation state inhabited almost exclusively by Danes, with the king being a prominent exception. While he had spent most of his youth in Copenhagen, he originated from the German speaking part of Schleswig and spoke Danish with a distinct German accent. Having lost a war to the two great German powers and having become increasingly nationalistic, the Danes as a whole did not think much of their new king. This was the background against which Pastor Birkedal made his remark in the early autumn of 1864.

From a constitutional point of view the king was now fully encapsulated by the state in the Kantian sense of the term, since the absolutist parts of the formerly composite monarchy had been lost. The remaining part of his realm was ordered according to the 1849 constitution.¹⁹ Suddenly there were virtually no royal prerogatives left. The king had opposed national liberal policies from his first day in office in November 1863. He had been in direct opposition to his own government on the Schleswig question. After the peace of Vienna in 1864 his political priority was clearly to appoint government ministers with whom he could agree. As a result His Majesty’s governments had increasing difficulties in securing agreement from the parliament (*Rigsdagen*), especially from the lower chamber (*Folkethinget*). In 1877 and again in the years between 1885 and 1894 the conservative governments under J. B. S. Estrup (prime minister 1875–94) passed the state budget without the consent of the lower chamber. Although Estrup lacked the support of the *Folkethinget* the king insisted on his constitutional right

to appoint his own government. It was not until 1901 that a clear hierarchy between the legislative and executive bodies was established and parliamentary rule introduced.²⁰

How did the king and his consort cope with this sudden change in their situation? There are no accessible sources, such as letters or diaries, to give a direct answer as to what their strategies or considerations were.²¹ In the absence of information on the inner workings of the new situation, one must rely on accounts of how the Danish monarchy appeared and presented itself to the public. This makes it possible to trace the outlines of a dynastic strategy. The king's own marriage had been arranged for dynastic reasons. Coming from a remote cadet branch of the Oldenburg House whose political and economic means were modest, Christian had contracted a marriage that tied him much closer to the ruling family in Copenhagen. This move would eventually pave his way to the throne. The royal couple continued that dynastic policy when it came to their own children. In 1863 their oldest daughter, Alexandra, became the wife of the British crown prince. Shortly afterwards, in 1866, their second daughter, Dagmar, married the heir to the Russian throne. Alliances were thus forged with two of the Great Powers. While these dynastic connections had lost most of the political significance which had marked them in earlier centuries, they indisputably helped the royal family gain respect and popularity domestically.²²

King Christian IX and Queen Louise knew that their loyalty to Denmark during the two wars (1848–50 and 1864) had left them very unpopular in Germany. Equally, they could not have been unaware of the fact that they were also highly unpopular in Denmark when they acceded to the throne. As mentioned earlier, this resulted from the new king's Germanness. The tensions from the First Schleswig War were never settled. After his election as heir he was nicknamed 'The Protocol Prince', a derogatory term indicating that he was imposed upon the Danes from the outside. On the one hand the London Protocol of 1852 provided Prince Christian with a mandate, and on the other hand it set out a course that inevitably would lead to a confrontation with the dominating political circles in Copenhagen and public opinion.

The lack of popularity continued after 1863 as a result of the king's political strategy or sympathies. He allied himself with the conservatives, mainly the landed elite who controlled almost all of the governments from 1870 to 1901.²³ A growing liberal opposition – only loosely related to the older national liberals – called *Venstre* (literally 'The Left') and their electorate (mostly farmers, smallholders, teachers, craftsmen and shopkeepers) regarded the king as an instrument of the conservatives. The Danish political left was far from being republican: their loyalty simply remained with the previous king. During the reign of Christian IX, 46 monuments were erected to honour his predecessor, Frederik VII. Most of these monuments were initiated by members of *Venstre* or their sympathizers. Only 20

monuments were erected in honour of Christian IX, four of these in his lifetime and none of them before 1889.²⁴

In 1873 the leader of the opposition, Chresten Berg, demonstrated his protest against the government by refusing to stand when cheers were called for the king, as was protocol in the *Rigsdagen*. The following year at a public event a schoolteacher on the island of Lolland proposed a toast 'to him who calls himself king'.²⁵ The incident caused a scandal, especially among conservatives, and the teacher was reprimanded, but also received a lot of support from members of the opposition. The two incidents show how lese-majesty was a means to a political end. The provocations were not about monarchy itself, but the affiliation of the monarch with a particular political party. The target of the provocations was the government, and the lese-majesty proved to be very effective when it came to enhancing the impact of the protest.

The road to popularity

In the capital, however, the popularity of the royal couple slowly and steadily increased – or at least their unpopularity decreased. In 1867 the French ambassador to the Danish court, Adolphe Dotézac, noted that it was the first time that the general mood in Copenhagen indicated a certain regard for the king.²⁶ Around 1870 the Swedish Prince Oscar (later King Oscar II) noted in his diary that King Christian enjoyed much more esteem than one would have expected just four years earlier.²⁷

The king and queen travelled relatively little within Denmark and rarely in the peripatetic way preferred by many royals in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, that is as a couple or a family and with numerous public appearances.²⁸ Their travel pattern was based on their relations to their own family and not to the people. Benefitting from the comfort and reliability of modern railways and steamers they saw relatives in Germany or received visits from their children and grandchildren in their summer residence in Fredensborg Castle. Every year the king went on a *Kurreise* to Wiesbaden. The king occasionally went hunting on some of the great estates mainly in eastern Denmark.²⁹ In his capacity as (symbolic) supreme commander of the armed forces he would also visit garrisons and other military facilities all over the country. Miriam Schneider has shown the cultural implications of the royal family's close relations with the navy.³⁰ Several of the Glücksburg princes became naval officers and in the nature of their job they did plenty of travelling. One of the main functions of the 'Sailor Princes' (*Schneider*) was to be present on the naval ships that regularly carried out expeditions to the Danish West Indies where they represented Danish supremacy militarily as well as symbolically.

In 1883 the wife of the conservative Prime Minister Estrup identified the royal family's reluctance to travel within Denmark as a problem. Most of

the time Estrup lived in Copenhagen while his wife stayed on their estate in Jutland, and in a letter to her husband she suggested that the royal couple should visit the very stronghold of the opposition: 'Couldn't you make the royals go to Jutland? You hear complaints that they never go. From all sides it is said, that if only the peasants knew the royals better, especially the king, public opinion would improve.'³¹

Although Christian and Louise never went so far as to formulate a veritable strategy for popular outreach, they did benefit from the increasing popularity of their family. This was the case even though it was clear that, as a state, Denmark did not gain anything politically from the dynastic marriage policy pursued by the royal family. No territory was acquired or regained. This fact was openly stated. It had even become a trope in public discourse that, when it came to foreign relations, the dynastic dimension did not amount to much anymore. When celebrating the wedding between the heir to the Russian throne and Princess Dagmar in 1866, for instance, *Illustreret Tidende*, which was by no means anti-royal, reported the many celebrations and stated that such marriages were no longer of political significance.³²

In 1878 the royal couple's youngest daughter, Thyra, married the Hanoverian crown prince, or rather pretender to the throne, since the kingdom of Hanover had been incorporated into Prussia after the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. From a political point of view the marriage with a sworn enemy of Prussia was unwise, since it would provoke Berlin. The official Prussian response to the engagement was to abandon their promise to hold a referendum in Schleswig, but that was already then interpreted as a pretext for cementing Prussian rule in the duchies. The real reason why Queen Louise favoured the marriage was its usefulness for buttressing the dynasty's domestic standing: because of the very strong anti-Prussian emotions in the Danish public the Hanoverian connection was more than welcome.³³

It is obvious that the royal family gained prestige when its members married into other reigning dynasties of Europe. The scope of the press coverage alone attests to this. Royalty, their weddings, visits, travels and meetings were covered widely by the press all over Europe. The Glücksburg princes and princesses were handsome and bright, and the public enjoyed reading about their day-to-day activities as chronicled by news sources. This gradually led to a raising of Denmark's prestige, albeit indirectly. Consequently, the Danes themselves began to take pride in their royal house. In a poem celebrating the royal couple's silver anniversary in 1867, H. P. Holst linked the dynastic, domestic and national aspects of the royal family's success. The children were seen as destined for greatness and power, but the origin of their success was attributed to their love of home, which included both the royal family and their native land: 'Look with pride on the magnificent offspring / from your pact of love! / Far in the world they have been spread on the command of Providence, / Far they have been spread to greatness and power; / But they did not forget their native land.'³⁴

Another poem celebrating the silver jubilee of the king in 1888 initially described the national disaster in 1864 and the difficult task of the young king. In the third verse his children and grandchildren were compared to flowers and young trees symbolizing a new beginning: 'cheerful girls and lively boys' come from the south (Greece), the west (Britain) and the east (Russia) to play on the meadows of Sealand and to learn Danish.³⁵

Queen Louise acquired the image of a loving mother and her husband that of a dignified man of honour.³⁶ The relatively humble beginnings of their marriage now turned out to be a benefit in the public's view. Their children had not been raised by nannies or left to courtiers, as was usually the case in royal households. Christian and Louise could simply not afford to staff a court. When it was later revealed that the princesses had learned to mend their own clothes, this turned out to be a public relations asset. At the same time the Danes took pride in the fact that young ladies from a humble background seamlessly fitted into the grand courts of Europe, being admired for their beauty and composure. In the public eye there was undoubtedly a parallel between the Danish small-state mentality, that became prominent after 1864, and the image of the royal family, the idea being that even a small and modest monarchy could make its mark in Europe.³⁷

Elements of this process can be traced by analysing the media coverage of the royal family. One weekly illustrated magazine, *Illustreret Tidende*, used the modern xylographic technique for reproducing high quality pictures with very little delay in publishing.³⁸ An illustrated reportage of a royal event could be published 10–14 days after it had taken place, and royal affairs were covered extensively. In the early autumn of 1864 Edward Prince of Wales and his wife visited her parents at their residence at the manor Bernstorff north of Copenhagen.³⁹ The magazine printed a picture of a scene where Princesses Dagmar and Alexandra, returning on horseback to the manor, are greeted by the king and the Prince of Wales. The magazine itself calls it a 'family scene': 'the times have long gone, when kings and queens wore velvet robes and crowns on their heads wherever they went. The times are coming, when it is obvious to everybody, that royal and princely persons are people like all of us'. It is obvious, the magazine continues, that

members of the royal household take pleasure in the fact that they – at least as a variation – can choose a life without traces of golden crowns and ermine robes. In fact it is hard to imagine a more comfortable life than that of a princely family, who can rid themselves of the abundance of 'the princely' and keep the 'family'. Our royal family and its guests from England now have occasion for a pleasant social life under circumstances that are neither too narrow nor too large. The children of Britannia for a change now have the opportunity to live under conditions that would be unfamiliar luxury for most people, but to themselves probably is the opposite.⁴⁰

The political context of the scene is left out of the picture, but it would have been felt all too acutely by any contemporary Danish reader. The episode took place almost at the same time as the Birkedal incident on Funen, in the weeks between the military defeat earlier that year and the peace treaty of Vienna at the end of October. This was the context but certainly not the content of the article. First of all the anonymous reporter mentioned the changing role of the royal family from 'the princely' to 'the family'. But any reader would grasp the political situation in question. The Prince of Wales was the key figure, of course. The Danes still hoped for British support for their cause during the pending peace talks. The text itself does not pander to the British, though; rather the opposite. Stating that however great, rich and mighty the British may be, they could learn something from the modest, pleasant and agreeable Bernstorff far from the pompous parades by which they were allegedly surrounded at home. In that way the smallness of the defeated Denmark was translated into greatness. This emphasis on the family and the home and not the dynasty and the court became the new matrix for how royalty was described.⁴¹ Furthermore, meritocratic ideals were promoted. Like his father before him Crown Prince Frederik – born 1843, who succeeded as King Frederik VIII in 1906 – became an army officer. But he was also sent to Oxford to study politics in 1863 and was thus the first Danish prince to attend university. He was, however, called home later that year before he could finish his education. It was actually his friend and British opposite number, the Prince of Wales, who brought him the message that the Danish king had died, and that he was now Crown Prince of Denmark and had to return to attend to the duties of the immediate heir to the throne; most prominently he had to attend meetings in the council of state (*Statsrådet*) together with his father.⁴²

Using Bagehot's ungracious term he was basically an unemployed youth until he became an unemployed well-educated middle-aged man.⁴³ He was crown prince for 43 years. In almost open opposition to his father Crown Prince Frederik developed sympathies for the liberal opposition and took interest in modern science. He frequently attended meetings at the Videnskabernes Selskab (Royal Academy of the Sciences) and even went so far as to take part in the *bürgerliche Öffentlichkeit*, the public debate in newspapers, anonymously of course.⁴⁴

In 1901 Christian IX accepted parliamentary rule: that is he appointed a government that was in accordance with a majority in the parliament. Most people believed that he had been persuaded to do so by the crown prince. This particular combination of a conservative monarch and a liberal heir to the throne seems to be an often repeated pattern in the nineteenth century. As a whole most royal families offered a range of possible individuals or personalities with whom various members of the public could identify. In this case the liberals looked to the son and the conservatives to the father. The point is that everybody liked someone in the royal family. Nobody

was universally popular, but that was not necessary as long as nobody was universally unpopular and everybody respected the monarch. This was probably not intentional. It seems to be a pattern repeated by other generations and in other monarchies that the crown prince serves as the vehicle of future hopes whereas the monarch is the guardian of established values.

The emphasis on education was maintained into the next generation, also as an ideal in the eyes of the public. In an 1886 article celebrating the 16th birthday of the young Prince Christian (to be Christian X in 1912) the journalist noted that his childhood until that point had been like that of most other children, and that his education was important. Further keywords of course were 'healthy', 'happy' and 'home':

The healthy principles, according to which his father and his siblings were raised in their childhood, are also being put to use by the crown prince in the education of his own children. They are from birth destined for the highest positions of society, and that is why they should have the highest and best education. Apart from the sound influence that is exercised on the young prince's mind by a happy childhood home, a careful education by good teachers has developed his spirit and now entering his seventeenth year he stands as a kind and worthy young man, liked by everyone he comes across.⁴⁵

There are no references to traditional male, martial qualities like 'authority' or 'strength' in this portrait of the young prince, who was about to become an accomplished army officer. Instead the emphasis lies on the unassuming normality of his childhood, personal traits like kindness and on the need for qualifications in a rather non-specific sense in his future career.

Self-representation

In the mid-1880s the painter Laurits Tuxen was commissioned to produce an ambitious group portrait of the whole royal family. It required several trips to the Greek, Hanoverian, British and Russian courts to prepare sketches and studies for each and every portrait and took several years to complete. When the huge canvas was finished the artwork was a great success and paved the way for Tuxen's international career. The British queen praised it as 'charming & very cleverly grouped' (see Figure 8.1).⁴⁶

The setting was the Palace of Fredensborg, north of Copenhagen, where the Danish king and queen had their summer residence and where their family would come to visit them. The artist had obviously tried to make the picture as lively as possible and also allowed for some emotional elements, especially when it came to the children, but the relations between the persons are clearly hierarchically organized. 'You see a family, but no family life', a critic wrote.⁴⁷ Tsar Alexander III and his wife are at the centrepiece



Figure 8.1 Laurits Tuxen, King Christian IX of Denmark with family (Christian 9. med familie) (1886) © Royal Reception Rooms, Christiansborg Palace, Copenhagen. Photograph by Thorkild Jensen

of the painting, symbolizing Russia's prominent role as the main sponsor of the Glücksburg family's rise to prominence. The other son-in-law, the Prince of Wales, sits to the left, and the royal couple is thus flanked by great powers and devoted daughters. The picture is a monument to the dynastic success of the family, but it is also a striking feature that no symbols whatsoever indicate that any of the persons in the picture is royalty.

Even if one did not know it, they are still easily identified as members of the social elite. The men mostly wear uniforms, and the women expensive dresses à la mode. But the public did not need any symbols to recognize those in the picture as royalty. Most of the individuals were familiar to almost any member of the public from the many postcards in commercial circulation showing portraits of royalty. Illustrated magazines such as *Illustreret Tidende* also made an important contribution to familiarizing the looks of members of the royal family.⁴⁸ Their faces had become their insignia. Royalty no longer had to dress like kings in order to be recognized as such. This may be seen as an important step towards what became a celebrity culture or even cult surrounding the monarchy, most famously perhaps represented by the German Emperor Wilhelm II, nicknamed 'Filmhelm'.⁴⁹

Fifteen years later Tuxen was commissioned to complete another group portrait which had become a favourite genre among royal houses. It was called *The Four Generations (De fire Slægtled)*. Christian IX is shown with

three heirs to the Danish throne; to his right the Crown Prince (Frederik VIII, 1843–1912), to his left his grandson (Christian X, 1870–1947) and the toddler at his feet is his great-grandson (Frederik IX, 1899–1972). The painting was much more regal and formal than the first Tuxen canvas (see Figure 8.2). The three men are dressed in the official robes of the Order of



Figure 8.2 Laurits Tuxen, *The Four Generations* (*De fire Slægtled*) (1902) © Royal Reception Rooms, Christiansborg Palace, Copenhagen. Photograph by Thorkild Jensen

the Elephant. The king even carries his sceptre, which the constitutional kings never did. The reception of the painting was quite negative.

The public and the critics acknowledged Tuxen's skills as a painter, but found the work 'too pompous'. It offended public opinion by being 'perfectly unbourgeois', as one critic wrote, who missed the air of Fredensborg, indirectly referring to Tuxen's earlier family portrait.⁵⁰ Another critic called it a piece of window dressing 'that hurts every eye and does not do good in any heart'. It was meant to impress, but the critic wanted a more 'human' portrait of the four persons.⁵¹ *The Four Generations* is a portrait of a dynasty, but also a good example of an image that failed to win public appreciation. It simply lacked domestic quality. The error was never repeated. Both of Tuxen's giant canvasses now hang in the Royal Reception Rooms at Christiansborg Palace in Copenhagen. The Fredensborg picture is in full view in one of the bigger rooms and *The Four Generations* is tucked away in a smaller room, mostly behind closed doors.

Conclusion

During the reign of Christian IX the Glücksburg dynasty was successfully domesticated. In other words, the Danish royal family with its German roots began to understand the need to change how their role was perceived by their public. They did this by representing bourgeois and meritocratic values with which most Danes could identify. Danes took pride in the international success of the second generation. It may seem paradoxical, but there is a close connection between the rise of the nation states and the so-called Royal International as Johannes Paulmann has shown.⁵² This change in the status of the royal family formed the foundation for what can be called a dynastic alliance with the nation, based on popularity.

It is of course challenging to determine the exact scope of popularity of royals in the nineteenth century. Opinion polls have only been conducted in Denmark since the late 1940s. Even with these data 'understanding the monarchy's popularity' is notoriously difficult. 'Different individuals admired the royals for different reasons, and with varying degrees of intensity.'⁵³ So when it comes to the late nineteenth or early twentieth century little can be based on hard evidence. There is, however, a general consensus amongst observers and historians that the royal couple enjoyed unambiguous admiration and popularity by the time they celebrated their golden anniversary in 1892.⁵⁴ There was a huge turnout when the couple travelled through the city of Copenhagen in an open carriage. Gifts poured in from all over the country which then went on exhibition attracting 114,000 visitors.

While the king was still identified with the increasingly unpopular government, as can be documented by election results, he distanced himself from the daily workings of politics. By the turn of the century the royal family

as a whole had achieved what the king had lacked 35 years earlier: popularity. The constitutional struggle had been settled, the media had become considerably more positive (although almost universally benevolent media coverage was not achieved until the 1930s), no more wars were lost and the image of a happy Danish family with ties the world over was well-established. The domestication process was complete.

Notes

1. Fr. Nielsen (1934), 'Vilhelm Birkedal', in: Povl Engelstoft and Svend Dahl (eds), *Dansk Biografisk Leksikon*, vol. 3, Copenhagen, 134–39.
2. Mathias Hattendorff (2012), *Das Haus Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg*, Werl.
3. The 1864 war is one of the most debated issues in Danish historiography, but remains a footnote in international and even German historiography; Carsten Jahнке and Jes Fabricius Møller (eds) (2011), *1864 – und der lange Schatten der Geschichte*, Husum. On the 1864 war in general see Michael Embree (2006), *Bismarck's First War: The Campaign of Schleswig and Jutland 1864*, Solihull.
4. Simon Schama (1986), 'The Domestication of Majesty: Royal Family Portraiture, 1500–1850', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* XVII/1, 155–83; David Cannadine (1983), 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual', in: Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence O. Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 101–64.
5. Volker Sellin (2011), *Gewalt und Legitimität. Die europäische Monarchie im Zeitalter der Revolutionen*, Munich, 179.
6. Per Sandin (2011), *Ett kungahus i tiden*, Uppsala (with English summary). See also Frank-Lothar Kroll (2007), 'Zwischen europäischem Bewußtsein und nationaler Identität. Legitimationsstrategien monarchischer Eliten im Europa des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts', *Historische Zeitschrift*, Beiheft 44, 353–74.
7. This was the case even in the Prussian constitution of 1848 (§§ 51–57). In 1850 a section was added (§ 57) on government in case of vacancy of the throne. On actual abdications see Heidi Mehrkens (2008), 'Rangieren auf dem Abstellgleis: Europas abgesetzte Herrscher 1830–1870', in Thomas Biskup and Martin Kohlrausch (eds), *Das Erbe der Monarchie. Nachwirkungen einer deutschen Institution seit 1918*, Frankfurt/M., 37–58.
8. Wilhelm Weischedel (ed.) (1993), *Immanuel Kant. Schriften zur Anthropologie, Geschichtsphilosophie, Politik und Pädagogik I, Werkausgabe*, vol. 11, Frankfurt/M., 197. Among Danish intellectuals in the early nineteenth century, Kant was the most influential philosopher.
9. Johannes Paulmann (2001), 'Searching for a "Royal International": The Mechanics of Monarchical Relations in Nineteenth-Century Europe', in: Johannes Paulmann and Martin Geyer (eds), *The Mechanics of Internationalism: Culture, Society, and Politics from the 1840s to the First World War*, Oxford, 145–76.
10. Hartmut Pogge von Strandmann (1999): 'Nationalisierungsdruck und königliche Namensänderung in England. Das Ende der Großfamilie europäischer Dynastien', in: Gerhard A. Ritter and Peter Wende (eds), *Rivalität und Partnerschaft: Studien zu den deutsch-britischen Beziehungen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Paderborn, 69–91.
11. Walter Bagehot (1867), *The English Constitution*, (2001 edn), Oxford, 41.
12. Peter Burke (1992), *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, New Haven, CT.

13. The classic study on the subject of emotional ties between ordinary families and the royal is Michael Billig (1992), *Talking of the Royal Family*, London.
14. Jes Fabricius Møller (2014), 'Det indskrænkede monarki og teorien om statsmagtens ligevægt', *Historisk Tidsskrift* 4, 539–64.
15. *Forhandlingerne på den grundlovgivende Rigsforsamling*, sp. 1581.
16. See the London Treaty, 8 May 1852: *Departementstidenden*, 22 June 1852.
17. *Dagbladet*, 17 September 1856. For further examples see Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen (2003), *Prinsessen og det hele kongerige*, Copenhagen, 58.
18. Jes Fabricius Møller (2013), *Dynastiet Glücksborg*, Copenhagen, 83.
19. Except the remaining overseas territories of Greenland and the Danish West Indies and to some extent Iceland and the Faroe Islands; see Knud J.V. Jespersen (2004), *A History of Denmark*, Basingstoke, 58–65.
20. Møller (2014), 563.
21. The Royal Archives at *Rigsarkivet* in Copenhagen are only accessible by special permission from H.M. the Queen which is rarely granted even for archives from the nineteenth century. However, letters to relatives in the Russian, Hanoverian, Greek and British royal families will probably be of great value when studying the question in detail. A request by this author for access to the archives of the former royal family of Hanover received a negative answer.
22. Compare Frank-Lothar Kroll (2010), 'Staatsräson oder Familieninteresse – Möglichkeiten und Grenzen dynastischer Netzwerkbildung zwischen Preußen und Rußland im 19. Jahrhundert', *Forschungen zur Brandenburgischen und Preußischen Geschichte* NF 20/1, 1–41; and Daniel Schönplflug (2008), 'Liebe und Politik: Die Heiraten der Hohenzollern und ihre Nachwirkungen, 1858–1935', in: Biskup and Kohlrausch (eds) (2008), 77–95.
23. Jens Wendel-Hansen and Jes Fabricius Møller (2013), 'Bound to the State: The Nobleman in Danish Politics', *Journal of Modern European History* 11/4, 454–73.
24. Inge Adriansen (2011), *Erindringssteder i Danmark*, Copenhagen, 216–22.
25. Troels Fink (1986), *Estruptidens politiske historie*, vol. 1, Odense, 40–54.
26. Hans Roger Madol (1936), *Christian IX*, Copenhagen, 132.
27. Nils F. Holm (ed.) (1962), *Oscar II, Mina Memoarer*, Stockholm, vol. 3, 89.
28. David Cannadine (2008), 'Monarchy: Crowns and Context, Thrones and Dominations', in: David Cannadine, *Making History Now and Then*, Basingstoke, 39–58.
29. Jesper Laursen (2009), *Herregårdsjagt i Danmark*, Copenhagen, 251, 362, 270, 275.
30. Miriam Schneider (2015), "'Young, Brave, and True, He Wears the Blue": The Concept of the "Sailor Prince" in Nineteenth-century European Monarchies', in: Frank-Lothar Kroll, Karina Urbach and Dieter Weiß (eds): *Inszenierung als Legitimation? Die Monarchie in Europa im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Berlin.
31. Ditlev Tamm (1996), *Konseilspræsidenten Jacob Brønnum Scavenius Estrup*, Copenhagen, 268. It was not until 1908 that the royal family, now King Frederik VIII and Queen Louise, made a tour of all of Jutland (*den store Jyllandsrejse*), in a targeted and partly successful effort to create stronger ties between the electorate of Venstre and the royal house. Frederik's father (d. 1906) evidently did not see the point of such a venture.
32. *Illustreret Tidende*, 18 November 1866.
33. Madol (1986), 151.
34. *Illustreret Tidende*, 26 May 1867; see also 26 May 1892. This was also the theme of Nicolaj Bøgh's poem on four of the royal couple's grandchildren, all heirs to

- a European throne: Albert Victor of Britain, Constantine of Greece, Nicolaus of Russia and Christian of Denmark. See Miriam Schneider, "'Our Four Heirs to the Throne": Emotional Identification with the Success of the Glücksborg Dynasty in Nineteenth-Century Danish Family Magazines', http://heirstothethrone-project.net/?page_id=698, accessed 12 February 2015. See also two poems in honour of the king and queen in Hans Peter Holst (1887), *Udvalgte Skrifter*, vol. 1, Copenhagen, 119–20.
35. *Illustreret Tidende*, 11 November 1888; analysed in Olden-Jørgensen (2003), 72–75.
 36. *Illustreret Tidende*, 6 September 1897: 'a gentleman and a knightly king'; Christian Frederik von Holten (1899), *Erindringer*, Copenhagen, 282. See also *Illustreret Tidende*, 11 November 1888.
 37. On the domestic life of the royal family see Tor Boman-Larsen (2004), *Kongstanken*, Oslo.
 38. The magazine is available online at <http://illustrerttidende.dk>.
 39. It is usually referred to as a *slot*, which is not the same as the German *Schloss* and does not translate into castle or palace. *Slot* means royal residence and can be as small as a villa. Bernstorff was actually sometimes referred to as a villa.
 40. *Illustreret Tidende*, 25 September 1864.
 41. 'Home' was particularly a keyword when the royal couples celebrated wedding anniversaries. See *Illustreret Tidende*, 26 May 1892 and 29 July 1894.
 42. N. Neergaard (1935), 'Frederik VIII', in: Povl Engelstoft and Svend Dahl (eds), *Dansk biografisk Leksikon*, vol. 7, Copenhagen, 276. The only biography on Frederik VIII by Aage Heinberg ((1962) *Frederik VIII og hans tid*, Copenhagen) is largely anecdotal.
 43. Bagehot (1867), 38.
 44. A handful of those letters to the editor are known; Olden-Jørgensen (2003), 173.
 45. *Illustreret Tidende*, 3 October 1886.
 46. Lise Svanholm (1990), *Laurits Tuxen*, Copenhagen, 68.
 47. Karl Madsen in *Politiken*, 18 May 1886.
 48. The portrait of the Tsar is actually most likely painted after a photograph. He spent very little time sitting for Tuxen: see Svanholm (1990), 60.
 49. Dominik Petzold (2008), 'Monarchischer Kult in der Moderne: Zur Herrschaftsinszenierung Wilhelms II. im Kino', in: Biskup and Kohlrausch (eds) (2008), 117–37, 125.
 50. *Illustreret Tidende*, 13 April 1902.
 51. *Politiken*, 26 March 1902.
 52. Paulmann (2001), 145–76.
 53. Philip Williamson (2007), 'The Monarchy and Public Values 1900–1953', in: Andrzej Olechnowicz (ed.), *The Monarchy and the British Nation, 1780 to the Present*, Cambridge, 223–57, 256. See also Neil Blain and Hugh O'Donnell (2003), *Media, Monarchy and Power*, Bristol 2003, 29.
 54. Olden-Jørgensen (2003), 52–54.

9

The Succession of an Unborn King: Constitutional Politics in Spain after the Death of Alfonso XII

Carmina López Sánchez

Spain's Glorious Revolution of 1868 brought the reign of Isabel II and the Bourbon dynasty to an end. The heir to the throne, Isabel's son Alfonso, was a child of 11 years when the Spanish royal family was forced into exile. Their departure on 30 September 1868 marked the beginning of the so-called Democratic Sexennium (1868–74), during which Spaniards first established the parliamentary monarchy of Amadeo de Savoy and then proclaimed Spain's First Republic. On 29 December 1874, however, the last successful *pronunciamiento* of nineteenth-century Spain occurred.¹ The aim of this military coup was to reinstate the Bourbon dynasty by placing Alfonso XII on the throne. The public face of the *pronunciamiento* was General Arsenio Martínez Campos, but as he himself pointed out, the coup had been orchestrated by Spain's captain general in Cuba, a widely revered military hero. In fact, Martínez Campos would later inform the king 'that the only person I have obeyed is the Conde de Valmaseda, crowned by so many laurels in Cuba: he, and he alone was the initiator, I confined myself to implementing his wishes and his commands'.²

There was more than just direct military action, though. The return of Alfonso XII to the throne was being plotted from the very moment Isabel II went into exile. A variety of forces contributed to the Alfonsine movement, but the real ideologue and promoter of the restoration of the Spanish monarchy was Antonio Cánovas del Castillo (1828–97), the leader of the conservative minority caucus in the Spanish parliament, the Cortes. Cánovas emerged as head of the Alfonsine cause in August 1873. From then on he pursued an energetic campaign in favour of Isabel's son, particularly in military, bourgeois and aristocratic circles, and not only in Spain, but also in the Spanish colonies in America. It has long been maintained that Cánovas del Castillo opposed military force as a means of restoring the Spanish monarchy. Yet even though he was not the prime mover behind the Martínez Campos *pronunciamiento*, he certainly took

full advantage of its political consequences which accelerated his plans for a restoration.³

The reign of Alfonso XII effectively began in January 1875, but Cánovas's plans went much further than merely installing the prince on the throne. Appointed president of the council of ministers by the new king, he worked tirelessly for the promulgation of a new constitution. On 30 June 1876 what is still Spain's longest lasting constitution was proclaimed. It made the Crown the political backbone of the country and arranged for power to be shared between parliament and the king.⁴ Cánovas was intent on ensuring that the Crown's position was ironclad. On the one hand, he would establish *turnismo*, a practice of two-party rotation which worked on the basis of a restricted system of managing the vote.⁵ Known as caciquism, this electoral arrangement actively involved regional and provincial notables in the political sphere. It was they who procured policies favourable to the interests of their patrons, thereby ensuring the smooth running of the alternating two-party system. Caciquism distanced the Spanish people from the electoral process. The king appointed a government, which would only then call an election to achieve a parliamentary majority with which it could govern. At this point the cacique intervened through various forms of electoral manipulation in order to engineer an outcome favourable to a particular party.

This mechanism protected the Crown and gave Alfonso XII's reign a quasi-fictional social stability. It also helped to delay the political modernization which the public would eventually demand.⁶ The other threat to stability came from within the ranks of the army. In order to stave off another *pronunciamiento*, Cánovas sought to tie the Crown very closely to the army. The widely disseminated image of Alfonso as a soldier-king, for instance, was generated in order to place the monarch, as supreme head of the army, at the very apex of the military command.

The Restoration delivered a period of considerable stability. One major factor was the 1876 constitution, which provided a framework that allowed for the inclusion even of initially hostile elements both on the left and the right. The king became the arbiter in the political arena and Alfonso XII successfully oversaw the party rotation of the *turnismo* model which followed the initial dominance of Cánovas's Liberal Conservative Party.⁷ This peaceful competition for political power obviated the opposition's reliance on military leaders and their *pronunciamientos*, which had been the main source of instability during Isabel II's reign.⁸ The early stages of the restoration also gave Spain the peace it had wanted for so long; in 1876 and 1878 respectively the Carlist War and the Cuban war, which had consumed massive resources and manpower, were brought to an end in a way that was satisfactory for the new regime. In addition to that the Spanish economy then entered a period of industrial and agricultural expansion, also reflected in public infrastructure projects and the stock market.⁹ Spain finally appeared to be on a track towards a more stable and prosperous future.

Cánovas's well-laid plans were very nearly thwarted on 25 November 1885, though, when King Alfonso died of tuberculosis. The sudden death of the king – who left behind a pregnant widow and two young daughters – gravely endangered the restored monarchy. In this chapter I aim to explore the interwoven positions of the dynasty and Spain's political institutions as well as the steps taken in order to secure the succession of the king's unborn son. In fact, the situation following Alfonso's death illustrates how the dynasty, the constitution and the political institutions had all become elements of a system that worked effectively to stabilize Spanish politics and society. What is more, the role of the monarchy was considered an integral factor within this system: on the level of party and governmental politics the dynastic crisis produced an affirmation and recognition of the importance of the monarchical principle for the working of the new constitutional order. All the interested parties recognized that a strong Crown provided a space within which politics could be pursued non-violently and without causing a fundamental crisis of the state. This motivated them to await the birth of the king's posthumous child, even at the risk of a brief interregnum. I will explore how the efforts made to protect the continuity of the dynasty against republican and Carlist ambitions helped to further embed *turnismo* and develop a more established system of party politics within the framework of a constitutional monarchy. What was a dangerous succession crisis actually turned into an opportunity for Spain's political system.

Sudden though it appeared, for those in the know the state of the king's health had been a troubling issue for some time. Dr Izquierdo, the king's physician, believed that Alfonso's tuberculosis had been present from childhood. It had reappeared in the year that he acceded to the Spanish throne, during the battle of Lacar in the Carlist Wars and once again in 1883. Pedro Répide observed that during Alfonso XII's visit to cholera victims in Aranjuez in July 1883, the king carried a red silk handkerchief, which he kept in his riding boot when seated and which he frequently took to his mouth to wipe away the bloody phlegm.¹⁰ It would appear that it was during this particular visit to Aranjuez that Alfonso spoke to Francisco Silvela, the Minister of Grace and Justice, about his illness; Silvela then informed Cánovas.

The press did not openly report on the king's condition. In the last days of his life it was agreed that only the official bulletins should be published, in order not to alarm the population, and to avoid false rumours. Despite the fact that the press did not allude to the king's health, the people knew he was sick; what is more, it was said that the king had consumption. On 24 November 1885, the official *Gaceta de Madrid* stated, 'His Majesty the King (may God preserve him) continues in the El Pardo Palace, his royal health not being subject to change, nor is that currently being enjoyed at Court by Her Majesty the Queen and the royal family'.¹¹ Augusto Conte, the Spanish ambassador in Vienna, recalled that these reassuring reports did not convince everyone:

Once the summer season was over, the queen returned to Madrid, and the doctor insisted the king should stay in El Pardo alone, and when we asked for news of his health, we were told it was better than ever. Mingling with this, other, very different voices were being heard, and travellers and correspondents carried those voices to the Court in Vienna. They reported that Alfonso's health was critical, but that the government was concealing it for political reasons. The king himself did not wish his illness to be known, and burnt the handkerchiefs in which he coughed up blood in the fireplace. This deception was continuing, when suddenly news arrived – one report following another – that Alfonso was very ill, that his condition was hopeless and, finally, that he had died at El Pardo on 25 November. And so little time passed between the first report and the final one so that we could have aptly quoted that well known line by Bossuet, saying in unison: the king is ailing, the king is dying, the king is dead.¹²

Various accounts exist of the last hours of Alfonso XII. The official version is that he died on 25 November at El Pardo, surrounded by his family, although some sources state that he died alone. In the last months of his life, the doctors had recommended he be moved to El Pardo, and he finally went there on 31 October; the remainder of the royal family stayed in Madrid and visited him frequently. On the night of 23 to 24 November, the king had an attack of dyspnoea. According to Dr Izquierdo, the Marqués de Alcañices, high steward and a close friend of the king, then went to Madrid on the morning of 24 November to communicate the seriousness of the king's condition to the queen. According to *El Imparcial*, the queen got into the carriage Alcañices had travelled in and left for El Pardo.¹³ That night, only María Cristina, Dr Camisón and Ceferino, his gentleman of the bedchamber, remained in the room. At eight in the morning, when the doctor checked on Alfonso, he became aware that the end was near. He asked for the queen to be called, and she immediately returned to the room where the king was lying and remained kneeling by his bedside. She ordered the *infantas* to be brought but they did not arrive in time to say farewell to their father.¹⁴

The death of the king did not lead to public disorder, but two distinct kinds of political threat could be sensed in the press: Carlists, supporters of the second Bourbon line, and the Zorrillistas.¹⁵ There were no alarmist headlines but some articles continuously referred to the movements of the republican leaders Carlos and Ruíz Zorrilla. On 29 November *El Imparcial*¹⁶ wrote that 'the peaceful attitude of the Carlists [was] down to the fact that they do not wish to be the ones to begin the conflict, they would prefer it if Zorrilla's followers were the ones to start the unrest in the country'.¹⁷ For its part, *La Época* argued that the Carlists would not initiate any movement against the monarchy; yet they would take up arms if the republicans stirred

up a rebellion, and in this case the Carlists would have to confront them in order to 'defend the religion of our forefathers and the throne of San Fernando'.¹⁸ Soon there were fears all over Europe that Spain would once again plunge into a civil war.¹⁹ *El Imparcial* quoted a statement from *Le Temps* that Spain should carefully avoid repeating its earlier tendency to dethrone a Spanish monarch only to bring in a foreign one and then expelling him too. And it added that Spain should ensure that parliaments would not lack loyalty and sincerity which would once again justify *pronunciamientos*.²⁰ At the same time, expressions of condolence arrived from all over Europe.

On 5 December, following the death of Alfonso XII, Segismundo Moret, Minister of State, issued a circular to Spanish representatives abroad, in which he addressed the threat that might have arisen from Carlists as well as Zorrilla and his republican forces.²¹ He provided a number of reasons why there had been no disturbances in the country. With reference to the Carlists and Zorrillistas he pointed to the 'scant support enjoyed by the revolutionary forces'. In addition, he noted Spaniards' deeply rooted sentiment for the monarchy and spoke highly of the deftness with which Cánovas del Castillo had requested the cooperation of the leading liberal Práxedes Mateo Sagasta in order to save the constitutional monarchy without imposing any conditions. Sagasta immediately and enthusiastically offered his support. Moret also highlighted the role of the queen regent as a staunch supporter of the monarchical cause.

Only one year earlier Moret had referred to the strong position of the republicans and on 25 November 1885 *El Imparcial* openly stated that the main concern in the current circumstances was the threat from Carlism. It thus appears that Moret's soothing statements to Spain's representatives abroad were an attempt to play down the whole affair in order to convince foreign courts that the government was in control of the political situation. In fact, it would not have been implausible to expect that both Carlists and Zorrillistas would use the king's death as an opportunity to seize power. In addition to the republican and Carlist threats, the stability of the Spanish throne was also jeopardized by other pretenders – hailing from the very heart of the royal family. Queen Isabel II believed this could be a good moment to take back the throne via a regency. As Alfonso XII lay dying Isabel dared to ask Martínez Campos 'What will happen here if a tragedy occurs?'. The general responded, 'Madam, legally, there will be María Cristina's regency'. León y Castillo's report of the conversation then noted that 'a strange expression, a mixture of surprise and disillusionment could be seen on the queen's face as if, somewhere inside her, she had suddenly felt the collapse of hopes planted there by certain courtiers, more devoted to her than well informed'.²² And it seemed that the Duke de Montpensier also entertained hopes of regaining the Crown, something he had been conspiring to do for years.²³

There was thus the risk that Alfonso's death could end everything that had been achieved to stabilize the Spanish monarchy. The support Cánovas

received from the monarchists of different shades, though, made it possible for him to continue his course, it even reinforced it. The death of the king accelerated the restoration project and reinforced the importance of the monarchical element. As Cánovas del Castillo explained himself, he renounced his position as president of the council of ministers because the death of the king implied the loss of the royal trust which had sustained him in office.

This realization, he insisted, had led him to recommend Sagasta, leader of the Liberal Party, for the position. On 26 November, Cánovas formally tendered his resignation. 'Madam, the never sufficiently mourned death of H. M. the King has led to the expiry of the mandated royal trust conferred on the present ministry', he wrote to the Queen.²⁴ Cánovas approached the liberal leader to initiate the peaceful change of government; his main objective was to save the throne. On the night of 24 November, hours before the king's death, the ever-present Martínez Campos brokered a meeting between the principal political leaders, Cánovas and Sagasta.²⁵ No written documents survive of this meeting, but it came to be known as the 'El Pardo Pact' and emerged as the driving force establishing *turnismo* as a permanent feature of Spanish politics.²⁶

Talking to Augusto Conte, the Spanish ambassador, the Austrian emperor expressed his surprise at this change of government: 'the Emperor graciously paid me the compliment of saying he was sorry to see me go, and he also said he had been greatly surprised by Cánovas stepping down from power at the moment when his services would have been most necessary. I gave him the appropriate explanations for this, although it was not easy to make him understand the state and conditions of our parties, nor the dangers that Cánovas had invoked by transferring power to Sagasta' – whose political record clearly struck Conte as less than reassuring.²⁷

The change in government did not only surprise Emperor Franz Joseph, it also required an explanation in Spain itself. On 3 July 1886, Cánovas del Castillo observed in parliament that this handover had not been a mere transfer of power to the liberals:

Moreover, if we must discuss such a grave and sad matter, it is essential that the idea that I ceded power to the liberal party is struck from the debate, never to be reinserted. Why was it up to me to hand over or cede power? That task was the queen regent's alone, as head of the executive and as the constitutional monarch. I have neither handed over nor ceded, nor could I hand over or cede it... From the moment the king expired, I was nothing, absolutely nothing, nothing more than a private citizen in my country. What is a minister, Honourable Members, other than a temporary custodian of the king's trust?²⁸

For Cánovas there was no other possible outcome. With the king's death, he had lost the royal trust, and it was up to him or to another party leader,

in this case Sagasta, to form a new government that would enjoy the trust of the monarch's rightful successor. *Turnismo* had already begun in 1881, so there was nothing new in the liberals assuming power with the ultimate aim being the defence of the monarchy. In that same speech on 3 July 1886, Cánovas admitted that he 'felt personally responsible for the consequences the events could have had on the monarchy'. And, after analysing these potential consequences, Cánovas went on to explain the reasoning that had led him to offer his resignation and to propose Sagasta as president of the council of ministers:

[Born] in me was the conviction that the fierce fight the monarchist parties experienced in normal circumstances, a struggle that was possible when the throne was strong, had to stop completely, and for a lengthy period of time. I thought a truce was indispensable and that all monarchists should unite around the monarchy to accomplish a task in a manner hitherto unknown in our history because, not only were we confronted by the death of a king, we did not even have a child monarch: we were facing a problem, an X, something which had not existed in the monarchy before; and in this situation, a situation which was truly extraordinary, the least that could be expected was that the monarchist parties would pull together to maintain the normal and constitutional state of the country.²⁹

Years later, Francisco Bergamín, a personal friend of Cánovas and holder of various ministerial positions during the reign of Alfonso XIII, explained what Cánovas had told him about his decision to resign the presidency of the council of ministers after the death of Alfonso XII. His real motive was much more closely related to the question of succession. According to article 60 of the constitution of 1876, the heir to the throne was the Princess of Asturias, the infanta María de las Mercedes.³⁰

But knowing that the queen was pregnant, Cánovas believed, and time proved him right, that a male heir might be born, and this would depose the new queen from her position, only months after being chosen, and replace her with the new king. Cánovas del Castillo ... decided to wait, and Queen María Cristina became the regent, with no king of Spain ... and he considered the matter so serious that he did not feel that the decision should come from him, he wanted to entrust it to the liberal party, confident of the discipline and loyalty of its members, confident also that the person upholding the agreement was incapable of revoking it; and this is how the El Pardo Pact was born.³¹

According to Bergamín, Cánovas's objective was to defend the monarchy and prevent the civil war which might follow after the deposing of a child-queen

by her new born brother. It is true that the situation was ominously similar to that in 1833, when Fernando VII left his two daughters as heirs to the throne. Moreover, the reign of Isabel II, mother of Alfonso XII, did not conjure up happy memories either. Faced with this situation the decision of the dynastic parties – Sagasta’s liberal one and Cánovas’s conservatives – was not to proclaim King Alfonso XII’s firstborn, Princess María de las Mercedes, as queen but to wait until María Cristina had given birth. This meant that Spain only had a regent queen during the six months that passed between the death of Alfonso XII and the birth of Alfonso XIII, but the political history of nineteenth-century Spain had taught the politicians a lesson about the importance of not rushing into the proclamation of the new monarch.

Without her mother’s pregnancy, Princess María de las Mercedes would have been proclaimed queen of Spain after the death of her father, marking the beginning of a ten-year regency. Such a situation carried significant risks: it could have encouraged the pretensions to the throne of the only male prince, the Duque de Montpensier, and of his son, Antonio. They had moved closer to the throne anyway, since Alfonso XII had approved the marriage of his sister Eulalia and Antonio de Montpensier, believing that this wedding would curb Montpensier’s thirst for power.³² There were also the Carlists who could claim the throne in these difficult times for the monarchy, for they could provide a male successor. One of the possible solutions considered in case the queen gave birth to another princess, was the wedding of her eldest daughter and heiress to the throne Mercedes to the son of Carlos, Jaime, Duke of Madrid. With all these potential outcomes up in the air, the Spanish people, the politicians and the queen herself hoped for the birth of a son to generate stability.

On 27 November 1885, news of the queen’s pregnancy was made public in *La Época*:

If fortune wills that Her Majesty gives birth to a prince, not only will it alter the succession, which as of now falls to the Princess of Asturias, María de las Mercedes, but also the duration of the minority... Therefore, H. R. H. the Princess of Asturias is today the heir presumptive to the Spanish throne, and will remain as such until her august mother gives birth to the progeny she is carrying. This will decide if she remains Princess of Asturias, or if she is the definitive queen of Spain, in which case the principality will pass to H. R. H. Princess María Teresa.³³

This news item in *La Época* shows that, two days after the death of Alfonso XII, the country was already aware of the queen’s pregnancy. There appears to have been a general but casual acceptance that while waiting for the birth of Alfonso XII’s posthumous child, the Princess of Asturias would continue in her role as heiress to the Spanish throne and not be proclaimed queen of Spain.³⁴ This was not something which was explicitly discussed in



Figure 9.1 Francisco Jover y Casanova and Joaquín Sorolla y Bastida, Oath before the Courts of Queen Maria Cristina (30 December 1885) (Jura de la Constitución por S.M. la Reina Regente Doña María Cristina) (1897) © Patrimonio Histórico-Artístico del Senado, Madrid. Photograph by Fotografía Oronoz

the Spanish newspapers with the biggest circulation nor has it been subsequently addressed by Spanish historiography. It was simply assumed that, for the smooth running of the country, waiting for the birth of the boy who would become Alfonso XIII was the most advisable course of action – even at the price of a brief interregnum (see Figure 9.1).

The intention that motivated this course of action appears to have been to maintain some of the normality and continuity that had marked the reign of Alfonso XII. This was also why Alfonso was later chosen as the name of the infant, although it would appear that Alfonso XII would have liked the child to be called Fernando. Alfonso XIII was born on 17 May 1886. The infant was king of Spain from the moment of his birth. His arrival clarified the situation pertaining to the future of the Spanish monarchy. Despite its importance, the birth of the king was toned down in the newspapers because of a storm that had hit Madrid five days earlier, with grave consequences. Moreover, the country was still in mourning for Alfonso XII, although it was suspended for three days at court to celebrate the birth. On 17 May *La Época* announced the arrival of the new king on its front page. Not so *El Imparcial*, which stated that Pope Leo XIII had agreed to the queen's request to be a godfather to 'the royal child, should it be male'. Going beyond what had been asked of him, the pontiff even offered to do so 'also if the child is female'.³⁵ The fact that the pope was offering to be the godfather of Alfonso

XIII, as Pius IX had been of Alfonso XII, was reassuring and demonstrated that the relationship between the Holy See and the Spanish monarchy continued to be good.

On 22 May 1886 *La Ilustración Española y Americana* observed that although it prolonged 'the minority a few more years, the birth of the child who will receive the name of Alfonso XIII at the baptismal font tomorrow, strengthen[ed] the monarchy with every advantage, for males are preferred over females in the nation's laws, and remov[ed] the responsibility of the crown, always a grave one and more so at the present time, from the interesting and pretty girl, who will be Princess of Asturias'. Four days previously *La Época* had pointed out: 'it is easy to calculate, and no one ignores, how many advantages are created by the fact that it is a male of whom, for this quality alone, certain aptitudes and inspirations are expected, appropriately developed through education, in carrying out with firmness of purpose the leadership role to which he is destined'. That same day *El Imparcial* conceded that 'the difficulties and problems of such a lengthy minority are hidden from no one; but in the male succession, all can see greater solidity and stability in the decisions of the future'. *El Imparcial* devoted its front cover to the fears that had existed not only in Spain, but in the whole of Europe after the death of Alfonso XII, and pointed to what the author believed to be a common sentiment throughout Spain: that the critical and most difficult periods for the country following the death of Alfonso XII were now over.

To a certain extent, the time of crisis that had arisen with the death of Alfonso XII the previous November came to a close in that month of May. On the one hand, elections had already been held, and the constitution of the Congress and Senate would be finalized, thus closing the political process begun with the El Pardo Pact. Cánovas del Castillo had managed to restore the Bourbon monarchy in Spain, produce a new constitution and establish a working two-party system. While it is true that the constitution of 1876 has been accused of being highly conservative, or even doctrinaire, it is worth pointing out that it is not an entirely original constitution, as it is based on Spanish historical constitutionalism. The influence of the 1845 and 1869 constitutions are particularly significant.³⁶ It is indeed true that the constitution is a rather ambiguous document, but this was clearly the intention of Cánovas; the constitution was meant to integrate all parties of the monarchy. The ambiguity allowed the incorporation of new, more liberal political forces, whose bastion was the introduction of universal male suffrage introduced by Sagasta's Liberal Party in 1890.

The birth of Alfonso XIII also brought the dynastic issue to a close. A prince had been born, who was called to reign from the moment of his birth. A long regency period began during which his mother, Queen María Cristina, would be the head of state. Spain had proved itself capable of overcoming the periods of uncertainty which had emerged months earlier.

This outcome was possible because the main agents of the political decision-making processes in Spain had entered a system of mutual support during the reign of Alfonso XII. Between 1876 and 1885 the constitutional monarchy, its institutions and the political groups had worked sufficiently successfully to win the recognition of the main parties. In 1885 it was thus in their own interest to protect the future of the dynasty when it was endangered – by handing over power within the framework of monarchical constitutionalism and committing to the course that would, in the long run, produce the most stable dynastic solution. This was done in the expectation that a strong monarchy at the core of a stable constitutional settlement would successfully rebut any republican, Carlist and military challenges to the status quo. Expectations were thus raised that the new King Alfonso XIII, with Sagasta as president of the council of ministers and surrounded by reliable allies, would embody the future stability of Spain's constitutional monarchy.

Notes

Translated from the Spanish by Melissa Boyd.

1. A *pronunciamento* was 'a political crisis with the decisive participation of the army, or part of it, in beginning a rebellion against the government, self-proclaiming itself as the spokesperson of the national will, and believing liberty to be at risk. The military involved in the conspiracy take their troops out into the streets and make their *pronunciamento* public by means of rallies, proclamations and announcements. They provoke a response from the mostly urban masses. It is this participation which defines a military intervention of this type as a *pronunciamento*, and not as a simple palace coup'; J. Cepeda Gómez (1999), *Los pronunciamientos en la España del siglo XIX*, Madrid, 7.
2. M. Izquierdo Hernández (1946), *Historia clínica de la Restauración*, Madrid, 17. The Count of Valmaseda, Blas Villate y la Hera (1824–82) entered Spanish military service in 1837. Valmaseda participated in the revolt of 1854 and the War of Africa. He also was captain general in Cuba in the Ten Years' War (1867 as acting captain general; 13 December 1870–11 July 1872; 8 March–25 December 1875). On 29 December 1874, Valmaseda proclaimed the restoration in Ciudad Real, at the same time as Martínez Campos in Sagunto. See Manuel Espadas Burgos (1990), *Alfonso XII y los orígenes de la Restauración*, 2nd edn, Madrid, 337ff. ('El camino militar de Sagunto').
3. See Espadas Burgos (1990), 349ff. ('Cánovas ante la proclama de Sagunto').
4. The 1876 constitution was in force until the Primo de Rivera military coup in 1923 led to its suspension. See Joaquín Varela Suanzes-Carpegna (2009), *La Constitución de 1876*, Madrid.
5. The alternating two-party system or *turnismo* refers to the pre-established political alternation between Cánovas del Castillo's conservative party and the liberal party, which was eventually led by Sagasta.
6. Pedro Carasa (2008), 'La Restauración monárquica (1875–1902)', in: Angel Bahamonde (ed.), *Historia de España. Siglo XX 1875–1939*, 3rd edn, Madrid, 50–51.

7. Varela Suanzes-Carpegna (2009). The Liberal Conservative party led by Cánovas was in government almost uninterruptedly from 1875–80. On 8 February 1881 Alfonso XII made Sagasta president of the council of ministers, thus initiating almost three years of left liberal rule in Spain.
8. For an excellent account of the reign of Isabel II see Isabel Burdiel (2010), *Isabel II. Una biografía (1830–1904)*, Madrid.
9. Earl Ray Beck (2000), *A Time of Triumph and of Sorrow: Spanish Politics during the Reign of Alfonso XII, 1874–1885*, Carbondale, IL., 64.
10. Pedro Répide (1953), *Alfonso XII, Revista literaria. Novelas y cuentos*, Madrid, 54.
11. *Gaceta de Madrid*, 24 November 1885, parte oficial, 1.
12. Augusto Conte (1903), *Recuerdos de un diplomático*, vol. 3, Madrid, 513–14.
13. *El Imparcial*, 'The King's Illness', 25 November 1885, 1, col. 4.
14. Izquierdo Hernández (1946), 214–23. The Conde de Romanones provides another version of the events. According to him, the queen was not at El Pardo as the king lay dying: 'at the same time as her husband, attacked by dyspnoea, convulsed in bed... María Cristina remained in the royal box, endeavouring to ensure that her immense sadness did not show on her face... The king, with wife, with mother, with daughters, with sisters, died in El Pardo like one dies in hospital, completely alone.' (Conde de Romanones (1964), *Doña María Cristina de Habsburgo y Lorena. La discreta regente de España*, 3rd edn, Madrid, 46–47. This version does not, however, stand up to scrutiny as there was an announcement that 'due to the indisposition of the artists, Messrs Antón, Baldini and Silvestri, there will be no performance at the Theatre Royal today'. See *La Correspondencia de España*, 24 November 1885, 3, col. 5. For more information on the plays performed at the royal palace see Joaquín Turina Gómez (1997), *Historia del Teatro Real*, Madrid, 393–94.
15. At that time Spanish republicanism was fragmented into several movements. As a result of its insurrectionist tendencies and military connections, the one led by Manuel Ruíz Zorrilla was the most dangerous for Cánovas del Castillo and the royalist supporters in general.
16. This important newspaper whose masthead carried its nickname the 'Liberal Paper' was founded by Eduardo Gasset y Artime and first circulated on 16 March 1867. Although the newspaper initially opposed the restoration, it ended up supporting it. It formed part of the famous newspaper 'trust' with *El Liberal* and *El Heraldo de Madrid*, before going out of circulation in 1933. Its weekly supplement *Los Lunes Ilustrados* was first published in June 1893, see <http://hemeroteca-digital.bne.es/details.vm?q=id:0000189234&lang=es>, accessed 4 April 2015.
17. *El Imparcial*, 30 November 1885, 3, col. 4.
18. *La Época*, 28 November 1885, 2, col. 2.
19. 'El extranjero y la muerte del Rey', *El Imparcial*, supplement to no. 6,644, 26 November 1885.
20. *El Imparcial*, 28 November 1885, 2, col. 3.
21. Royal Palace Archive, Madrid (RPA), reigns section, Alfonso XII collection, 'national politics' volume, box 13/3, 5 December 1885.
22. Fernando León y Castillo was minister for the overseas territories under Alfonso XII and minister of government during the María Cristina regency; Fernando León y Castillo (1919–21), *Mis Tiempos*, vol. 1, Madrid, 313.
23. Antonio María de Orleans, Duke of Montpensier (1824–90) was the son of King Louis-Philippe I of France and María Amelia de Borbón-Dos Sicilias. In 1846 he married *infanta* Luisa María de Borbón, sister of Isabel II (queen of Spain 1833–68).

He conspired to take the throne on several occasions. In 1878 his daughter, María de las Mercedes Orléans y Borbón, married Alfonso XII and became queen of Spain. Furthermore his son, Antonio María Luis Orleans y Borbón, married the sister of Alfonso XII, Eulalia de Borbón.

24. See *La Época*, 26 November 1885, 3, col. 5.
25. The role played by Martínez Campos during the restoration has not been sufficiently studied. In his biography of Queen María Cristina (1964), the Conde de Romanones focuses on the general in one of his chapters, 'The Men of the Regency: Martínez Campos, Sagasta, Cánovas and Castelar', 79–91. Lario devotes a few pages to bringing us closer to the figure of Martínez Campos as military adviser to the Crown: see Ángeles Lario (1999), *El Rey, piloto sin brújula. La Corona y el sistema político de la Restauración (1875–1902)*, Madrid, 463–69.
26. Francisco Silvela (May 1902), 'Los partidos políticos', *Nuestro Tiempo*, supplement to no. 17, 727. The 'Pact' is still shrouded in some doubt. In 1902 Francisco Silvela, Minister of Grace and Justice in the government of Cánovas in 1885, said: 'when the imminent danger to the life of Alfonso XII, who was dying in El Pardo, became known in Madrid, Cánovas did not hesitate. He decided to advise the queen that power be handed over to the liberals, immediately after the king's death, and he made this known to the Duque de Montpensier and to Sr. Sagasta, which gave rise to the renowned legend of the El Pardo Pact, divorced from all reality, since the resolution to abandon the government to its fate was taken by Cánovas entirely on his own initiative, without the direct or indirect intervention of any intelligence from any liberal person'.
27. Augusto Conte (1903), *Recuerdos de un diplomático*, vol. 3, Madrid, 520–21. Given his participation in the 1868 revolution and his support of the democratic monarchy of Amadeo of Savoy, Sagasta's reputation may have given more conservative monarchists cause for concern.
28. (2006) *Cánovas del Castillo. Discursos parlamentarios*, Madrid, 1137.
29. (2006) *Cánovas del Castillo. Discursos parlamentarios*, Madrid, 1139.
30. Constitution of 1876, article 60: 'succession to the throne will follow the regular order of primogeniture and representation, the first always having preference over subsequent lines; within the same line, the closer grade over the more remote; in the same grade, the male over the female; and in the same sex, the elder over the younger'.
31. Francisco Bergamín (1928), 'Cánovas, político', in: Ateneo de Madrid (ed.) *Conferencias pronunciadas en el Ateneo de Madrid en conmemoración del primer centenario del nacimiento de Cánovas del Castillo*, Madrid, 24–25.
32. Parliamentary Archive, Madrid (PA), 'copia certificada de la inscripción del matrimonio de SS.AA.RR. los infantes de España don Antonio de Orleans y Borbón y doña Eulalia de Borbón y Borbón', box 19, series of original laws, dossier no. 01724.
33. *La Época*, 27 November 1885, 1, col. 4.
34. The first constitution in modern history in Spain of 1812 established in article 201 that 'the first-born son of the king shall be given the title of Principe de Asturias'; See José María Vallejo García-Hevia (2008), 'El Principado de Asturias', in: José Antonio Escudero (ed.), *El Rey. Historia de la Monarquía*, vol. 1, Barcelona.
35. See *El Imparcial*, 17 May 1886, 3, cols 3–4.
36. www.congreso.es/consti/otras/historicas/. See also Miguel Artola (ed.) (2007), *Las Constituciones españolas*, Madrid.

10

An Italian Heir for the New Century: Vittorio Emanuele, Prince of Naples

Valentina Villa

When on 14 March 1861 the Italian parliament bestowed institutional and political legitimacy on the rule of Vittorio Emanuele II, the public acceptance enjoyed by the Crown was neither immediate nor complete.¹ On the contrary, many subjects were convinced that the kingdom of Italy was nothing more than a geographical expression – as Prince Metternich had famously stated – and that the new sovereign did not represent them. Even years after the country's unification some foreign observers still held the same opinion; in 1863 Sir Henry Winston Barron, an Irish politician who travelled Italy extensively, detected little unity:

It is absurd, and contrary to fact, to say that the Piedmontese are the same nation [as the rest of Italy], speaking the same language, and united by a solemn compact. They are not the same race; they have not the same habits, customs, or language; and as to the compact, it was a solemn fraud.²

The widespread feelings of distance from and sometimes aversion to the monarchy and above all the government that could be found amongst the people stemmed from a variety of problems: tensions with the Catholic Church and the requisitioning of ecclesiastical property on behalf of the government, the imposition of martial law and the atrocities committed by the army (especially in the southern regions where the conscription of thousands of men led to protests and imprisonments).³

However, despite these substantial difficulties affection towards the Crown was to grow over the years. Even though Italy's three kings did not possess remarkable qualities (they were not particularly brave or bright or even handsome), they emerged as the young nation's only unitary reference point.⁴ After the controversial and troubled process of unification, the monarchical institution gradually consolidated and, in the end, the construction of a national identity would owe much to the House of Savoy.⁵

Between 1861 and 1900 – the era of the making of Italy – the sovereigns contributed to the forging of a national myth. They did so by utilizing the traditional and modern resources available to the monarchy: royal symbols and rituals, public appearances, charity work and speeches from the throne. The creation of the public image of the respective kings, disseminated throughout the country, was particularly successful. In this regard, the most recent historiography on Italy's constitutional monarchy has focused on the political and symbolic significance of the monarchs' public visibility.⁶ Moreover, the widespread acceptance of the monarchy also became evident in the construction of monuments and the designation of streets, the immense public sympathy expressed on royal funerals, or participation in royal ceremonies.⁷

Over the last 15 years, researchers have greatly enhanced our understanding of the influence of the monarchy on the nation building process and of its political significance during the Risorgimento. Yet the third Italian king, Vittorio Emanuele III, has so far received less attention.⁸ One reason for this might be his association with the authoritarian government of Benito Mussolini. Moreover, uncomfortable questions concerning his complicity in Fascist crimes – especially the approval of the racial laws – and of his role in the fateful decision to enter the Second World War have prevented an unbiased analysis of his actions during the Mussolinian *Ventennio*.⁹

The era of the Fascist dictatorship is not the only period in the long life of Vittorio Emanuele III, though, which has remained largely neglected. It is particularly regrettable that his childhood and adolescence have so far been left under-explored as his early life as heir to the throne was marked by an important departure from previous traditions within the royal household. It can also be argued that, even though his position was considerably constrained by the constitution, he played a substantial role during the problematic period at the end of the century. At that time the monarchy's image had been severely tarnished by scandals and heavy-handed political interference. The crisis was assuaged to some extent, though, by the probity and perceived reliability of the royal heir which prevented a complete loss of faith in the Crown. An exploration of Vittorio Emanuele's early years as heir to the throne – with a focus on his education and his marriage – will thus offer valuable insights into the Italian monarchy's ability to grow into a national institution.

Born on 11 November 1869, Vittorio Emanuele was the first truly *Italian* heir apparent to the throne. His father, Umberto I, was already 17 years of age when Vittorio Emanuele II was proclaimed King of Italy and, therefore, little was known about Umberto's childhood outside Piedmont-Sardinia. The birth of united Italy's first male royal baby, however, produced a gush of enthusiasm throughout the nation and was welcomed with jubilation by the parliament and the press.¹⁰ The son of Margherita and Umberto was born in the royal palace of Capodimonte in Naples, a location deliberately chosen in

order to foster affection for the crown in the southern regions.¹¹ There were public celebrations in the city and the royal household made munificent donations to all babies in the orphanages and the shelters, especially those born on the same day as the prince. These acts of royal generosity helped to shape a new image of the crown among the Neapolitans, who still vividly remembered the despotism of their former dynasty, the House of Bourbon and the formal rituals that used to accompany public appearances of the absolutist sovereigns.¹² When the baby was christened three days later, he was named Vittorio Emanuele Ferdinando Maria Gennaro. While the first two names were traditional in the House of Savoy, the others were a not-so-subtle strategy to gain the sympathies of the supporters of the Bourbons (Ferdinand), of the Catholics (Mary) and of the devotees of the patron saint of Naples (Gennaro).¹³

The royal child spent the first years of his life in the national limelight and travelled widely across the peninsula. Less than a year after his birth, Rome was secured as the new capital of the country and, from that moment on, Vittorio Emanuele moved between Turin, Naples and the Eternal City. In 1896 in an article about the prince's future residence as a married man, Turin's newspaper *La Stampa* observed: 'until now he has lived here for too short a time... he never spent a long time in the ancient city that was the cradle and the centuries-old seat of his dynasty'.¹⁴

The great visibility maintained by King Umberto I and his young enterprising wife in an effort to strengthen the foundations of the monarchy's popularity had indeed established a model that was well-known to the press and the public. It also shaped the youth of the first national heir. Right from the start of his life, Vittorio Emanuele was at the centre of an ever increasing public attention and the boy grew accustomed to being paraded around on public occasions and exhibited to the crowds – often wearing elaborate period costumes – in order to gain a broader consent for the monarchy.¹⁵

In 1881, at the age of 11, the heir started a carefully devised regime of formal education, which marked a clear departure from the nineteenth-century Savoy family tradition, since both of his predecessors had not received any systematic instruction. A thoroughly educated prince was a real novelty in Italy.¹⁶ Young Vittorio Emanuele II – 'the Father of the Fatherland' – had spent more time hunting than studying.¹⁷ Whereas the Prince of Naples's study plan included long lessons in constitutional law, Vittorio Emanuele II's textbook had still maintained that 'it will be established that in principle the supreme power comes from God and only from Him'.¹⁸ The simple and rough manners of the first Italian king – which often verged on rudeness – won him the sympathies of the working class and his soldiers, yet not the approval of Count Cavour and other politicians, who dismissed him as loutish and uneducated. Umberto I, on the other hand, was more charming, especially towards women, but constitutional law remained a mystery to him, too. In fact, according to some detractors, he used to say that a king

only needed to know three things: how to sign his name, read a newspaper and mount a horse.¹⁹ It thus marked a stark contrast to his predecessors, that the future Vittorio Emanuele III received an education that was carefully planned by his parents – particularly by his mother, who had spent more than a year looking for a suitable tutor for her son (see Figure 10.1).



Figure 10.1 The royal family with Umberto I, Queen Margherita and the crown prince (La famiglia reale con Umberto I, la regina Margherita e il principe ereditario) (1878). The small inset at the top shows the late King Vittorio Emanuele II © Biblioteca Comunale dell'Archiginnasio, Bologna

Probably the most widely quoted source in this regard was written by his professor of Italian, Luigi Morandi.²⁰ His book *How Vittorio Emanuele III was brought up*, published in 1902, sold over 40,000 copies. Unfortunately, it was a piece of political propaganda that created and reinforced many stereotypes about the king's adolescence. Vittorio Emanuele was aware that this publication could effectively damage his reputation and wrote, slightly concerned, to his former tutor, Egidio Osio: 'Have you seen the book of that Morandi? I would have never thought that it would be possible to print so many absurdities.'²¹ The pamphlet presented an exaggerated description of the boy's natural shyness and over-stressed the well-known problem of his height. Vittorio Emanuele was diminutive even by nineteenth-century standards (1 m 53 cm) and his physical malformation, probably caused by the fact that his parents were first cousins, was particularly obvious during military displays. Those 'glass-like legs', as the prince used to call them, were his constant distress during his adolescence but they did not keep him from enjoying life.²² Therefore, defining his complex personality just on the basis of his shortness would definitely be too simplistic.

A more accurate account of the heir's early life was given by his tutor and friend Colonel Egidio Osio. Born in 1840, he was a 41-year-old bachelor from Bergamo when he started working with the prince. A volunteer soldier during the war against Austria in 1859, Osio had studied at the Military Academy of Ivrea and embarked on a career in the army. He distinguished himself during the British expedition in Abyssinia and was well received as military attaché at the Italian embassy in Berlin in 1879, where Prince Friedrich Karl of Prussia recommended him to the Italian sovereign.²³ The colonel was appointed as the boy's tutor in 1881 (the heir had learned the basics with a nanny and with his mother). He would accompany and work with Vittorio Emanuele every day for the next eight years. Despite his pupil's young age, Osio was strict and quite stern.²⁴ He became famous for his quote 'the Prince is free to do whatever...I want',²⁵ and he believed in the importance of learning military values – such as a clear sense of duty and the ability to endure fatigue. These were the qualities that Osio considered characteristic of the House of Savoy. As a result, the prince always rose at six o'clock and went to bed at nine; he had lessons every day except Thursdays and Sundays, when the court attended mass.²⁶ On his days off Vittorio Emanuele could have lunch with his parents. The rest of the time, he remained under the colonel's firm rule and tough love.

The prince's educational programme was inspired by the curricula of the Military College of Nunziatella in Naples (1881–84), the School of Infantry in Modena (1884–86) and eventually by a combination of those of the School of War and the Foreign Office Diplomatic School.²⁷ The prince was formally enrolled at all of these institutions during these periods and he even used to wear the standard uniform of the pupils but – as the custom of the Savoy court imposed – he always studied alone.²⁸ At the end of the

year, oral exams were conducted in the presence of the king and the queen, the Minister of War, the chief of the army staff and other notables of the government and the military.

Colonel Osio's teaching was almost exclusively scientific, but very comprehensive; the prince studied strategy; logistics; astronomy; the art of war; geodesy; civil, penal, constitutional and commercial law; and political economics.²⁹ This schedule did not leave much space for spiritual introspection and poetic contemplations; it rather nurtured the boy's natural inclination towards science and technology. This and the fact that his tutor, unlike those of previous princes, was not a priest, could probably explain another difference between the new heir and his predecessors: his religious indifference. While the first Italian monarchs, despite their colourful private lives, were pious and venerated the Church, Vittorio Emanuele remained a detached believer and a fervent anticlerical throughout his life.

Along with the traditional school subjects and the physical and military exercises, particularly excruciating for his little body, the prince practised painting, dancing, horse riding, swimming, hunting and fencing. He also played musical instruments, even though some detractors joked that he only appreciated the official hymn of the House of Savoy, which was performed before every military display. Vittorio Emanuele's great passion, however, was numismatics. He became an avid coin collector and even wrote a colossal 20-volume work about the history of Italian coins, the *Corpus Nummorum Italicorum*.

Much attention was lavished on the study of foreign languages. The prince spoke very good English as his nanny, Elizabeth Lee, was Irish, and throughout his life he preferred keeping his accounts and his book references in English. He also wrote some entries of his juvenile diary in English; including the remarkably succinct account of his first encounter with his future wife ('We meet!') on 1 June 1896.³⁰ The Italian heir also had a perfect command of French, which was the language of the court of Savoy and which would be the language the prince shared with his future bride, Princess Elena of Montenegro. For a long time the couple talked in French whenever they were in private. With his parents, Vittorio Emanuele usually spoke the Piedmontese dialect, but Italian was to be spoken with all the teachers and the courtiers. He was, indeed, the first Italian king to speak with a received pronunciation and without any inflection. With Colonel Osio the prince learned German – during the famous visit of Adolf Hitler to Italy in 1938 the king humiliated Mussolini and the Fascist *gerarchi* by showing off his perfect command of the language – and, later, he even acquired Russian.

Moreover, in order to broaden the heir's mind, Osio took him to a different part of the world every summer: between 1885 and 1889 they visited Switzerland, Germany, Malta, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Turkey, Spain and Russia. As a result, the prince gained an impressive knowledge of domestic and international affairs. From the

correspondence with his tutor it appears that Vittorio Emanuele, though still a young boy, was well informed about the political situation not only of Rome and of Italy but also of the rest of the world. In 1882 when he was just 13 years old, he wrote:

Dear Colonel,

Maybe you already know that a Fenian has fired a revolver shot against Queen Victoria while she was alighting from the carriage at Windsor station. The bullet did not hurt anyone and the assassin was immediately caught...If everything goes well, today there is the debate (in the city council) about the abolition of the horse race of the Berber.³¹

For the first time in the history of the House of Savoy the Prince of Naples was receiving a sound education and the intellectual tools to understand the dramatic changes that the new century would bring: when it was his turn to ascend the throne, his studies had made him perfectly aware that the Italians wanted a constitutional monarch who respected the wishes of the chambers and did not interfere with the government's activity (whereas before 1900 royal meddling in political affairs had been a continuous practice in the House of Savoy). His exceptional education was praised widely and even made the foreign press. In 1900, on the eve of his accession, the *New York Times* highlighted the fine tutoring Vittorio Emanuele had received:

The new King's training is said to have been more rigid than that of any other Prince in Europe. He lived like a Spartan till he became of age, and his studies were of the most extensive character, ranging from military science to the literature of his own land. He speaks several languages perfectly, and will be altogether, probably, the most accomplished monarch in existence.³²

In 1889, having completed his formal education, Vittorio Emanuele moved to Naples, where he would stay for five more years, in order to experience military life while commanding his own regiment. Surprisingly, Naples was the perfect city for the shy prince, who even learned to speak the joyous and colourful dialect and had some romantic liaisons.³³ Moreover, the world of the barracks was his natural environment and he was happy to live at a great distance from the *bon vivant* royal court. Both his father and his tutor had instilled in the heir a deep sense of respect and appreciation for the army; as a child he had been used to spending hours attending the troops' training every week and he appreciated the hierarchy and discipline in the military. This special relationship between Vittorio Emanuele and the armed forces often proved to be a great asset and especially so during the two World Wars, when the loyalty of the army to the king, even after the fall of Fascism, was rarely questioned.³⁴

Between 1889 and 1896, Vittorio Emanuele also travelled widely abroad and made the acquaintance of all the crowned heads of Europe. During these tours he represented the Italian monarchy abroad but only as a member of a royal house, not as a future head of state involved in politics. Even though the challenges which arose as a result of Italy's foreign policy influenced his visits, he managed to perform well-balanced public appearances. This, again, illustrated the differences in attitude between Vittorio Emanuele and his father. Indeed, despite the signing of the Triple Alliance with Berlin and Vienna, Italian interests diverged from those of her allies and the Austria-Hungarian Empire was still considered an enemy by the majority of the people. Whereas his father was an open and strong supporter of the alliance, Vittorio Emanuele managed to maintain a more neutral attitude. In line with the Triple Alliance signed by Umberto's government the Italian heir visited Emperors Wilhelm II and Franz Joseph I. In August 1893, for example, he was present at the manoeuvres of the German army in Metz. But he made sure that his travels would range more widely: in the summer of 1891 he visited Edinburgh and the impressive new railway bridge crossing the Firth of Forth.³⁵ Apparently, the serious and educated heir was well received abroad and his behaviour gained the once discredited House of Savoy new respect among the other monarchies. Queen Victoria appointed him Knight of the Order of the Garter in 1891 and in a private letter he boasted, quite rightly, 'the kind old Lady has taken a liking for me'.³⁶

At the end of the century the heir to the throne had to face what was considered one of his most important duties: he was about to get married. Indeed, ever since his coming of age at 21 in 1890, his subjects were wondering who would become the next queen of Italy. The reluctance of the prince to find a suitable fiancée gave rise to (allusive) conjectures and the matter became a political issue in 1895 when Vittorio Emanuele's first cousin, the Duke of Aosta, Emanuele Filiberto, married Princess Hélène of Orléans in Kingston-upon-Thames.³⁷ The good looks and the *physique du rôle* of the ambitious Duke of Aosta were always a thorn in the prince's flesh; years later, when he became king, his childlessness led to the possibility being aired that he could be replaced by his handsome cousin, who already had two sons (Amedeo in 1898 and Aimone in 1900). During the days before the March on Rome, the fear that the pro-Fascist Duke could be hailed as the new sovereign surely played a part in Vittorio Emanuele's fateful decisions.³⁸

Getting married was thus of the utmost importance and so the royal parents – together with Prime Minister Francesco Crispi, the Minister of the Royal Household Urbano Rattazzi, the President of the Senate Domenico Farini and various European ambassadors – considered promising female candidates. This generated wild rumours. However, Vittorio Emanuele consistently refused to get married young and later maintained that he would have never accepted a loveless marriage of convenience – like that of his parents.³⁹

In April 1896, however, the heir met Princess Elena of Montenegro in Venice on the occasion of the International Exposition of Arts. Two months later, during the celebrations for the accession of Tsar Nicholas II, he fell in love with her. Vittorio Emanuele had no idea that Crispi had been thinking about the Balkan princess for years and that she had, of course, been invited to Venice on purpose. For his part, the prince was proud to think he was solely responsible for their happy union.⁴⁰ Getting married late (at the age of 27) and to a relatively unknown Montenegro princess was a bold move. It attracted some criticism as the House of Savoy was the oldest ruling dynasty in Europe and had a certain prestige.⁴¹ The engagement had a profound impact at the time and the prince impressed the public by suggesting that the monarchy was openly choosing a new way of life.⁴²

The wedding celebrations on 24 October 1896 represented a temporary respite in the tumultuous Italian life of the age (the terrible humiliation of Adwa, where an Italian army was defeated by Ethiopian troops on 1 March 1896, was still felt as a national trauma): the Crown granted a wide amnesty,⁴³ treated the soldiers to extra supplies of wine and coffee, promoted discounted railway and boat tickets so that the expected huge audience could travel to Rome more easily and declared the day of the nuptials a national holiday. Moreover, in a curious mixture of the holy and the profane, a large number of babies were christened on the wedding day; many of them bore the names of Vittorio Emanuele or Elena.

Italian newspapers and political columnists believed that the wedding was part of a strategy to establish closer relations with the Russian Empire, but even though Princess Elena was actually a member of the Romanov court, the marriage had practically no foreign policy dimension. It satisfied much more basic needs: the Balkan princess was very tall, strong and healthy and, therefore, was expected to rejuvenate the dynasty with her 'good blood'.⁴⁴ Moreover, she was one of the few European princesses who would have agreed to convert to Catholicism before the wedding; at the explicit request of Queen Margherita, she renounced her Orthodox faith when she first set foot in Italy, in Bari. However, the popular idea that the wedding also implied an approach to Russia points to the contradictory nature of Italian foreign policy. Despite being in an alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary since 1882, the Italian ministers were always ready to explore new ways to resolve the problem of the territories still under the rule of the old enemy Austria, the *terre irredente* Trentino and Trieste.

Between 1896 and 1900 the Prince of Naples withdrew from public life. On top of his sound education and non-dynastic marriage this marked another crucial break from the continuity of monarchical representation in nineteenth-century Italy. The essential royal dilemma was how to find a balance between appearing close to the people and at the same time maintaining an aura of magnificence. Vittorio Emanuele saw himself as representing

middle-class values and a certain austerity; and he lived his private life accordingly. He cherished traditional family values – gone was the time of his predecessors' multiple infidelities. The prince had no desire to live in the royal palaces and pursued rather modest hobbies such as gardening, fishing and photography.⁴⁵ His yearning for privacy and a simple lifestyle led him to renting, for a small sum, the uninhabited island of Montecristo off the Tuscan coast where he could spend some time alone with his wife. Moreover, he broke with the royal tradition of riding horses – except for the military ceremonies – and chose the car as his favourite way of transport, often taking the wheel himself rather than using a chauffeur.⁴⁶ Years later, after his accession, the changes at court became even more evident and earned him the nickname of the 'bourgeois king': the royal palace of Monza was closed, his father's thoroughbred racehorses were sold and all the balls and lavish ceremonies were discontinued.

Not only did the transformation affect the appearance of the monarchy, but also its finances. In fact, Vittorio Emanuele, who had been thrifty even as a child, wanted to clear his father's huge debts and was extremely conscious of the public controversy about the civil list, which was one of the highest in Europe and often caused protests during parliamentary debates.⁴⁷ After the First World War the king even proposed a substantial reduction of 3 million lira and transferred royal assets and lands to the state property administration in order to fund the Opera Nazionale Combattenti (National Veterans Association). Showing that he understood, at least partly, the Italian difficulties after the war, he wrote to Prime Minister Francesco Nitti: 'it's the hour in which everyone needs to do his part to reduce the state expenses'.⁴⁸

The heir's low public profile affected Italian politics. On the one hand he could not participate in the political life of the country because of the almost religiously respected political rule of the House of Savoy that kings reign one by one. This ensured that the new sovereign was largely unprepared for his political role, but also meant that he could not be held responsible for any decision taken by his father. On the other hand, Vittorio Emanuele did not even wish to get involved in politics. His law studies had taught him that a constitutional monarch had to abstain from any kind of interference and he scrupulously toed that line. Therefore, the prince did not know the protagonists of the Italian political scene; he never attended a parliamentary session and never read any official documents. The heir merely observed the tense political situation from a distance, but this detachment allowed him to gain a deep perspective on the country and on the role of the monarchy. This was recognized even abroad:

beneath his quiet, unimpressive exterior a strong will was being forged and an alert intelligence trained against the hour of his country's need.... this reserved little man was watching things from afar, silently,

but with a thorough sweep;...in his background of refined leisure he was gathering the invaluable outside point of view.⁴⁹

He certainly realized that, at the end of the century, the Crown was in danger. The Italian nation was in distress: an inept political class, tangled up in a constant series of scandals and crises, used an authoritarian approach to control social tensions and the monarchy was no longer a symbol of unity.⁵⁰ Many people considered Umberto I, who had approved the repression of strikes and even praised the general who fired against the demonstrators in 1898, a dangerous reactionary.⁵¹ In the words of historical essayist Silvio Bertoldi:

It was the reign of the catastrophic and guilty defeat of Adwa, first example of the carelessness and the internal divisions of the Italian army caste; it was the reign of the proletarian slaughters, of the troops used to suppress strikes and protests with guns and bombs;...it was the reign of the Banca Romana scandal, with 64 million of illegal money in circulation and the glaring bribery of the highest offices of the state – maybe even of the royal family...It was in particular the reign of the dynastic attempt to impose the royal policy with the bayonets overturning the government expressed by the popular will.⁵²

Moreover, Umberto exposed the Crown to political attacks by twice intervening in the choice of the prime minister (Luigi Pelloux in 1898 and Francesco Saracco in 1900) 'without even feeling the need of resorting to the usual consultations'.⁵³ This illiberal behaviour, even though it probably did not reflect a conscious attempt to push towards an authoritarian government but a personal inclination for strong politicians, discredited the House of Savoy and the sovereign.

In this national crisis, the education and private life of the crown prince appeared to represent a more suitable image of a monarchy capable of coping with the social and political challenges of the new century. Vittorio Emanuele was seen as a beacon of hope even by some of the fiercest adversaries of the monarchy. Ricciotti Garibaldi, fourth son of the hero of the unification, Giuseppe Garibaldi, stressed:

if he exercises the strength of will he is said to possess to free his crown from the state of bondage in which it was under Umberto, and make it take its true position of mediator between the different political schools, using his influence and royal prerogatives in favor of those classes that most need comfort and guidance, the monarchy in Italy may yet have a long lease of life, for patriotism is a strong quality in the Italian heart, and he would find sincere, if unexpected, support from sources now hostile to him and his crown.⁵⁴

When Umberto was assassinated at Monza on 29 July 1900, there was an outburst of genuine popular emotion. The Italians, shaken by the killing, rallied behind the Crown. The shock was tinged with some cool realism, though: 'the tragedy of Monza was the murder of a monarch, but it was the salvation of the monarchy', one contemporary observer commented.⁵⁵ The new king promised to be different from his predecessors. The impression of an intellectual education and irreproachable private life was reflected in his first speeches and political decisions. On 11 August 1900, during his first address to the Senate, he promised publicly to respect the constitution and the freedom of his subjects. Moreover, the former Prince of Naples refused the repressive measures of his father and pardoned many of those convicted for the demonstrations of 1898 (even Gaetano Bresci, the king's murderer who wanted to avenge the victims of Bava Beccaris, did not receive capital punishment). His opening to the Left led by Giovanni Giolitti, who was prime minister almost uninterruptedly from 1903 to 1914 and enjoyed the support of the monarch, finally paved the way towards a decade of peace and social reforms in Italy. Indeed, disappointing those who had hoped for an authoritarian turn after the killing of Umberto, Vittorio Emanuele approved many laws to improve the freedom and the living conditions of the Italians; the progressive social reforms proposed by Giolitti found the full backing of the sovereign who even gained the nickname 'socialist king'.⁵⁶

Therefore, even though by the end of his long reign Vittorio Emanuele would fail to live up to the expectations of the country, it is impossible to dismiss his upbringing as irrelevant: the considerable public support for the monarchy right up until 1946 was firmly rooted here. In 1900, the well-educated and sober heir – in many ways so different from the traditions of his family – became the saviour of the monarchy that would last for another half century.

Notes

1. 'The Senate and the Chamber of Deputies approved, we have sanctioned and we issue as follows: Article unique. King Vittorio Emanuele II assumes for himself and for his successors the title of King of Italy'; law 17 March 1861, no. 4671 of the Kingdom of Sardinia.
2. H.W. Barron (1863), *Results of Victor Emmanuel's Rule*, London, 66.
3. On this central topic in Italian history, see E. Gentile (2010), *Né stato né nazione. Italiani senza meta*, Rome-Bari; and R.H. Rainero (ed.) (1981), *L'Italia unita: problemi ed interpretazioni storiografiche*, Milan.
4. Though very different personalities, neither of the first two Italian kings lived up to the expectations associated with a *national* sovereign. Vittorio Emanuele II disliked half of the nation he was supposed to win over, whereas his son, Umberto I, was completely unaware of the social tensions caused by his government's decisions. A good portrait of the two monarchs' characters can be found in Mario Oriani (2002), *Poker di re: storie di amore e di guerra dei Savoia*, Milan.

5. Lucy Riall (1994), *The Italian Risorgimento: State, Society and National Unification*, London; Catherine Brice (2010), *Monarchie et identité nationale en Italie. 1861–1900*, Paris; Paolo Colombo (2004), 'Una Corona per una nazione: considerazioni sul ruolo della monarchia costituzionale nella costruzione dell'identità italiana', in: Marina Tesoro (ed.), *Germania, Giappone e Italia tra Ottocento e Novecento*, Milan, 21–33; Filippo Mazzonis (2003), *La Monarchia e il Risorgimento*, Bologna; Ilaria Porciani (1997), *La festa della nazione: rappresentazione dello Stato e spazi sociali nell'Italia unita*, Bologna; and Francesco Luciani (1996), 'La "Monarchia popolare". Immagini del re e nazionalizzazione delle masse negli anni della Sinistra al potere (1876–1891)', *Cheiron. Materiali e strumenti di aggiornamento storiografico* XIII, 141–88.
6. Paolo Colombo argued: 'the subjects' catalyst for symbolic resources are far from insignificant in the unfolding of the political as well as the institutional dynamics'; Colombo (2006), 'Gli esecutivi monarchici nella svolta di secolo: dalla "dittatura parlamentare" di Crispi al primo dopoguerra', in: Sandro Rogari (ed.), *Rappresentanza e governo alla svolta del nuovo secolo. Atti del convegno di studi. Firenze, 28–29 ottobre 2004*, Florence, 157–68, 162.
7. Valentina Villa (2011), 'La visibilità pubblica del re nella storia costituzionale italiana: continuità tra età liberale e fascismo', *Storia Amministrazione Costituzione* XIX, 47–65.
8. Seventy years after the end of the monarchy there is still no scholarly biography of the third Italian king. For biographical aspects of Vittorio Emanuele's life refer to Antonio Spinosa (1990), *Vittorio Emanuele III: l'astuzia di un re*, Milan; and, from a different perspective, Romano Bracalini (1980), *Il re 'vittorioso': la vita, il regno e l'esilio di Vittorio Emanuele III*, Milan.
9. Two significant exceptions are Paolo Colombo (2010), *La monarchia fascista. 1922–1940*, Bologna; and Federico Quaglia (2008), *Il re dell'Italia fascista. Forma di governo e costituzione nel regime dittatoriale*, Rome.
10. 'Too many tears to be sincere! All of a sudden those champions of the pen have realized that their heart is all for the monarchy, all for the members of the royal family'; see 'Rivista', *Gazzetta Piemontese* 318, 16 November 1869, 1.
11. The last king of the Two Sicilies, Francesco II of the House of Bourbon, lived in exile in Rome and, besides being a relative of the royal family – his mother was the daughter of King Vittorio Emanuele I – he was still cherished in 'legitimist' circles. See Simon Sarlin (2013), *Le légitimisme en armes: histoire d'une mobilisation internationale contre l'unité italienne*, Rome.
12. Vittorio Emanuele II found the Neapolitans' habits particularly annoying; in a letter to his daughter Clotilde he revealed: 'the highest officials of the princes throw themselves to the ground to kiss the feet and those who cannot throw themselves to the ground, make gestures to demonstrate their desire to humble themselves so melodramatically as to appear grotesque; therefore, while they were bending, I would have wanted to kick their bums'; see Gianfranco E. De Paoli (1992), *Vittorio Emanuele II. Il Re, l'uomo, l'epoca*, Milan, 211.
13. Silvio Bertoldi (1970), *Vittorio Emanuele III*, Turin, 6.
14. 'La residenza del Principe ereditario', *La Stampa. Gazzetta Piemontese* 255, 13 September 1896, 1.
15. 'L'arrivo della Famiglia Reale', *La Stampa. Gazzetta Piemontese*, 26 July 1880, 1. About the luxurious *bals d'enfants* at the royal court in Rome see Giulia Gorgone (2002), 'De bal en bal: mondanità nei primi anni della Roma Italiana', in: Giulia Gorgone and Cristina Cannelli (eds), *Il costume è di rigore. 8 febbraio 1875: un ballo a Palazzo Caetani*, Rome, 33–44.

16. The situation was different at other European courts, where it was fairly normal that heirs receive a formal and sometimes very demanding education; for example, in Germany Prince Wilhelm II of Hohenzollern spent some time studying at the University of Bonn. See Silvio Lanaro (2011), *Retorica e politica. Alle origini dell'Italia contemporanea*, Rome, 41.
17. Pierangelo Gentile (2011), *L'ombra del re. Vittorio Emanuele II e le politiche di corte*, Rome, 21–33.
18. See André Charvaz (1876), *Plan d'études des princes de Savoie-Carignan*, Paris, 38.
19. Carlo Casalegno (1956), *La regina Margherita*, Turin, 147–48.
20. Luigi Morandi (1901), *Come fu educato Vittorio Emanuele III. Ricordi di Luigi Morandi*, Turin. Despite its many inaccuracies, the book was used as an authoritative source by many scholars in Italy and abroad; see, for example, in one of the few texts in English dealing with the Italian monarchy, Robert Katz (1971), *The Fall of the House of Savoy: A Study in the Relevance of the Commonplace or the Vulgarity of History*, New York, 159.
21. Letter from Vittorio Emanuele III to Egidio Osio, 13 April 1901; see Mario Bondioli Osio (1998), *La giovinezza di Vittorio Emanuele III nei documenti dell'Archivio Osio*, Milan, 725.
22. Spinosa (1990), 33; Vittorio Emanuele was a keen traveller and a passionate photographer. He loved walking long distances to reach secluded spots suitable for his snapshots. See Michele Falzone del Barbarò (1981), *Vittorio Emanuele III ed Elena di Savoia fotografi*, Milan.
23. For a detailed biography of the colonel see Bondioli Osio (1998), 41–65. His official title was that of vice governor of the crown prince as – according to the dynastic tradition – the tutor of the heir to the throne should have been a lieutenant general.
24. The harshness and indifference of the colonel were highly exaggerated in Morandi's memoir and, therefore, became a typical topic in the heir's biographies. However, from the analysis of their daily correspondence the affection of the young prince towards his tutor is undeniable. Until the age of 13, Vittorio Emanuele signed all his letters with the untranslatable pet name of 'Pimpino' (a hypocorism with an affectionate assonance with the word 'bambino', that is 'child') and often wrote that he loved him. See Bondioli Osio (1998), 79.
25. Silvio Bertoldi (2002), *Vittorio Emanuele III: un re tra le due guerre e il fascismo*, Turin, 35.
26. Morandi (1901), 7.
27. Bondioli Osio (1998), 232–33.
28. Morandi (1901), 13–14.
29. Bondioli Osio (1998), 233.
30. Bertoldi (1970), 96.
31. Letter from Vittorio Emanuele, Prince of Naples, to Egidio Osio, 3 March 1882; see Bondioli Osio (1998), 101.
32. 'Italy's New King', *The New York Times*, 30 July 1900, 1.
33. Queen Margherita described the experience of the prince in Naples with her usual exuberance in a personal letter: 'you would have heard and known that the young man is conducting himself very well and is winning everybody's affection in Naples; he is so happy about his stay and so charmed by his soldiers; his deep love for the army is very sweet. He is also enjoying himself very much in the *beau monde* and it really has to be said that the Neapolitan society – females in particular – still has the traditions of the good old society and the ladies are

- enjoyable and lovely and even clever'; Letter from Queen Margherita to Egidio Osio, 23 December 1890; see Bondioli Osio (1998), 429.
34. See, among others, Lucio Ceva (2005), *Teatri di guerra: comandi, soldati e scrittori nei conflitti europei*, Milan, 41–79.
 35. Bondioli Osio (1998), 458–59. During these trips, the heir could show off his relaxed attitude and his modern way of life. In Scotland, he stayed in a hotel – and not in a royal palace – and dined at the canteen of the barracks with the officials of the Cameron Highlanders' regiment. Moreover, he demonstrated a new approach to personal security, abolishing every form of official protection while travelling across Europe incognito.
 36. The appointment was never annulled, even after the beginning of the Second World War; see the original text in English in Bondioli Osio (1998), 457.
 37. Getting married abroad was a tradition in the House of Savoy since the sixteenth century; see Paola Bianchi (2010), 'Politica matrimoniale e rituali fra cinque e settecento', in: Paola Bianchi and Andrea Merlotti (eds), *Le strategie dell'apparenza. Cerimoniali, politica e società alla corte dei Savoia in età moderna*, Turin, 39–72, 43–44.
 38. Gianpasquale Santomassimo (2000), *La marcia su Roma*, Florence, 89.
 39. After the first years of marriage, Umberto I and Margherita started leading separate lives and Vittorio Emanuele knew for sure that his father had many mistresses. Considering the approach of Vittorio Emanuele towards his own marriage, it looks particularly unsettling that he had chosen a royal bride for his son Umberto, the Belgian princess Maria José, almost since he was a toddler, thus imposing on him a marriage of convenience. The relationship between Umberto and Maria José of Belgium, which started when they were both children, can be traced in Arrigo Petacco (1998), *Regina. La vita e i segreti di Maria José di Savoia*, Milan.
 40. Completely unaware of the ploys behind his back, he wrote to Osio regarding the betrothal: 'I did everything on my own and without any help from the politics which is luckily very far away from my engagement'; Letter from Vittorio Emanuele to Egidio Osio, 1 September 1896; see Bondioli Osio (1998), 617.
 41. Because of her origins, Princess Elena was even mockingly called 'the peasant' or 'the mountaineer' by some members of the aristocracy; see Bertoldi (2002), 384.
 42. The romantic aspects of the affair were considered very important by the press, too, which pushed to present the relationship as a real fairy-tale. A newspaper incorrectly stated that the prince met Elena in 1894 and that the two of them had been writing to each other secretly for years; 'Come nacque l'amore dei due sposi', *La Stampa. Gazzetta Piemontese* 233, 21 August 1896, 1.
 43. The amnesty included draft dodgers, members of the army who committed certain types of military crimes, people responsible for the rebellions in Sicily and Lunigiana (except for murder) and all the felons punished with a sentence whose length was less than six months; there were also special exemptions for women, young and mentally disabled offenders; see 'I limiti dell'amnistia', *La Stampa. Gazzetta Piemontese* 287, 15 October 1896, 1.
 44. Prime Minister Francesco Crispi had requested some portraits of the princess to check her physical appearance; see Bracalini (1980), 55.
 45. When he became king, Vittorio Emanuele refused to live with his family at the Quirinal palace. Instead, he bought a vast residence in the north of Rome, Villa Ada (then Villa Savoia). Vittorio Emanuele II had bought the mansion in 1874 for hismorganatic wife but at his death it was sold to a Swiss count to refund the

- debts of the monarch. Vittorio Emanuele III made the villa his family home and went to the Quirinal every day, just as a clerk who commuted to work; Spinosa (1990), 67.
46. Letizia Argenterì (1994), *Il re borghese: costume e società nell'Italia di Vittorio Emanuele III*, Milan.
 47. To understand the mechanisms of the civil list see Paolo Colombo (1999), *Il re d'Italia: prerogative costituzionali e potere politico della Corona (1848–1922)*, Milan, 63–67.
 48. Spinosa (1990), 90.
 49. Sydney Brooks (1903), 'The King of Italy', *The North American Review* 176/555, 246–53, 249.
 50. Regarding the end of the century's crisis, one of the most interesting studies is Umberto Levra (1975), *Il colpo di stato della borghesia. La crisi politica di fine secolo in Italia. 1896–1900*, Milan.
 51. After the hunger strikes of 1898 Umberto I gave Fiorenzo Bava Beccaris, who had become the symbol of the cruel repression, a military decoration and even wrote, regarding the award, 'I am happy and proud to honor the virtues of discipline, abnegation, and valor which [your troops] so admirably exemplify'; see Katz (1971), 143.
 52. Bertoldi (1970), 30.
 53. Luigi Pelloux (1967), *Quelques souvenirs de ma vie*, Rome, 193–94.
 54. Ricciotti Garibaldi (1900), 'Monarchy and Republic in Italy', *The North American Review* 171/529, 811–16, 815–16.
 55. Brooks (1903), 250.
 56. Levra (1975), 199.

Part IV

The Impact of Dynastic Deaths

11

1834–1869–1891: The Untimely Deaths of Three Heirs to the Belgian Throne

Christoph De Spiegeleer

Between 1834 and 1891, illness cost Belgium's constitutional monarchy no fewer than three heirs to the throne. The lives of these princes have only been addressed by a small number of anecdotal biographies and a handful of scholarly studies.¹ Though the last couple of decades have seen the publication of numerous analyses of the weaknesses and strengths of various nineteenth-century monarchies, these deaths have never been subjected to a comparative analysis focusing on their impact on the Belgian constitutional monarchy and on what was done to cope with the succession crises triggered by each of them.²

In this chapter I will investigate what links the untimely deaths of three heirs, as well as the place of these tragic events within the changing national and international politics of nineteenth-century Europe. Owing to Belgium's fragile international position and its growing linguistic and political tensions, questions regarding the royal succession were a delicate matter. An account of the princely deaths will serve as an introduction to the role of heirs within Belgium's nineteenth-century constitutional monarchy. In a second section I will explore the question as to whether or not these deaths posed a threat for the international position of the young monarchy and I will analyse comments in foreign newspapers. In the third part of the chapter I will assess the impact of linguistic and political tensions on the reactions which followed the deaths of the Princes Leopold and Baudouin. Finally, the measures taken by the royal family and politicians to secure the succession and future of the monarchy after these untimely deaths will be investigated.

The popular responses evoked by these deaths as well as the strategies pursued by the royal family and other agents are closely aligned with the broader themes addressed in this volume and pose similar questions. To what extent did they express the loss of expectations and hopes previously attached to the figure of the heir? Which features of a 'nationalized'

monarchy can be traced in the funerals of the princes? Did the death of these princes trigger the kind of succession crisis which could only be resolved by a process of negotiation between the monarchical and the constitutional sphere?

Princely losses in a young constitutional monarchy

Belgium's independence from the Netherlands was declared in October 1830 – only two months after the Belgian Revolution. The newly formed country became a sovereign, independent state with a hereditary constitutional monarchy, and the National Congress elected Leopold of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha to serve as its king. The constitution made the throne hereditary in the direct, male descendance of Leopold by order of primogeniture.³

The heir apparent, Louis-Philippe, was born in July 1833 as the first child of Leopold I and his wife, the French Princess Louise-Marie of Orléans. As a political and national event that guaranteed the nation's future the prince's birth received a great deal of attention in the press.⁴ Yet Louis-Philippe died in May 1834. Apparently the milk of the first wet nurse was too strong for the baby who suffered from liver disease and an inflammation of the nose and throat.⁵ It was decided to bury the heir in the church of St Michael and St Gudula, next to the Duke of Brabant John II and the Archduke Ernest of Austria, feudal rulers from the medieval and early modern period.⁶ The chamber of representatives voted for a special address to be delivered to the bereaved king, stressing both the intimate bond between the nation and the monarchy and the loyalty of the Belgian citizens.⁷ Parliament decided not to include references to a possible succession crisis to avoid any political reverberations. The death of the infant heir to the throne in 1834 was not without consequences, though. It gave rise to fears for the future independence of the young Belgian nation state and its dynasty. Little wonder, then, that the national press strongly emphasized the political dimension of the birth of a second son, the future Leopold II, in April 1835. In December 1840 Leopold I invested the new Crown Prince with the title of 'Duke of Brabant', an 'invented tradition' aimed at creating the impression of an ancient relationship between the country and its dynasty.⁸ The burial of the first heir next to princes from the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries and the creation of the new honorific title for the crown princes of Belgium were symbolic acts designed to generate additional legitimacy for the new Coburg dynasty.

In 1859, the Duke of Brabant and his wife, a Habsburg princess of Austria, became the parents of a son, Leopold, who became heir-apparent after the accession of his father as King Leopold II in December 1865. But three years later Prince Leopold died, after months of illness, at the age of nine. What first seemed to be a common cold and cough turned out to be an infection of the membrane surrounding the heart.⁹ Citizens eagerly devoured

the medical bulletins communicated by the court during the long illness of the young heir. Identifying with the royal family as parents and grandparents many Belgians had come to share the joys and sorrows of their ruling house.¹⁰ Keen to capture and communicate the image of a bereaved father who had lost his only son, the daily press stressed King Leopold II's emotional reactions after the death of the crown prince and his mournful presence during the funeral.¹¹

A couple of months later, Marie of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, the German wife of King Leopold II's brother, Prince Philippe, gave birth to a son, Prince Baudouin, then second in line to the throne. Leopold II would have only one more child, Princess Clémentine, born in 1872, so Baudouin was raised in the expectation that he would eventually succeed his uncle as king. Just like the earlier princely births in 1833 and 1859, the birth of Prince Baudouin was welcomed in royal and diplomatic circles as a political event that consolidated Belgium's future.¹²

The education and court life of an heir were increasingly seen not merely as a dynastic matter but as an issue of political and national importance. This was all the more the case in 1870s Belgium, when the young heir presumptive Baudouin received his education. The country was torn between ultramontane hardliners, who believed the Catholic Church had to be at the centre of public life, and liberals committed to secularizing society.¹³ The decision in 1875 to appoint the liberal Jules Bosmans as Baudouin's personal governor with responsibility for the prince's education thus provoked strong opposition in the ultramontane press.¹⁴ In the 1880s, critical opinions were voiced within the radicalizing Flemish movement against the neglect of Dutch in Baudouin's curriculum. The ruling classes in nineteenth-century Flanders, the Dutch speaking northern part of Belgium, spoke French, with Dutch being regarded as an inferior language. Yet in 1887 the prince made himself popular in Flanders when he addressed a Flemish crowd in the town of Bruges in Dutch. After his speech Baudouin also decided to stand in honour of the unofficial Flemish anthem. As a result of these symbolic gestures, many Flemish people came to see Baudouin as their saviour and believed that, as king, he would settle the language question once and for all.¹⁵

In line with broad cultural trends, many nineteenth-century princes and monarchs began to live their domestic lives like 'normal' citizens, with an allegedly bourgeois work ethic, often combined with a military sense of duty, but quite removed from royal pomp and circumstance.¹⁶ This explains why, in 1884 when the prince was 15 years old, Leopold II and Baudouin's father, Prince Philippe, decided to send him to the Royal Military School where Baudouin was to receive a military education in close contact with the other students. This marked a significant rupture with the superficial military training received by his father and uncle.¹⁷ In 1889 Baudouin assumed the command of the 263 men of the first company of the regiment of the

carabiniers. For many observers, Baudouin embodied both military duty and the fulfilment of bourgeois values. In order to attract popularity his simple lifestyle and his demonstrative solidarity with the soldiers were deliberately made visible and known to the public.¹⁸ In 1891, however, he caught a cold that rapidly developed into bronchitis. The prince suddenly died before his 22nd birthday. His younger brother, the then 15-year-old Prince Albert, was now destined to become king.

The demise of the Belgian heirs: the international echo

The deaths of three young royal heirs were events that received attention beyond the country's borders. For the first two princes this was largely owed to the circumstances under which the Belgian monarchy was created and which resulted in a very close connection between dynasty and nation. When Leopold I's son died in 1834, the country's independence was still not recognized by the Dutch King Willem I. In fact, at the very moment when the infant passed away, diplomats in London and Paris were seeking to attain an official recognition of Belgium by the Spanish cabinet.¹⁹ Apart from this, the independent constitutional monarchy still had to struggle with disruptive opposition within Belgium's borders. Until 1839 the Orangists constituted a strong anti-Belgian opposition; they represented traders and industrialists who had flourished under the Dutch reign. Symbolic acts of resistance, party press and conspiracies on the part of these counter-revolutionaries caused considerable controversy.²⁰

On the day before Louis Philippe's death earlier street riots led the Minister of Justice to propose measures outlawing any public support for a return to Dutch rule.²¹ In this context, a relatively low-level dynastic crisis in 1834 (given the young age of the Belgian queen who was expected to have more children) could raise serious concerns about the future of the nation state and the monarchy. Indeed, the secretary-general of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs believed that the absence of a successor would place the country in a precarious political position for at least a year.²² Rumours circulated that both members of parliament and the king were looking to Leopold's nephew as a successor and reports reached the press that members of the chamber of representatives had met outside parliament to discuss the issue of succession. As a result, papers in Belgium and France openly discussed the question of the stability of the Belgian state.²³

Once Willem I signed the treaty of the XXIV articles in 1839, which officially recognized the independent and neutral kingdom of Belgium, the internal Orangist opposition slowly disappeared. Yet the Belgian nation was only finally consolidated in 1848, when the parliamentary constitutional monarchy escaped the revolutionary mood which swept much of Europe.²⁴ However, with the removal of the French King Louis-Philippe I Belgium lost its privileged dynastic link with France, and Napoleon III's destabilizing

politics undermined the peacekeeping diplomacy pursued by Leopold I.²⁵ Leopold II shared his father's concern for the defence of Belgium's territory and placed little faith in the European powers' guarantee to protect Belgium in exchange for her neutrality.²⁶ A general atmosphere of anxiety about a possible French annexation of Belgium persisted throughout the Second Empire.²⁷ Moreover, even if Napoleon III would not directly invade Belgium, court and government circles were fearful that Belgium would turn into a battleground in the event of a Franco-German war.²⁸

In 1868–69 Jules Van Praet, an influential voice on both foreign and national politics and close advisor of King Leopold II's father, had grave concerns about the succession. Van Praet advised the liberal Prime Minister Walthère Frère-Orban that, in case of the death of Prince Leopold, the political world would have to reaffirm its confidence in the nation's future, perhaps even with some pathos, in order to calm the public. During his son's protracted illness Leopold II himself feared the consequences the crown prince's death would have for the legitimacy of the monarchy.²⁹ After the child had passed away liberal, liberal-Catholic and ultramontane papers confidently asserted the vitality of the independent nation and that strong ties of loyalty linked the Belgian people to their monarchy.³⁰ They were staging a national union which was, as will be shown, fragile at best.³¹ Prominent liberal and Catholic parliamentarians followed Van Praet's informal advice and did their best to deny all doubts regarding the political future of the nation and monarchy. Addresses were given to the chamber and condolence letters delivered to the bereaved king by the senate and chamber of representatives.³²

Given the international context in 1869, a number of foreign papers considered the possible political consequences of the heir's death. The French paper *L'Union* warned that the question of Belgian succession was a European problem that had to be solved.³³ Influential English papers, on the other hand, stressed their belief in the strength and future of the Belgian monarchy.³⁴ Such articles reflected the considerable sympathy the little nation enjoyed in British public opinion and anticipated Britain's diplomatic intervention when the relationship between France and Belgium would become increasingly tense.³⁵ With the help of the British government, Belgium was eventually guaranteed its neutrality and managed to stay outside the military conflict between Prussia and France in 1870.³⁶

In the late 1880s and early 1890s, Leopold II and his government endeavoured to stress Belgium's neutral position between France and Germany.³⁷ Nonetheless, the death of Baudouin in 1891 caused the French daily *Le Figaro* to express publicly concerns about Belgium's independence from the neighbouring German Empire under Wilhelm II. The newspaper argued that the death of the new young heir Albert could give the German branch of the Saxe-Coburg family occasion for claiming the Belgian throne.³⁸ This reaction can be explained by the general French concern that Belgium would

support Germany in her plans to attack France. Some British dailies were equally worried about Belgium's independent future now that there was only one young male heir.³⁹ Leopold II personally assured Victoria that, in absence of a male descendant, the Belgian constitution gave him the right to appoint a new heir, in agreement with both chambers.⁴⁰

The deaths of heirs and intra-Belgian problems during the second half of the nineteenth century

If the death of Louis-Philippe in 1834 was a political event on an international level and the death of Baudouin in 1891 mostly a national event, the death of Leopold in 1869 was both. It occurred at a moment when both the Catholic-liberal struggle within the kingdom and international French-German tensions were heightened. In the 1860s many journalists, diplomats and politicians believed that internal political strife and Belgium's international position were closely connected. French papers predicted that the fierce debates raging between Catholics and liberals in the Belgian parliament would lead to a break-up of the nation and would, eventually, allow France to conquer Belgium. This explains why, after Prince Leopold's death, the most important Catholic daily in Brussels called upon the nation to rally behind the bereaved royal family in order to protect Belgium from foreign aggressors and their thirst for territorial gain.⁴¹

The national press professed great confidence in the strength and future of the country and its dynasty. The question of whether the constitutional pact between nation and monarchy was also a pact between the Catholic Church and the nation, and thus the relationship between state and Church, was still the subject of intense debate, though. In the years 1858–70 the liberal governments turned back the Catholic tide and reduced Church control in areas such as charity and education. This radicalized an ultramontane wing within political Catholicism that was convinced that the Church stood well above the state as well as anticlerical sentiments of freethinkers within the Liberal Party.⁴² In 1869 political-religious tensions quickly resumed their ordinary course in the press, as was shown by the public discussion following the official reaction by Archbishop Victor Dechamps to the death of Prince Leopold. A militant attitude within the clerical-liberal battle and a concern to propagate the union between nation, religion and monarchy drove the leaders of the Belgian Church to use their pastoral letters for political ends. Dechamps composed a special pastoral letter in which he expressed his hope that the loss of the heir would bring Belgium closer to its Catholic traditions and glory.⁴³ Some ultramontane bishops even publicly stated that Leopold's death was God's punishment for the war fought against the Church by a part of the population.⁴⁴ Liberal journalists severely criticized the archbishop for attacking the government in this fashion. This incident exacerbated anticlerical emotions and further

widened the gap between ultramontanist and the constitutional regime with its freedom of press and religion.⁴⁵

After years of ideological warfare the Catholics eventually succeeded in ending Frère-Orban's era of political liberalism in 1884. Socio-economic polarization now became more important than the religious-ideological battle. The labour movement grew into a well-organized mass movement. In 1885 socialist leaders created the Belgian Workers' Party which started street protests to demand universal suffrage.⁴⁶ At the same time the Flemish middle classes were growing increasingly conscious of their language and culture. Sales of newspapers in the Dutch language were rising.⁴⁷ As a result, the impact of Baudouin's death in 1891 should be seen not so much in terms of the threat it caused for the international position of Belgium – caught as it was between its powerful neighbours – but in a national political context. His death mobilized socialist and flaming sentiments in the politically opinionated national press.

If the future of the Belgian monarchy seemed uncertain in 1891, this was also a result of a new era of democratization. The electoral reform contained in the new constitution of 1893 was crucial for the political consolidation of both the Flemish and the socialist movement.⁴⁸ The reaction to the death of Prince Baudouin in the Flemish penny press shows the increasing support the Flemish movement experienced amongst different social groups. It also pointed to the rapid growth of Flemish national awareness. A successful media campaign that highlighted Baudouin's visits to Flemish cities and his symbolic actions in Bruges in 1887 had turned him into a kind of mythical saviour for many Flemings. Especially in Antwerp, the hotbed of the movement, his loss was greatly felt.⁴⁹ Papers portrayed the deceased heir presumptive as 'their Flemish Prince' who had symbolized the end of discrimination and represented hope for the future.⁵⁰ On the other hand, some important francophone papers were noticeably unkeen to recall the Flemish sympathies of the prince and neglected or minimized Baudouin's Dutch speeches in their memorial articles.⁵¹

In 1891, in contrast to 1834 and 1869, the arrival of a socialist mass movement with its own party press meant that the previously unanimous public acceptance of the principle of constitutional monarchy and its expression through the media had come to an end. The monarchy was no longer seen as essential for independence. In the early 1890s the socialist party was explicitly republican and its press was used for aggressive anti-dynastic propaganda. Two socialist and republican leaders from the capital, Louis Bertrand and Jean Volders, called the hysterical responses to Baudouin's death pure bourgeois hypocrisy intended to serve the monarchy.⁵² According to Volders, the possibility of a real succession crisis in the future – with only one male successor left – made the demand of the socialist party for universal suffrage even more urgent.⁵³ Such a public disavowal of the monarchy was without precedent in 1834 and 1869. These republican hardliners seemed isolated

amid the sentimental outbreak of emotions after Baudouin's death. In fact, the socialist rhetoric triggered the anger of some royalist citizens, as can be seen in certain poems and in the vandalizing of a party press building in Brussels.⁵⁴ This incident was certainly the result of rumours, spread by the socialist and radical press, that the prince may have met a violent, unnatural death which would eventually lead to a mediated scandal in the foreign press.⁵⁵

Responses to safeguard the future of the monarchy

How did different agents (ministers, representatives and especially the kings) negotiate behind the scenes to respond to the challenges which arose from the deaths in 1834, 1869 and 1891? The strategies – explored here for the fields of royal diplomacy, the politics of royal marriage and the public staging of the funeral ceremonies – changed as the position of the Belgian monarchs towards their subjects and ministers, as well as the relationship between European monarchs, were undergoing significant transformations.

Leopold of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha was the widower of a British crown princess, uncle to Queen Victoria, friend of Whig aristocrats, son-in-law of the King of the French and a German by birth and education. In other words, he was well equipped to compensate for Belgium's initial lack of a diplomatic machinery and could use his networks to support his kingdom's international position. Leopold I engaged in extensive personal diplomacy behind the scenes of the European conflicts of the day.⁵⁶ It is thus not surprising that he made use of his family connections and conducted an independent royal diplomacy after the death of his first son in 1834.

Parliamentarians had been quick to suggest that the king should designate a new heir from among his nephews of the Saxe-Coburg branch and thus make use of article 61 of the constitution. Leopold seemed to accede to this request even before the funeral.⁵⁷ The Belgian envoy in London and confidant of Leopold I, Sylvain Van de Weyer, advised the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on which parliamentary procedure to follow and also corresponded personally with Leopold on the idea of naming a new heir.⁵⁸ The bereaved king wrote to his father-in-law to inform the King of the French and his government of his intentions. Louis-Philippe immediately expressed his displeasure at Leopold's intention to adopt a German nephew as the new successor. According to him, Leopold had no right to decide this on his own without the approval of France and Britain. Louis-Philippe did not regard the Belgian succession question as urgent and feared that this decision would break the dynastic relationship between the Coburg and the Orléans families and thus also the connection with Britain.⁵⁹ The French monarch warned that his nation would look askance at this decision to sell Belgium 'to the Germans'.⁶⁰ Some Belgian members of parliament equally feared the

delicate discussions this action would unleash and the plan to designate a new heir was eventually aborted.⁶¹

Leopold II lost the peacekeeping role and internationally recognized position his father had gained for himself. On a broader European scale the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed a decrease of the peaceful diplomatic role that crowned heads could play as the 'royal international' gave way to a growing nationalization of monarchies.⁶² As a result, the second king of the Belgians did not engage as extensively with European politics in his correspondence with Queen Victoria as his father had done.⁶³ In his correspondence with Queen Victoria after the death of his child in 1869 Leopold II restricted himself to expressing his personal sorrow and the burdens of royal duty in times of personal grief. He refrained from any diplomatic and political commentary on his succession.⁶⁴ In 1891 Leopold II's letters to Victoria show that he was far more concerned about the tense political situation within Belgium than with his own succession.⁶⁵

Leopold I had been able to perform discreet royal diplomacy behind the scenes because of his powerful family connections. These resulted from carefully arranged strategic marriages which served to secure the Belgian succession and consolidate the position of the young monarchy. Leopold I's marriage to the daughter of the 'Citizen King' Louis-Philippe I was the result of long negotiations and a highly political affair. Leopold I decided to marry his son, the Duke of Brabant, to a Habsburg princess, in order to further consolidate the Belgian dynasty and the country's independence.⁶⁶ The marriage of Leopold II's brother, Prince Philippe, to the daughter of the Prince of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen was equally political. As early as 1862–63, Queen Victoria pressed Prince Philippe to marry as soon as possible in order to secure the future of the country and avoid the danger of Belgium becoming French. After all, his father was sick and his brother had only one young male child.⁶⁷ Philippe's marriage put the Prussian King Wilhelm I and Leopold II on friendly terms and allowed them to meet in Berlin against the background of heightened Franco-Prussian tensions.⁶⁸

By the time of Baudouin's death, Leopold II had become convinced of the need for constitutional reform. In the course of the ongoing negotiations he tried – with varying levels of success – to increase both his political and dynastic influence. A week after Baudouin's death Leopold II informed his prime minister that he wanted to put himself in charge of the marriage plans of his new successor Albert and the other princes.⁶⁹ For if there was one thing Leopold II had inherited from his father, it was an enduring belief in the political importance of dynastic ties. The parliamentary committee which prepared the revision shared Leopold's fear that careless marriages by princes who were in the line of succession could damage the country politically. A new provision was thus added to the constitution stating that royal

consent had to be obtained for the marriages of princes if they wanted to retain the right of succession. In 1898 Leopold II forbade Prince Albert to marry a French princess of the exiled Orléans branch, because this marriage was deemed politically dangerous.⁷⁰

In the context of analysing a ruling dynasty's public performance, a royal or princely funeral can be read as a form of communication. Messages are relayed nationally, between the monarchy and its subjects, and internationally, between related and non-related foreign monarchs.

In 1834 Leopold I and his wife were shattered by grief and did not even attend the funeral of their infant son, which was treated as an event of minor political importance.⁷¹ The funerals of the Princes Leopold and Baudouin in the second half of the century reflected how theatricality and symbolic politics were gaining importance in interstate relations.⁷² Compared with 1834, the mourning for Prince Leopold in 1869 entered a different public and international dimension. Official notification letters were now sent to courts in all parts of the world.⁷³ The connection with the Hohenzollern dynasty through Leopold II's sister-in-law resulted in the ceremonial representation of the Prince of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen and the King of Prussia, who both sent special military representatives.⁷⁴ The funeral took place in the small church of Laken and was organized exclusively by the royal court. The government was keen to stage a second official ceremony in the church of St Michael and St Gudula, designed to stir public patriotic and monarchical sentiments.⁷⁵

At the time of Baudouin's solemn funeral in 1891, national identity had become more important than international monarchical family ties, and monarchs had in the first place to personify their nation state and national prestige.⁷⁶ Another structural feature of European politics at the end of the nineteenth century was theatricality, caused by the growing symbolic role of monarchs at times of international rivalry.⁷⁷ Both these long term tendencies – nationalization of monarchies and the rise of theatricality in international politics – not only manifested themselves during meetings between sovereigns, as demonstrated by Johannes Paulmann, but also in the organization of royal funerals in the late nineteenth century.⁷⁸

Leopold II personally took all the major decisions with regard to the burial of his nephew Baudouin. He clearly found it difficult that royal funerals had become increasingly national and public events. Many non-related foreign monarchs and heads of state intended to send a special mission to Baudouin's funeral, but Leopold II declined them all.⁷⁹ The Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister asked Leopold to reconsider this decision, indicating that an increased sense of theatricality and national representation of monarchies had become the expected norm.⁸⁰ It appears that Leopold II was not wholly unaffected by this trend and clearly cared about maintaining excellent ceremonial and diplomatic relations with German princes and kings.⁸¹ He did not dare to refuse the delegation from

the German Emperor Wilhelm II and personally and with full military honours received Prince Heinrich of Prussia, the emperor's brother, at the train station.⁸² Leopold had also ordered a copy of the funeral hearse used for Emperor Wilhelm I in 1888.⁸³ The king was thus well aware of the importance of ceremonial acts in the relations between courts and with regard to communicating national pride. The result was a substantial international gathering. Queen Victoria decided to send her son-in-law, Prince Henry of Battenberg, to Brussels. A small deputation of the Prussian regiment of which Baudouin was captain was also allowed to participate in the funeral in Brussels and Prince Albert, the new heir presumptive, walked next to Heinrich of Prussia in his uniform of the Royal Military School.⁸⁴ This theatrical scene of Belgian and German royal representation and pride was witnessed by dense masses of people who could at the time hardly imagine the future events in 1914–18 which would force both the British and Belgian royal families to abandon their German family name.⁸⁵

Conclusion

During the moments of dynastic hiatus caused by the sudden deaths of three heirs a number of questions became very pressing. They concerned the role of the Belgian royal family in the international position of Belgium and the monarchy's ability to act as an integrative or polarizing force on the national level. The importance of the Belgian monarchy for the history of the young nation state on both a symbolic and political level became very obvious. The new Belgian monarchy had to consolidate itself in the international order in the first half of the century and depended on the policies of the great powers. Hence the death of Prince Louis-Philippe in 1834 became a political event that triggered reflections in the press on the geopolitical situation of Belgium. In 1869 the emotional power with which the press and representatives confirmed the vitality of the Belgian nation and dynasty after the death of Prince Leopold shows how the Belgian monarchy had become a focal point of patriotic and national sentiment, even if parliament was clearly divided on major issues.

In fact, as the nation survived moments fraught with international tension in the second half of the century, the Belgian monarchy increasingly had to act as an integrative institution in times of growing national political strife. The question of succession proved particularly delicate, as the future king was supposed to be the living personification of the continued existence of an increasingly linguistically and politically divided country. The centre of gravity of the problems caused by premature deaths of heirs was shifting. Prince Baudouin's death in 1891 triggered popular responses in the national press directed at internal issues in a rapidly changing political and social landscape characterized by the rise of the socialist and the Flemish movement. Flemish middle-class groups projected cultural and political

expectations onto the heir presumptive, whereas socialist opinion-makers used the death of the prince to intensify their republican ideology and struggle for universal suffrage.

These dynastic ruptures called for strategies to safeguard the future of the monarchy. The kings of Belgium were bound by the limits of the parliamentary system and had to negotiate with their ministers. In 1834 members of parliament and ministers prepared the designation of a new successor and eventually decided to abort the plan. In the 1890s Leopold II stood in close contact with the prime minister with regard to the constitutional revision and the chamber of representatives had to vote on the king's demand to have his say on succession issues included in the new constitution.

Though the succession was to be negotiated between the constitutional and monarchical sphere, this chapter has shown how the complex personalities of the first two Belgian monarchs stopped them from turning into mere puppets of their ministers, especially concerning matters of their succession. Leopold I was able to correspond with royals, diplomats and foreign ministers on his succession outside the control of his government in 1834. Leopold II may have lost this key role in European politics, but he became more authoritarian as time passed. In the aftermath of Baudouin's death in 1891 he successfully introduced a decisive personal influence on the marriages of his successors in the new constitution. Marriages of Belgian princes and heirs did not lose their political meaning as a strategy for securing the future of the monarchy throughout the century. Leopold II also refused to allow foreign delegations at the funeral of Baudouin in 1891, in spite of explicit pressure from his government. The funeral of Baudouin became nonetheless a notable event with pageantry and considerable foreign representation, in tune with the growing theatricalization and nationalization of monarchies.

Notes

1. Many of the books on the history of the Belgian monarchy are driven by a nostalgic interest in Belgium's reigning house; see Henriette Claessens (2002), *Leven en liefdes van Leopold*, Tielt; Mia Kerckvoorde (1991), *Louise d'Orléans. Reine oublié, 1812–1850*, 2nd edn, Paris. For more scholarly studies see Jean Stengers (1997), *De koningen der Belgen. Van Leopold I tot Albert II*, 2nd translated edn, Leuven; Gita Deneckere (2011), *Leopold I. De eerste koning van Europa*, Antwerp; Herman van Goethem (2011), *Belgium and the Monarchy: From National Independence to National Disintegration*, Brussels; and Vincent Dujardin and Valérie Rosoux (eds) (2009), *Leopold II. Ongegeneerd genie? Buitenlandse politiek en kolonisatie*, Tielt. In two recent biographies of Prince Baudouin and Prince Philippe, Count of Flanders, Damien Bilteryst attempted to find some middle ground between academic research and anecdotic sentimentalism, with varying success; see Damien Bilteryst (2013), *Le prince Baudouin. Frère du Roi-Chevalier*, Brussels; and (2014), *Philippe, Comte de Flandre, Frère du Léopold II*, Brussels.

2. For valuable studies on the connections between national identity, international political culture and Europe's nineteenth-century monarchies see David Cannadine (1983), 'The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the "Invention of Tradition", c.1820–1977', in: Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds), *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge, 101–64; Eva Giloi (2011), *Monarchy, Myth, and Material Culture in Germany, 1750–1950*, Cambridge; John Wolffe (2000), *Great Deaths: Grieving, Religion and Nationhood in Victorian and Edwardian England*, Oxford, New York; Johannes Paulmann (2000), *Pomp und Politik. Monarchenbegegnungen in Europa zwischen Ancien Régime und Erstem Weltkrieg*, Paderborn.
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4. Paul Hymans and Henri Hymans (1887), *Bruxelles à travers les ages, vol. 3: Bruxelles moderne*, Brussels, 82–86.
5. Brussels, Royal Archives (RA), Fonds Leopold I, Archives Marie-Amélie, 643, no. 88, letter from Queen Louise-Marie to Marie-Amélie, 19 May 1834; letter from Leopold I to Princess Sophie, in: Jean Puraye and Hans-Otto Lang (eds) (1973), *Lettres de Léopold Ier à sa sœur la Princesse Sophie, à son beau-frère Emmanuel, Comte de Mensdorff-Pouilly, à son neveu Alphonse, Comte de Mensdorff-Pouilly, 1804–1864*, Luik, 261.
6. 'Caveaux des Ducs de Brabant', *L'Indépendant*, 20–21 May 1834.
7. 'Rapport de la commission d'adresse à l'occasion du décès du prince royal', *Moniteur belge* 144, 24 May 1834, session 23 May 1834.
8. Vincent Dujardin (2009), 'Leopold voor Leopold II: de Hertog van Brabant (1835–1865)', in: Dujardin and Rosoux (eds) (2009), 57–60.
9. RA, Archives Cabinet Leopold II, 1328, 'Historique de la maladie de S.A.R. le Prince Leopold de Belgique', 31 December 1868.
10. 'Mort du Prince Royal', *Le Journal de Bruxelles*, 23 January 1869.
11. 'Mort de S.A.R. Le Duc de Brabant', *Le Bien Public*, 23 January 1869; 'Funérailles de S.A.R. le Duc de Brabant', *L'Écho du Parlement*, 26 January 1869; and 'Funérailles du Prince Royal', *Le Journal de Bruxelles*, 26 January 1869.
12. Letter from Prince Karl-Anton of Hohenzollern to Prince Philippe, 12 November 1868, and letter from Nothomb to Prince Philippe, 3 June 1869, cited in Bilteryst (2013), 29–32.
13. Els Witte, Jan Craeybeckx and Alain Meynen (2000), *Political History of Belgium from 1830 onwards*, Antwerp, 62.
14. Bilteryst (2013), 66; Eliane Gubin and Jean-Pierre Nandrin (2005), 'Het liberale en burgerlijke België, 1846–1878', in: Els Witte and Eliane Gubin (eds), *Nieuwe Geschiedenis van België I. 1830–1905*, Tielt, 369.
15. Van Goethem (2011), 53; Bilteryst (2013), 177–79.
16. Heinz Dollinger (1985), 'Das Leitbild des "Bürgerkönigtums" in der europäischen Monarchie des 19. Jahrhunderts', in: Karl Friedrich Werner (ed.), *Hof, Kultur und Politik im 19. Jahrhundert*, Bonn, 347–56.
17. Bilteryst (2013), 132.
18. 'La vie du Prince', *Le Journal de Bruxelles*, 24 January 1891; 'Le Prince Baudouin en public', *Le Journal de Bruxelles*, 24 January 1891; 'Capitaine aux carabiniers', *Le Soir*, 24 January 1891; and 'Uit het leven van prins Boudewijn', *Het Handelsblad van Antwerpen*, 24 January 1891.
19. Brussels, General State Archives (GStA), Papiers Van de Weyer, 107, letter (minute) from Van de Weyer to Leopold I, 16 May 1834, and 238, letter from Palmerston to Van de Weyer, 24 July 1834. Brussels, Archives Foreign Affairs

- (AFA), correspondance diplomatique, légation Grande Bretagne, janv-mai 1834, letter from Van de Weyer to de Merode, 13 May 1834.
20. Witte, Craeybeckx and Meynen (2000), 26–27; see Els Witte (2014), *Het Verloren Koninkrijk. Het harde verzet van de Belgische orangisten tegen de revolutie, 1828–1850*, Antwerp.
 21. *Le Lynx*, 17 and 18 May 1834.
 22. AFA, correspondance diplomatique, légation de Grande Bretagne, janv-mai 1834, letter from Nothomb to Van de Weyer, 18 May 1834.
 23. *Le Journal des débats*, 25 May 1834; *Le Messenger de Gand*, 29 and 30 May 1834.
 24. Witte, Craeybeckx and Meynen (2000), 43.
 25. Deneckere (2011), 495–99.
 26. Witte, Craeybeckx and Meynen (2000), 60–61.
 27. John Bartier (1975), ‘La police politique de Napoléon III et la Belgique’, in: *Les Relations franco-belges de 1830 à 1934, Actes du colloque de Metz (15/16 Novembre 1974)*, Metz, 84–85; Romain Yakemtchouk (2010), *La Belgique et la France. Amitiés et rivalités*, Paris, 33–34; and Coenraad A. Tamse (1973), *Nederland en België in Europa (1859–1871)*, Den Haag, 134.
 28. AFA, copied letters from Leopold II to Victoria, vol. 2; letters from Leopold II to Victoria, 1 May 1866 and 20 March 1867; letter from Lord Howard de Walden to Lord Stanley, 22 April 1867, in: David Stevenson (ed.) (1987), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print. Part I. Series F. Vol. 4: Belgium, 1862–1890*, London, 273.
 29. Archives Université Libre de Bruxelles (AUL), Archives Frère-Orban, 60, letter from Van Praet to Frère-Orban, 17 September 1868.
 30. Liberal-Catholicism had a positive attitude towards modern civil and political liberties and did not want to use the state to impose Catholicism on the nation, in contrast with the ultramontane ideology. The opposition between liberal-Catholics and ultramontanes within political Catholicism was specific to the nineteenth century. See Vincent Viaene (2001), *Belgium and the Holy See from Gregory XVI to Pius IX (1831–1859): Catholic Revival, Society and Politics in 19th-Century Europe*, Brussels and Rome, 37.
 31. ‘Mort du Prince Royal’, *Le Journal de Bruxelles*, 23 January 1869; ‘Mort de S.A.R. le Duc de Brabant’, *L’Écho du Parlement*, 23 January 1869.
 32. ‘Mort de S.A.R. le Duc de Brabant’, *Le Bien Public*, 23 and 29 January 1869.
 33. AFA, Diplomatic Archives, 10.274, décès de SAR le Duc de Brabant-Circulaires, corps diplomatique et consulaire de Belgique (IV), list press articles by Beyens, 17 February 1869; ‘Mort de S.A.R. le Duc de Brabant’, *Le Bien Public*, 23 January 1869.
 34. AFA, Diplomatic Archives, 10.274, décès de SAR le Duc de Brabant-Circulaires, corps diplomatique et consulaire de Belgique (IV), letter from Bartheleyns to Van der Stichelen, 23 January 1869; ‘Mort de S.A.R. le Duc de Brabant’, *L’Écho du Parlement*, 25 January 1869.
 35. Tamse (1973), 21.
 36. Mark Van den Wijngaert (2009), ‘Leopold II. Een vorst met veel vertoon maar minder macht’, in: Vincent Dujardin and Valérie Rosoux (eds), *Leopold II. Ongegeneerd genie? Buitenlandse politiek en kolonisatie*, Tiel, 20–21; Tamse (1973), 146.
 37. Yakemtchouk (2010), 35–6; letter from Lord Vivian to the Marquis of Salisbury, 26 February 1887, in: Stevenson (1987), 328.
 38. ‘La succession au trone’, *La Meuse*, 26 January 1891; ‘Le prince Baudouin’, *Le Figaro*, 24 January 1891.

39. 'La presse étrangère', *La Meuse*, 26 January 1891.
40. Letter from Leopold II to Victoria, 22 February 1891, in: Victor Capron (1990), *Un précieux enfant. Leopold, Duc de Brabant-Comte de Hainaut, 12/6/1859–22/1/1869*, Brussels, 145.
41. 'Mort du Prince Royal', *Le Journal de Bruxelles*, 23 January 1869.
42. Witte, Craeybeckx and Meynen (2000), 63–64
43. *L'Écho du Parlement*, 27 January 1869.
44. Rome, Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Nunziature di Bruxelles, Busta 12, sez. 3, Malattia e morte del Duca di Brabante, 122, pastoral letter Théodore-Joseph, 23 January 1869 and 114, pastoral letter de Montpellier, 22 January 1869.
45. *L'Écho du Parlement*, 27–29 January 1869; *Le Journal de Bruxelles*, 30 January 1869; *Le Bien Public*, 26 January 1869; Joseph Boniface (1869), *Épître à l'archevêque de Malines*, Brussels.
46. Witte (2000), 79–88. See Hendrik Defoort (2006), *Werklieden, bemint uw profijt! De Belgische sociaaldemocratie in Europa*, Leuven.
47. Witte (2000), 96–99. See Lode Wils (2009), *Van de Belgische naar de Vlaamse natie. Een geschiedenis van de Vlaamse Beweging*, Leuven.
48. Van Goethem (2011), 61.
49. 'Te Antwerpen', *Het Handelsblad van Antwerpen*, 24 January 1891; 'Dood van Prins Boudewijn', *Jong Antwerpen*, 29 January 1891.
50. 'Prins Boudewijn is dood', *Het Handelsblad*, 23 January 1891; 'God gaf hem ons!' and 'Prins Boudewijn en het Brugsche volk', *De Klauwaart*, 29 January 1891; 'Adressen', *Het Handelsblad*, 31 January 1891.
51. 'Le prince Baudouin en public', *L'Indépendance Belge*, 24 January 1891.
52. Louis Bertrand, 'Le Dogme Monarchique', *Le Peuple*, 28 January 1891; Jean Volders, 'Le Prince Baudouin', *Le Peuple*, 29 January 1891.
53. Jean Volders, 'L'hérédité au trône', *Le Peuple*, 27 January 1891; 'Une Grave Question', *Le Peuple*, 24 January 1891.
54. *Le Peuple*, 3 February 1891.
55. 'Ce qu'on dit', *Le Peuple*, 24 January 1891; *La Réforme*, 24 January 1891.
56. Viaene (2001), 137–38; Stengers (1997), 250–51.
57. AFA, correspondance diplomatique, légation de Grande Bretagne, janv–mai 1834, letter from Nothomb to Van de Weyer, 18 May 1834.
58. AFA, correspondance diplomatique, légation de Grande Bretagne, janv–mai 1834, letter from Van de Weyer to de Merode, 24 May 1834; RA, Fonds Leopold I, Archives Cabinet Leopold I, 178/4, letters from Van de Weyer to Leopold I, 24 and 27 May 1834.
59. AFA, correspondance diplomatique, légation de France, tome 6, 1834, copy letter from de Merode to Le Hon, 21 May 1834; RA, Fonds Leopold I, handwritten copies of correspondence between French and Belgian royal family, 639, letter from Louis-Philippe I to Leopold I, 22 May 1834.
60. RA, Fonds Leopold I, handwritten copies of correspondence between French and Belgian royal family, 639, letter from Louis-Philippe I to Leopold I, 31 May 1834 and extract of a letter from Palmerston to Leopold I, 26 May 1834.
61. AFA, correspondance diplomatique, légation de Prusse, tome 2, 1834, letter from de Merode to Beaulieu, 17 June 1834.
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63. Van den Wijngaert (2009), 20; Stengers (1997), 261; Tamse (1973), 137; AFA, copies of letters from Leopold II to Victoria, vol. 2, letters from Leopold II to Victoria, 20 March 1866; 1 May 1866; 11 December 1866–12 March 1867; 22 January and 7 March 1871.
64. Letters from Leopold II to Victoria, 24 and 31 January 1869 in: Capron (1990), 112–17.
65. Letter from Leopold II to Victoria, 22 February 1891, in: Capron (1990), 145; AFA, copies of letters from Leopold II to Victoria, vol. 3, letter from Leopold II to Victoria, 8 February 1891.
66. Stengers (1997), 244–45.
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73. AFA, Diplomatic Archives, 10.274, décès de SAR le Duc de Brabant. Notification aux souverains (V), formules de notification.
74. AFA, Diplomatic Archives, 10.274, décès de SAR le Duc de Brabant-Circulaires, lettres de condoléance (III), letter from Van der Stichelen to minister of royal household, 25 January 1869.
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78. Paulmann (2000), 406, 26; Cannadine (1983), 128–29; Frank-Lothar Kröll (2007), 'Zwischen europäischem Bewußtsein und nationaler Identität. Legitimationsstrategien monarchischer Eliten im Europa des 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhunderts', in: Hans-Christof Kraus and Thomas Nicklas (eds), *Geschichte der Politik. Alte und neue Wege*, Munich, 361.
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12

The Impossible Task of Replacing a Model Heir: The Death of Ferdinand-Philippe d'Orléans and the 'New France'

Heidi Mehrkens

From a dynastic perspective the French monarchy seemed rock solid in July 1842. King Louis-Philippe I and Queen Marie-Amélie were blessed with ten children. Five of their sons had reached adulthood; young Prince Antoine celebrated his eighteenth birthday that summer.¹ The king was very fond of his seven grandchildren, among them six boys, each one of them as fit as a fiddle. The family members were on first-name terms and enjoyed spending time together.²

The public staging of family values was designed to consolidate the dynasty. In spite of their numerous male offspring the Orléans' claim to the throne had not remained undisputed since the July revolution of 1830, the *trois glorieuses*, when Louis-Philippe had succeeded the Bourbon dynasty. Only the fall from power of King Charles X had delivered the throne to the younger branch of the family; the political coup estranged the Orléans from influential parts of noble French society.³ It became a challenge for Louis-Philippe's eldest son, Ferdinand-Philippe Duc d'Orléans, who was 20 years old when the revolution created him Prince Royal, to be accepted as heir to the throne. For years he strongly felt the repudiation in society, especially from legitimist groups still supporting the Bourbons.⁴ The remedy, again, seemed to come from the family. On 30 May 1837 Ferdinand-Philippe married Duchess Helene of Mecklenburg-Schwerin,⁵ and their two sons Louis-Philippe d'Orléans, Comte de Paris, and Robert d'Orléans, Duc de Chartres, were the couple's pride and joy; they helped establish the crown prince's image in society as a caring husband and father, embodying the future of the dynasty.⁶

He also became a promising 'next in line'. The relationship between the king and his successor improved when Ferdinand-Philippe learned to act with some restraint. After severe clashes with both the king and his ministry early in the 1830s he endeavoured to keep a low political profile,

to avoid openly challenging his father's increasingly conservative views and to demonstrate the dynasty's most valuable assets – unity and harmony. Instrumentalizing his military experience in Algeria, his interest in the arts and sciences, his connections to the literary circles of Paris, his liberal political attitude and social commitment, Ferdinand-Philippe succeeded in becoming more visible in public while keeping clear of the king's carefully guarded prerogatives.⁷

The Prince Royal's death on 13 July 1842 thus came as a huge blow for the July Monarchy. Ferdinand-Philippe was on his way to Castle Neuilly near Paris to visit his parents before leaving for a military inspection at Saint-Omer. Near Porte Maillot, the coachman lost control of the open carriage when his two horses bolted, and the prince fell so badly onto the pavement that he broke his skull. Ferdinand-Philippe was carried to a grocer's house where he died hours later without having regained consciousness.⁸

The loss of the Prince Royal left a void impossible to fill; this chapter deals with its consequences in the political as well as in the dynastic sphere.⁹ As we have seen, the Orléans family was blessed with numerous sons prepared to take Ferdinand-Philippe's place. Yet in the July Monarchy the death of the heir-apparent was not a matter to be solved within the dynasty alone: the government under Minister President Marshall Soult drafted the bill for a regency law to be discussed and passed in the legislative institutions of the French parliament, the *chambre des députés* and the *chambre des pairs*. The stormy debate on the regency bill shows that in nineteenth-century France a rupturing of the line of succession immediately went beyond the sphere of the dynasty. It can be argued that the relationship between the monarchical and the constitutional institutions of the state never fully recovered from the repercussions of the succession crisis.

On a different note the negotiations around Ferdinand's succession suggest that neither the office of 'regent' nor that of 'heir to the throne' was interpreted as a neutral institution with a clearly defined scope of duties. The succession crisis seems to have been overshadowed by an emerging notion of an ideal model of a constitutional heir to the throne. Its elements were extracted from the popular image and memory of the Prince Royal and expressed in countless memoirs, letters of condolence, poems and biographies, many of them published immediately after the prince's death. The royal family, taking great pains to nurture an emotional bond between nation and dynasty, relied on the participation and good will of their subjects and the media in order to further the monarchical feeling in the post-revolutionary 'new France'.¹⁰ The regency question therefore became an important topic with the potential to prove that the dynasty could not only provide many candidates, but also ones that were capable of filling the gap the Prince Royal had left. In France, where three influential dynasties – Bourbon, Orléans and Bonaparte – claimed the right to the throne, it mattered even more *who* was next in line.

The cabinet and the regency law

When Foreign Minister François Guizot received the message of the Prince Royal's accident he immediately rushed to the scene. In his memoirs Guizot described his helplessness and anxiety in the face of the suffering of the royal family: 'for three hours I stayed in this miserable chamber, next to the prince who died on a mattress, his father, his mother, his brothers, his sisters on their knees gathered around him, silent, just to hear him breathe... I saw how he died. I saw how the king and queen embraced their dead son'.¹¹

During these trying hours Guizot was in exclusive (yet surprisingly numerous) company. In addition to the head of the ministry and War Minister Marschall Soult, Duc de Dalmatie, the ministers occupying the portfolios of justice (Nicolas Martin), the interior (Charles Marie Tanneguy, Comte Duchâtel), the marine and colonies (Guy-Victor Duperré), finances (Jean Pierre Joseph Lacave-Laplagne) and public education (Abel-François Villemain) were also present at the prince's deathbed.¹² Since the passing of the Prince Royal was not a private affair, it was attended by these office holders performing a political protocol right next to the grieving members of the royal family. The death certificate was issued the same evening at the Castle of Neuilly by two members of the *chambre des pairs*, Etienne-Denys, Baron Pasquier as president of the chamber, and Elie, Duc Decazes. Ministers Soult and Martin certified the death of the heir to the throne.¹³

The ministers' responsibility went beyond this formal act. While the grieving royal family withdrew to the castle and avoided any public statement, the members of the cabinet, 'exclusively admitted to the king',¹⁴ kept a narrow communication channel open to the outside world where the French nation anxiously held its breath. The ministry cancelled the planned festivities for the 14 July national holiday and informed the prefects and the national guard about the incident. Hundreds of Parisians now thronged to the scene of the accident, to lay down flowers at the house where Ferdinand had died and to sign the condolence lists at the gates of Castle Neuilly. The ministers carefully sifted through the flood of letters of condolence and selected the ones to be presented to the king.¹⁵

While the royal family's children hurried to Paris to be at their parents' side – for example Ferdinand's sister Louise-Marie d'Orléans, Queen of the Belgians, and his brother François, Prince de Joinville, who, being at sea as a navy officer, only learned about the accident on 18 July – the ministers demonstrated that they were capable of keeping the state machinery going. The grieving king was soon back in charge, though. When Louis-Philippe convoked his cabinet council on 15 July, not even two days after his eldest son had died, the *Journal des Débats* commented: 'a father's anguish is profound; it remains silent in the face of the king's duties'.¹⁶

The most urgent duty of the king and the political institutions was to settle the dynastic succession. As a consequence of the death of the Prince Royal in the prime of his years the House of Orléans now had to bridge the considerable age difference between its current and its future head. Ferdinand's eldest son was a child of not even four years. The king was almost 70 years old and would probably not live to see his grandson reach majority.¹⁷ In order to secure the succession for the Comte de Paris, a regency seemed inevitable.

The French constitution, the *Charte* in its revised version of 1830, did not mention a regency at all, nor did it provide specifications about the age of majority of the future ruler.¹⁸ The invitation Louis-Philippe had received in 1830 from the *chambre des députés* which offered him the title of King of the French stated 'that general and urgent interest of the French nation calls to the throne: His Royal Highness Louis Philippe d'Orléans... and his successors for all future, in the male line, according to the right of primogeniture excluding the female sex and its successors'.¹⁹

Prince Royal Ferdinand-Philippe himself had decreed by his will that in the case of his premature death his eldest brother Louis, Duc de Nemours, should become regent for his eldest son.²⁰ The king also favoured Nemours who up to this point had been quite content with his role as younger prince and somewhat lacked the popular appeal of his elder brother.²¹ Considered rather conservative, Nemours would have been first choice of the majority loyal to the government which had been confirmed in the elections of 9 July 1842. By drafting a regency bill tailored to the male succession the cabinet supported the king's strategy to secure his dynasty's claim for power. The *Journal des Débats* proclaimed confidently that 'the new France' of the July Monarchy would be prepared to meet the challenge in unity and appealed to all parties to act in a fashion worthy of constitutional institutions.²²

The king's tears

Because of the tragedy the session of the bicameral parliament was opened early. In an audience on 21 July Louis-Philippe welcomed the peers, led by their speaker Pasquier, and 80 selected deputies.²³ When parliament was opened on 26 July the chamber seemed to be bursting at the seams. François Guizot was impressed by what he described as a moment of solidarity between politicians of all parties and the king:

I have just returned from the royal session and the Tuileries. Large assembly; around 160 peers and 400 deputies. The chamber crowded with spectators. Everyone in black. Deeply felt emotion, lively acclamation, repeated several times on the king's entry. The king, at first deeply worried and in tears, could hardly speak. He rallied himself at the third sentence.²⁴

The king allowed the members of the two chambers a glance at his troubled fatherly emotions. His tears reinforced the connection between the sovereign, his peers and the elected delegates. In the pro-governmental press the shared sentiment was interpreted as a strength of monarchy: 'the king was not afraid to show his tears', the *Journal des Débats* stated. 'The father's agony had something august, as well as the king's majesty. The tears that fell on this brilliant throne, ...resembled a sad and pious witness of the vanity of human greatness, while the energetic adhesion of the two chambers which resounded under the royal canopy, gave the impression of strength and might, of durability.'²⁵

Those who might have interpreted Louis-Philippe's tears as a sign of indecisiveness and weakness were soon set right. Despite being evidently 'dejected by age and grief',²⁶ the king, in his speech from the throne, energetically stressed the importance of a smooth passing of the regency law. He made an appeal to the members' feeling of national unity: 'should it please God to call me, then France, the constitutional monarchy, must not for one single moment be exposed to an interruption of royal authority'. Both chambers would have to fight off this 'immense danger' with well thought-out measures in order to maintain 'peace and security of our fatherland' throughout the future king's minority.²⁷

On 9 August the government presented their bill for a regency law to both chambers.²⁸ Article 1 set out that the king would attain his majority at the age of 18. The second article provided that the regent for an under-aged heir to the throne was to be the prince who was next in line and at least 21 years of age. In this case the heir's mother was responsible for his upbringing and education (*la garde et la tutelle*). François Guizot praised the bill for its representation of 'essential principles of constitutional monarchy in France', namely hereditary monarchy and the Salic law.²⁹

The demonstration of patriotism was welcomed by the liberal conservative majority in parliament. However, even before the debate commenced it emerged that the chambers were not as united in supporting the regency bill as the government and the monarch had hoped. The constitutional Liberal Party (*Parti du Mouvement*), led by Odilon Barrot, certainly would raise objections. The republicans around Lamartine had avoided joining in the public emotional consolation and pointedly met the king's tears in parliament with deep collective silence.³⁰ Moreover, the elections in July 1842 had provided new delegates from the legitimist party with seats in Parliament. The *Journal des Débats* openly challenged the election of Henri Auguste du Vergier de Larochefoucauld, deputy for Morbihan, and accused the politician of undermining the regency law by spreading pro-Bourbon propaganda before he had even given a single speech in parliament.³¹

Throughout the three days of parliamentary debate from 18 to 20 August emotions ran high in the *chambre des députés*.³² The commission in charge of examining the bill recommended minor formal changes. There was a

general sense that the regency might be a useful tool for dealing with the immediate situation France was facing. It was also unchallenged that this regency should be defined by law according to the *Charte* of 1830 rather than by constitutional amendment. However, the main disagreement among the various political groups touched upon the character of the bill itself: was this to be a temporary solution in order to solve an individual pressing problem? Or should the law be a lasting tool for similar constellations in the future?³³ It was understood that a general regency law would strengthen the Orléans' claim to the throne as well as, in a more general sense, the position of the monarchy in France. For very different reasons this was not acceptable for either the deputies of the political left or for the representatives of the legitimist right.

The list of speakers filled up very quickly. Left-wing politicians criticized the fact that the chambers had no say in deciding who would be regent and demanded a *loi des personnes* instead of a *loi des principes*: parliament, Lamartine stated, should be given the power to elect a suitable regent.³⁴ Even Odilon Barrot, a strong supporter of the July Monarchy, argued that the new regime must not try to be more monarchical than the old one under Charles X. In order to protect the crown, the regency bill in its current version would deprive the parliament of its function: 'believe in the wisdom of the chambers', he appealed to the representatives, 'believe in their experience!' Electing the regent would provide the best possible candidate and thus strengthen the monarchy.³⁵

And why would the best possible candidate necessarily have to be a man? Many republican deputies actually supported the regency of Ferdinand-Philippe's widow.³⁶ Duchess Hélène d'Orléans had a liberal reputation similar to that of her late husband. One argument in favour of her regency was that any potential conflict between the regent and the future king's mother could be avoided by simply merging these two functions. The advocates of the bill, on the other hand, stressed the importance of having a male regent. France would have to be represented as a nation and military force in Europe – surely a female regent would not be able to accomplish this task.³⁷

Delegates from the ranks of the legitimists, banished to the margins of political decision-making since 1830, used the debate to support the monarchy, yet not the dynasty currently on the throne.³⁸ Their deputies pleaded against a hereditary regency law, and Larochejaquelein caused a disturbance by expressing his view that 1830 had been a palace revolution, a 'triumphant insurrection',³⁹ bringing an unlawful regime to the throne of France. His rebellious attitude led to his removal from the speaker's desk.

Adolphe Thiers's speech made a strong impression. In 1836 and 1840, as minister president, the representative of the centre-left had learned to appreciate the Prince Royal's liberal attitude. As a member of the *chambre des pairs* Ferdinand-Philippe had occasionally given speeches in parliament.⁴⁰ Four

days after the prince's tragic death Thiers had made his way to Neuilly in order to express the condolences of the parliamentary opposition. In a letter he described how out of place he had felt in the entrance hall of the palace when at the same time the King and Queen of the Belgians had arrived and the family had cried and embraced each other. Ready to turn on his heel Thiers had been invited by Louis-Philippe to a private conversation about 'the most pressing matters of government'.⁴¹ With regard to urgent political reforms Thiers wrote in his private correspondence: 'this death affects me more and more each day. I have not lost a friend; but France has lost the only man who could have liberated this country from this mediocre life in which it dozes'.⁴²

Who would become regent was not important for Thiers: 'one group wants the Duchess (that is the opposition), the other the Duc de Nemours (that is the conservative party): This is all paltry. We should not interfere but take whom one will give to us'.⁴³ In his speech on the regency bill Thiers demonstrated his loyalty towards the July Monarchy: he opposed the party line and supported the bill, declaring under tumultuous acclamations from the parliamentary majority: 'I am deeply monarchical!'⁴⁴

The number of delegates who cast their vote on 20 August 1842 was 404. The bill passed in the *chambre des députés* with 310 *boules blanches* to 94 *boules noires*, an absolute majority.⁴⁵ It was also passed in the *chambre des pairs* (with 163 to 14 votes).⁴⁶ According to the *Journal des Débats* there had not been such a remarkable consensus of opinion since 1830, and the dissenting votes of republican and legitimist delegates were harshly criticized.⁴⁷ The passing of the regency law certainly strengthened the monarchy. For the moment they defined the respective roles of parliament and government in dynastic decision-making.⁴⁸ It can be argued that this result was, to a large extent, owed to the public staging of Ferdinand-Philippe's memory.

L'adieu du pays: saying farewell to a constitutional model heir

Plans for the Prince Royal's funeral were published three days after the accident: his coffin was to remain in the Chapel of Neuilly until 30 July and then to be displayed in Notre Dame de Paris. A ceremony was fixed for 3 August, followed by the coffin's removal to the vault of the dynasty at Dreux.⁴⁹ This outline for a state funeral was subject to lengthy discussions between cabinet ministers and the royal family. To start with, Queen Marie-Amélie refused to have her son's bodily remains transferred to Notre Dame, making it crystal clear that she did not want to expose the Prince Royal to the Parisians and offer them yet another spectacle. She also feared for the lives of her remaining sons who could become targets for assassins while escorting their brother's coffin. Since Louis-Philippe and his family had already experienced several assassination attempts this was not an argument that could be simply brushed aside.⁵⁰

The king and his ministers eventually prevailed over the mother's deeply felt wish: the funeral should be staged publicly in order to provide an opportunity for the grieving nation to say goodbye. François Guizot argued that Ferdinand-Philippe had not only been Marie-Amélie's beloved son, but 'also the child of France',⁵¹ and that the funeral would honour his rank and destiny as heir to the throne. The prince had decreed in his will that he wanted a simple funeral and no 'posthumous masquerade'.⁵² His wish was ignored because public sympathy towards the Crown, as it was understood, could make a difference when it came to voting in favour of or against the regency bill.⁵³

When the day of the funeral arrived, the Parisians flocked together for an *adieu du pays* that turned into a monarchical rally.⁵⁴ Tens of thousands attended the procession from Neuilly to Paris in respectful silence. The king's four sons walked behind the coffin, followed by representatives of both chambers and the government.⁵⁵ The body of the heir to the throne was laid out in state for three days in Notre Dame before being transported to the royal chapel in Dreux.

The *Journal des Débats* felt compelled to comment on the overall extent of sorrow expressed by the French people. According to the newspaper the popularity of the Prince Royal was rooted in the fact that Ferdinand-Philippe had understood his role as heir to the throne in a constitutional monarchy: 'the Duc d'Orléans knew his century'.⁵⁶ The paper also argued that the French people would stand together to protect the achievements of the July Monarchy.⁵⁷ Numerous biographies, press articles and pamphlets linked the memory of the heir to the throne to a collective 'monarchical sentiment' and stressed the significance of the Orléans dynasty for the nation's welfare. A children's book, dedicated to the Comte de Paris, spelled it out for its young readers:

I will tell you why your parents were sad and dismayed, why grief ruled over the whole of France. The fatherland is not only mourning the prince, but also the young man with the noble and generous heart, with the cultivated and open-minded nature, the respectful and dearly loving son – in one word, the hope of the royal family and of the other large family to which we all belong and which is called society.⁵⁸

It was easy to extract from the memory of Ferdinand-Philippe the image of a model constitutional heir serving the French nation. Not all elements of this image were recent and inspired by the adult life of the crown prince. Some of them actually drew power and authenticity from the fact that they were rooted in his youth in the 1820s, when the accession of his dynasty had seemed out of reach.

The Prince Royal had been cultured and a personal friend of many important artists and intellectuals. Alexandre Dumas travelled from Florence to

Paris to attend the funeral.⁵⁹ Victor Hugo delivered an address to the king in the name of the Institut Français.⁶⁰ Alfred de Musset, a friend of the family and deeply shaken up by this 'death without meaning in the prime of his life' honoured Ferdinand-Philippe with a poem.⁶¹ Louis-Philippe I purchased the house where his eldest son had breathed his last; the price of 110,000 francs was taken from the civil list.⁶² In 1843 the modest building gave way to the chapel of St Ferdinand, richly endowed with artwork presented to the family by artists who had been friends of the late heir to the throne. The chapel was clearly more than a place for contemplation; it transmitted a dynastic programme. The outstanding glass windows by Ingres and the memorial by Triqueti, designed by Ary Scheffer, still bear witness to the fact that Ferdinand-Philippe had been an important collector, friend and patron of the arts.⁶³

From childhood the Prince Royal had been taught to value culture and education. Between 1819 and 1825 Ferdinand-Philippe famously attended a public school, the Collège Henri-IV in Paris. Many contemporary biographers explicitly referred to Louis-Philippe's motivation for sending his sons to school: according to the king they were supposed to learn, in the company of other children, to avoid snobbery and develop a sense of duty and responsibility as princes related to the reigning dynasty within a constitutional monarchy.⁶⁴ Some of the Prince Royal's friendships with non-nobles actually lasted until his death; the delegate Louis Paul Achille Guilhem attended the funeral service in Dreux and was remembered by Ferdinand-Philippe in his will.⁶⁵

His rather liberal upbringing in comparison to other dynasties had nurtured the prince's interest in the social question. Far more so than the king, Ferdinand-Philippe had considered social inequality as a result of social change and industrial growth as one of France's most important problems and believed that all institutions of the constitutional monarchy had a responsibility for solving it.⁶⁶ Accordingly, the Duke and his wife became patrons of social societies, especially educational institutions. When the Prince Royal died, the societies addressed the Duchess expressing their condolences and their hope that the support would be maintained in the future. As the Parisian *Société pour l'Instruction Élémentaire* stated, the Prince Royal had understood 'that there is no work of equally high interest, equally liberal, equally religious, equally philanthropic than public education'.⁶⁷

The prince was also singled out in the public memory for his courageous visits to several hospitals during the cholera epidemic of 1832 and his remarkable solicitude for the patients.⁶⁸ Possibly the favourite field of his engagement had been the army where he could act more freely, 'avoiding collisions with the machine of governance'.⁶⁹ The image of the young soldier and war hero was highly significant. Here the tradition of military service within the Orléans dynasty dovetailed with Ferdinand-Philippe's self-staging as the youthful advocate of the 'new France', ready to defend the achievements of

the revolution, weapon in hand.⁷⁰ The prince fought as an officer of the First Regiment of Hussars in 1831 in the 'campaign of ten days' (*campagne des dix-jours*) in Belgium and in Algeria in 1835 and 1840.⁷¹ It is telling that there are numerous contemporary images of the Prince Royal as a soldier, often on horseback, and the fact that Ferdinand-Philippe wore uniform when he died might well have increased the aura of glory and honour surrounding the prince.

Put together, these elements of public, published and staged memory suggested that with the Prince Royal France had lost an ideal constitutional heir to the throne – and with him all hope for a liberal future of the July Monarchy. Left-wing politicians like Odilon Barrot or Adolphe Thiers had considered the prince capable of reconciling France's monarchical heritage with the developing democratic elements of the constitutional state. It was widely assumed that, once King of the French, Ferdinand-Philippe would have embodied the military strength of the nation as well as a sense of social responsibility; moreover, he was expected to bring France to a further stage politically by encouraging the longed for reform of the franchise system, something that Louis-Philippe refused to engage with until the moment he was dethroned in 1848. In this sense France now mourned 'the prince of the new generation, the king of the future'.⁷²

The fragile reign

In his biography of King Louis-Philippe I, Guy Antonetti has argued that the death of Ferdinand-Philippe deprived the dynasty of a personality which could not be replaced in its relevant function as the great white hope of the July Monarchy.⁷³ Louis-Philippe's fall from power in February 1848 was the result of a gradual process with many causes; nevertheless, the July Monarchy has frequently been interpreted as the 'second victim'⁷⁴ of the tragic accident that occurred six years earlier. No historian will be able to prove the assumption that Ferdinand-Philippe, on the throne in place of his father, would have been capable of avoiding a revolution.⁷⁵ In Antonetti's sense it might well be argued, though, that the death of the Prince Royal caused political effects beyond the control of the dynasty and the government, which gradually contributed to undermining the Orléans' reign.

Among legitimist circles the exiled pretender Henri d'Artois, Duc de Bordeaux, furthered hopes for a return of the Bourbon dynasty to the throne of France.⁷⁶ On 29 November 1843 several hundred supporters of the dynasty rallied in front of his house at Belgrave Square in London and swore loyalty to 'Henry V', future 'King of France'.⁷⁷ What was scandalous about this meeting was the public appearance of five representatives of the French chamber of deputies: the delegates Blin de Bourdon, Saubert de Larcy, Berryer, Duc de Valmy and Larochejaquelein were attacked in the French press, and so was the patron of this demonstration, Chateaubriand.⁷⁸

The *Journal des Débats* interpreted the conduct of the representatives as treason.⁷⁹ The Duc de Bordeaux's visit to London was accompanied by much alarmed correspondence across the Channel: urged by the French government, Queen Victoria refused to receive the Duke officially. Louis-Philippe stressed indignantly that d'Artois had come to London not as a visitor, but as a pretender, stirring legitimist feelings in France through his public appearances.⁸⁰ *The Times* in London shared this opinion, dismissing the rally as disturbing the peaceful relations between France and Britain.⁸¹

A massive dynastic and political campaign followed hard on the heels of this incident. It was stoked by the king who aimed to smother the spark of the legitimist fire and put the loyalty of the delegates to the test. When parliament opened on 27 December 1843 Duchesse Hélène d'Orléans made her first public appearance since her husband's death, together with the heir to the throne, the Comte de Paris. The delegates paid their respects to mother and son who were still in mourning, 18 months after the fateful accident.⁸² In his speech from the throne the king avoided referring to the occurrences in London, yet he stressed the successfully improved relationship between the French and the British governments.⁸³ The traditional address to the king by the *chambre des députés*, delivered in January 1844, almost predictably added fuel to the fire: the address criminalized the conduct of the five representatives who had gone to London to greet d'Artois and reproached them for breaking the oath they had sworn to respect the constitution and to remain loyal towards the House of Orléans. Infamy was the price for such treachery.

'The public conscience condemns such culpable machinations',⁸⁴ stated the address which had been approved by a narrow majority of representatives. The five delegates concerned reacted by resigning their seats – only to be re-elected in their constituencies.⁸⁵ Many representatives had voted against the severe condemnations expressed in the address because they lent the whole affair unwanted attention.⁸⁶ But Louis-Philippe was irreconcilable and his behaviour in the crisis contributed to increasing the tension.⁸⁷ This not only intensified his rejection by the legitimist party, but he also became increasingly estranged from the ministers and delegates supporting his cause. The king fiercely reproached his ambassador in Turin, Salvandy, because the loyal diplomat had voted against the address. His wrath was aimed at Thiers for the same reason.⁸⁸

With Louis-Philippe ageing and increasingly less capable of self-criticism the July Monarchy lost its defence mechanisms against competing republican and legitimist forces. The foundations of an emotional community between nation and dynasty, the monarchical sentiment, started to crack, and in the end it was impossible for the Comte de Paris to replace his father as the liberal hope and a constitutional model heir for the 'new France'. The shifted balance between the constitutional institutions and the dynasty became obvious in February 1848, when Paris was again on the barricades: hostility against the

crown and a gaping lack of support in the chamber of deputies forced the heir of the July Monarchy and his family into exile and left Louis-Philippe I to be the last French king.⁸⁹

Notes

1. Antoine d'Orléans, Duc de Montpensier (born 31 July 1824). Three of their children had died young: Marie (1813–39), Françoise (1816–18) and Charles-Ferdinand d'Orléans, Duc de Penthièvre (1820–28). The dynasty's genealogy is to be found in Arnaud Teyssier (2006), *Les enfants de Louis-Philippe et la France*, Paris, 309–12.
2. Anne Martin-Fugier (2012), *Louis-Philippe et sa famille 1830–1848*, 2nd edn, Paris, 18–19.
3. On the July Revolution see Munro Price (2007), *The Perilous Crown: France between Revolutions*, Basingstoke; Robert Tombs (1996), *France 1814–1914*, Harlow; Guillaume de Bertier de Sauvigny (1970), *La Révolution de 1830 en France*, Paris; Pamela M. Pilbeam (1994), *The 1830 Revolution in France*, Basingstoke. On the revolutions in Europe 1830 see Sylvie Aprile, Jean-Claude Caron and Emmanuel Fureix (eds) (2013), *La liberté guidant les peuples : Les révolutions de 1830 en Europe*, Seyssel.
4. Joëlle Hureau (1995), *L'espoir brisé. Le Duc d'Orléans 1810–1842*, Paris, 228–36; Martin-Fugier (2012), 202–6.
5. Renate Löschner (2009), *Helene Herzogin von Orléans – eine Mecklenburgerin im französischen Königshaus des 19. Jahrhunderts*, privately printed, Berlin; Jeanne-Paule d'Harcourt (1859), *Die Herzogin von Orléans Helene von Mecklenburg-Schwerin*, 2nd edn, Berlin.
6. The Comte de Paris was born 24 August 1838; the Duc de Chartres 9 November 1840; see Teyssier (2006), 128–32; Hureau (1995), 309–10.
7. Guy Antonetti (1994), *Louis-Philippe*, Paris, 838.
8. Descriptions of the accident are to be found in Hureau (1995), 311–12; Teyssier (2006), 143–44; Price (2007), 309–12.
9. On the political implications of grief in early nineteenth-century France see Emmanuel Fureix (2009), *La France des larmes: Deuils politiques de l'âge romantique (1814–1840)*, Seyssel.
10. Ute Frevert (2013), 'La politique des sentiments au XIXe siècle', in: Gudrun Gersmann, Mareike König and Heidi Mehrkens (eds), *L'espace du politique en Allemagne au XIXe siècle : Revue d'histoire du XIXe siècle* 46/1, 51–72.
11. François Guizot (1865), *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire de mon temps*, vol. 7, Paris, 11–12.
12. *Journal des Débats Politiques et Littéraires*, 14 July 1842, 1; Anon. (1842), *La vie et la mort du Prince Royal duc d'Orléans*, Paris, 24. On the 'third ministry Soult' see Benoit Yvert (2007), *Premiers ministres et présidents du Conseils depuis 1815 : Histoire et dictionnaire raisonné des chefs du Gouvernement en France (1815–2007)*, Paris, 60.
13. 'Acte de décès de très haut et très-puissant prince Ferdinand... Extrait des registres de l'état civil de la maison royale', in: Adrien Pascal (1842), *Vie militaire, politique et privée de son Altesse Royale Mgr le Duc d'Orléans*, Paris, 1842, 91. See also *Journal des Débats*, 15 July 1842, 2.
14. *Journal des Débats*, 14 July 1842, 1.
15. *Journal des Débats*, 15 July 1842, 2; 17 July 1842, 2.

16. *Journal des Débats*, 15 July 1842, 2. The liberal-conservative *Journal des Débats Politiques et Littéraires*, founded in 1789, supported the July Monarchy. It published exact records of the parliamentary debates and discussed dynastic and political events on national and international levels; Alfred Nettement (1842), *Histoire politique, anecdotique et littéraire du 'Journal des débats'*, Paris.
17. Antonetti (1994), 838.
18. 'Die Charte constitutionnelle vom 7. August 1830', in: Dieter Gosewinkel and Johannes Masing (eds) (2006), *Die Verfassungen in Europa 1789–1949. Wissenschaftliche Textedition unter Einschluss sämtlicher Änderungen und Ergänzungen sowie mit Dokumenten aus der englischen und amerikanischen Verfassungsgeschichte herausgegeben und mit einer verfassungsgeschichtlichen Einführung zur Erschließung der Texte versehen*, Munich, 295–300; Antonetti (1994), 838.
19. Gosewinkel and Masing (2006), 300.
20. He had drafted the will in April 1840 during the campaign in North Africa: 'Le Testament du Duc d'Orléans', in: Duc d'Orléans (1889), *Lettres 1825–1842: Publiés par ses fils le Comte de Paris et le Duc de Chartres*, 3rd edn, Paris, 309–23, 311; Hureau (1995), 316; René Bazin (1900), *Le Duc de Nemours*, Tours, 201–2.
21. Bazin (1900), 201.
22. *Journal des Débats*, 15 July 1842, 1. On the elections see Price (2007), 309.
23. *Journal des Débats*, 22 July 1842, 1; 24 July 1842, 2.
24. Guizot (1865), 15; Alfred-Auguste Cuvillier-Fleury (1842), *Neuilly, Notre-Dame et Dreux*, Paris, 52; *Journal des Débats*, 27 July 1842, 1.
25. *Journal des Débats*, 27 July 1842, 1.
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 85. Antonetti (1994), 844; Bled (1992), 129.
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13

The Opposition of the Archdukes: Rudolf, Franz Ferdinand and the late Habsburg Monarchy

Günther Kronenbitter

In 1910, Karl Renner, the leading social democrat in the Reichsrat, the Lower House of the Austrian parliament, hit upon one of the characteristic features of the Empire's pattern of power. In his speech Renner pointed out that the Habsburg *monarchy* should rather be called a *dyarchie* – a system where there are two rulers instead of one. Ever since European monarchists had begun to defend their preferred political system with arguments based on more than just tradition and religion, the unity of decision-making on behalf of the body politic had been fielded as a favourite reason for preferring a monarchical solution. Even in a constitutional monarchy, there were aspects of decision-making where it was considered essential that the final say rested with one single person. For the Habsburg monarchy, with its long tradition as one of the Great Powers of Europe, questions of foreign policy and war formed the very core of these aspects that called for one single person's judgement and command.¹

The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 had re-established Hungary's constitution and guaranteed a high degree of independence to the parliament and government in Budapest. It had transformed the Habsburg Empire; a common foreign and defence policy, controlled by the emperor-king as one of his central prerogatives, was now the main bond that held the dual monarchy together. Whereas Hungary's and Austria's respective shares of the financial burden caused by common defence, tariffs, currency questions and a whole host of other issues had to be negotiated between the two states on a regular basis, Great Power policy was – in theory at least – in the hand of the monarch and beyond the reach of parliaments and politicians. Since both Austria and Hungary were constitutional monarchies, the emperor-king would also have to approve legislation passed by the Reichsrat in Vienna or the Hungarian diet in Budapest.² The monarch was – again, in theory – free to appoint and to dismiss prime ministers, as well as the heads of the common ministries of foreign affairs, war and finances. All in

all, Franz Joseph, the Austrian Emperor and King of Hungary, succeeded in holding a complex political system together.³ According to tradition and the family statute, the monarch was also the head of the ruling house and made sure that the archdukes, the Habsburg agnates, would behave as they were supposed to. They should marry the right kind of woman, choose appropriate fields of social, professional and public activities, and in general do what Franz Joseph asked them to do without compromising the monarch's position in any way. Well, again, in theory.⁴

The development Renner alluded to in 1910, however, had not escaped the attention of anyone with even a vague interest in Habsburg politics: Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the throne, had built his own power basis and wielded influence in a way more befitting an opposition movement. Schönbrunn, Franz Joseph's favourite residence in Vienna, and Franz Ferdinand's Belvedere palace – less than four miles away – had become shorthand expressions for the staffs of the emperor and his nephew and designated successor. The antagonism between Schönbrunn and Belvedere made itself felt across a wide range of political issues, but most importantly it affected individual careers in anything from diplomacy to the military and civilian officials. Trapped between its present and its future monarch, the Habsburg elite had a difficult time. Many disliked the Belvedere's pushiness in this ongoing trial of strength. This was a major reason for the sigh of relief that could be heard when the news of Franz Ferdinand's assassination broke in June 1914.⁵ With his political activities and harsh personality the archduke had polarized the elites and added a further layer of complexity to an already highly complex and fragile political system.

Franz Ferdinand was not, however, the first heir to the throne to oppose this emperor. Franz Joseph's only son, Crown Prince Rudolf, had done the same, although not in the same manner. His attempts to shape Habsburg policy while he was still waiting for the moment when he would succeed to the throne relied on his own personal contacts. The characteristic feature of his approach was to forge close relationships with journalists, as a means of accessing valuable information and as a way to instigate articles that would serve his political agenda. In quite a few cases, the crown prince himself would put pen to paper and let his texts be published anonymously by his intimates. His attacks on the Austrian government and his criticism of the Habsburg monarchy's foreign policy did not go unnoticed and would eventually lead to thinly veiled criticisms of him in Austrian and German newspapers.⁶ Such attempts to wield political influence under the cover of anonymity were obviously doomed to fail. Although Rudolf's suicide in 1889 came as a result of his personal lifestyle that undermined both his physical and his mental health, a realization of what was by then an obvious fact – the futility of his political activities – probably played a role in it as well. Mayerling, the place where the crown prince took his life after killing his 17-year-old lover, became a *lieu de mémoire* for all that was wrong with

Both Rudolf and Franz Ferdinand embodied the tragedy of heirs to the throne outlived by those whose power and splendour they were meant to inherit. To be sure, they were not the only ones among Europe's dynastic elites to endure such a fate, but in the case of the Habsburgs, the demise of their empire in 1918 has made possible alternatives to Franz Joseph's policies a particularly captivating issue for historians. The heirs to the throne serve as points of reference for those who ponder whether the Habsburg monarchy might have survived. Both Rudolf and Franz Ferdinand opposed Emperor Franz Joseph's policies, at least in part, and they were anxious to prevent the collapse of the Habsburg monarchy before their accession to the throne. Confronting what they considered an imminent and lethal threat to Austria-Hungary, they shared a sense of urgency but had almost diametrically opposed political leanings and utterly different visions of the monarchy's future. Both men's lives ended prematurely and violently, but Franz Ferdinand was more successful than Rudolf when it came to promoting his agenda and in laying the basis for his reign – although neither of them would ever see the day of their accession to the throne.

The relative success of Franz Ferdinand's approach can partly be explained by the fact that the archduke's conservative views were much closer to Franz Joseph's own political preferences than Rudolf's liberal stance had been. It might have helped that Franz Ferdinand, born in 1863, was an adult when he became his uncle's designated successor in the wake of Mayerling, officially upon his father's death in 1896. After recovering from tuberculosis by 1898, Franz Ferdinand had 16 years to bolster his position. During those years Emperor Franz Joseph grew old and, eventually, frail, which increased the Belvedere's political clout. In addition, Franz Ferdinand's personal relationship with the emperor was much less complicated than had been the case with Rudolf.⁸

In the relationship between the crown prince and the emperor, emotions certainly played a role. Even without using elaborate psychological or psycho-analytical concepts, it seems reasonable to assume that personal character traits drove Rudolf's self-destructive political activism. As was also the case with his mother, Empress Elisabeth, both contemporaries and historians noticed an unstable temper and bouts of depression. Whether Rudolf had inherited a propensity for these mental issues is beyond the historian's remit, but Elisabeth was certainly unable to act as a stabilizing force in Rudolf's emotional life during his childhood and youth. His father, sticking to court protocol and a work ethic that would leave virtually no time to engage with his son, radiated an aloofness that affected most family members. Only late in his long life, with the loss of both his son and his wife weighing on him, was Franz Joseph able to develop an emotionally warmer relationship with close relatives. As a young crown prince, Rudolf was craving his father's attention and appreciation, but would be terribly disappointed when his ideas were rejected or ignored. It did not help that

Elisabeth had insisted on teachers for Rudolf who shared her liberal inclinations while Franz Joseph's ideas about education focused on discipline and traditional values. The tensions between his parents reverberated and probably had an impact on the crown prince's upbringing.⁹ Rudolf grew up in a family that did not fit nineteenth-century ideals of intimacy and affection. But then, dynasties were different from bourgeois families not just because direct interactions between family members were relatively rare and partly guided by protocol, but also because dynasties stood at the apex of the social and political order.

Conventions and customary law had regulated the life of their members for centuries. In the case of the Habsburgs, the *Familienstatut* of 1839 reinforced and codified traditional rules at a time when – because of his physical and mental problems – Emperor Ferdinand was considered more or less unfit to fulfil his duties as head of the ruling house and as monarch unaided. Franz Joseph used the *Familienstatut* as a basis to exert power as head of the dynasty. To him, the stipulations of 1839 were obviously sound and in agreement with his own notions of the Habsburgs' role in society and politics. At a time when Austria and Hungary had developed into constitutional monarchies, Franz Joseph's power in dynastic issues was almost unrestrained and had a whiff of neo-absolutism about it. Whereas the monarch's subjects had been guaranteed a high degree of personal freedom since the 1860s, the members of the ruling house had to accept Franz Joseph's will in matters perceived as private in modern society.¹⁰ An important aspect that sets dynasties aside from families is a much stronger sense for, and well-tended knowledge of, tradition. In the case of the nineteenth-century Habsburgs the deferential behaviour of court and country reinforced a notion of superiority and in the case of presumptive future monarchs the throne (which seemed only a heartbeat away) gave them an elevated position among the other archdukes, more senior or not. But in some ways, the rules and regulations the heirs to the throne had to follow were the same as for all other members of the House of Habsburg.

A particularly thorny issue was marriage or rather the wrong kind of marriage. Since Archduke Johann had cast an eye on Anna Plochl, a postmaster's daughter, this was a problem that would haunt the dynasty and produce a number of Habsburg drop-outs over the course of a century. Rudolf accepted traditional Habsburg concepts of marriage (but then became a womanizer whose exploits went even beyond the latitude customarily conceded to men of his rank). Franz Ferdinand, however, forced his uncle to accept a morganatic marriage with Sophie Chotek, a Bohemian aristocrat. In return for this rare assent to a morganatic marriage, the archduke had solemnly to renounce his future children's right to claim the status of members of the House of Habsburg while Franz Joseph amended the family statute of 1839 in order to reassert the validity of its regulations. Together with his wife and their three children Franz Ferdinand then chose to live a family life which

had rather more of a middle-class feel to it than a reflection of traditionally aristocratic preferences. His marriage to Sophie Chotek (see Figure 13.2) was a remarkable act of opposition against Habsburg traditions, but it came at a price: his wife and children would not benefit from the Habsburg's massive financial assets nor would they be treated as members of the dynasty according to state and court protocol. Franz Ferdinand had become suspicious of his uncle's court while he was struggling with tuberculosis and felt written off by courtiers. That his family would be discriminated against alienated him even further and would add fuel to the antagonism between Schönbrunn and Belvedere.¹¹

The ideological preferences of Rudolf and Franz Ferdinand were almost as different as can be imagined: Rudolf, inspired by his liberal teachers and steeped in both positivist science and rabid anti-clericalism, developed a strong resentment against anything that smacked of conservatism, Catholicism and aristocratic traditionalism. Wherever possible, he would lash out against what he saw as the self-indulgent, innovation-killing anti-intellectualism of useless Austrian aristocrats. Rudolf considered them responsible for the ousting of Austrian liberals from the cabinet in 1879. The conservative government that took over after more than a decade of almost



Figure 13.2 A happy yet inappropriate marriage: Portrait of Duchess Sophie von Hohenberg and Archduke Franz Ferdinand d'Este in uniform, private collection Heidi Mehrkens

uninterrupted liberal dominance became the target of Rudolf's unmitigated aversion. In his eyes, Prime Minister Count Eduard Taaffe embodied everything the crown prince detested: clericalism, feudalism, conservatism – and a strengthening of federalism, that is a revival of the role the traditional kingdoms and principalities played in the constitutional framework of Austria – at the expense of the political centre.¹²

Rudolf considered this to be a deadly threat to the Habsburg monarchy's survival. For him, only a strong state led by liberal politicians (and a liberal emperor) could steer a course of social, economic and cultural progress. His left-leaning tendencies echoed his mother's political ideas. With the liberals still in charge in Budapest, the crown prince would follow in Elisabeth's foot-steps and embrace the freedom-loving Hungarian elite, even if he could hardly ignore the fact that it was for the most part dominated by the Magyar gentry and high-aristocracy. Their liberalism and wide-spread anti-clericalism greatly appealed to Rudolf. He realized the severe problems Magyar policies created in the kingdom of Croatia but that did not diminish his affection for Hungary.

Rudolf was either unable or unwilling to realize the close link between nationalism and liberalism in both parts of the dual monarchy. In some way, his political ideas bore the imprint of pre-revolutionary progressivism. That made it hard for him to anticipate the problems caused by one of his favourite concepts: Rudolf wanted to make the Habsburg monarchy the rallying point of a Slav awakening. How this could actually be reconciled with Hungarian or German liberalism was an open question – but one Rudolf did not engage with. For Bohemia, where tensions between Czechs and Germans had been growing since attempts to find a viable compromise failed in 1871, the crown prince favoured a cooperation of liberals from both ethnic groups in the mould of the talks between František Rieger, František Palacký's son-in-law and collaborator, and Adolf Fischhof, a leading revolutionary in Vienna in 1848, as well as other German liberals which took place at Emmersdorf in 1878. Taaffe's approach to offer concessions to Czech demands was anathema to Rudolf but, beyond his belief in the benevolence of liberalism and its capacity to solve social and political problems, the crown prince had little to offer to national movements.¹³

If Rudolf represented Crown-liberalism, then Franz Ferdinand stood for the opposite solution to Austria-Hungary's domestic problems. The archduke firmly supported political Catholicism as a backbone of pro-Habsburg forces in Austria-Hungary. Among his followers and advisers were Bohemian aristocrats, exactly the social group most vilified by Crown Prince Rudolf. Franz Ferdinand appreciated tradition and dynastic discipline – with the sole exception of his marriage, to be sure – and had a long list of people, groups and movements he loved to hate. Since he made no bones about the targets of his ire, we know about those he resented most: socialists, liberals,

nationalists, Protestants, Jews, disobedient bureaucrats, officers, diplomats, politicians, journalists, unruly archdukes, the Schönbrunn circle – you name them, he loathed them.¹⁴

From his point of view it was the Magyar elite, still running Budapest, which posed the greatest threat to the Habsburg monarchy. Alienating South Slavs and Romanians, and taking the security of Austria-Hungary hostage as a way to wrench ever more autonomy from the Crown, the Magyar elite was, Franz Ferdinand believed, digging the Habsburg monarchy's grave. At one brief moment, during a crisis about the common army's place in Hungarian society, Rudolf had protested against anything that could undermine the common defence system. But that intervention had probably been suggested to him by his military environment and was owed to his experience of serving as an officer, for this critical attitude towards Magyar nationalism passed very soon. In the case of Franz Ferdinand, suspicion against any attempts to placate Hungarian aspirations was the hallmark of his domestic policy. There seemed to be different ways to contain and roll back Magyar ambitions, and over the course of the years, one or other of them topped the list of the archduke's reform plans. The notorious 'Trialism', the idea of forming a third political entity by uniting South Slav Austrian and Hungarian territories with Bosnian and Hercegovina, for example, would be shelved for good in the last years of Franz Ferdinand. Instead, the Belvedere now aimed for more centralization of power. Dualism had to be kept in check or abolished if possible, and, what counted most, the Crown should become the real centre of decision-making. The way to get there was just a question of tactics.¹⁵

Both Rudolf and Franz Ferdinand objected to the emperor's reluctant constitutionalism, usually implemented by playing off political actors against each other in a game of divide and rule. Franz Joseph most certainly did not have any affection for constitutionalism, but he accepted the Compromise of 1867 as the only viable platform to run a monarchy formed out of two states and riddled with nationalist strife. So for all their differences, the domestic agendas of both archdukes had something in common.

Rudolf and Franz Ferdinand also shared a point of departure when it came to foreign affairs: they both had a strong tendency to put domestic issues first and to shape their foreign policy strategies accordingly. Once again, their conclusions about Austria-Hungary's true interests in international politics were diametrically opposed to each other. Rudolf was a progressive-imperialist who wanted to make the Habsburg monarchy the decisive power in the Balkans. To get control of the 'European Orient', as he called it, Russia had to be pushed out of the region, probably by force. For most of his short adult life, he considered war against the backward, dangerous tsarist empire as the logical consequence of the international situation – and it coincided well with his pro-Hungarian, anti-conservative stance. His dislike of

Prussian militarism was strong, but he hoped for a liberal turn in Germany under Emperor Friedrich III. These hopes were to be dashed, though. Even before he was diagnosed with cancer, Crown Prince Friedrich had fallen increasingly under Bismarck's control and his son, Prince Wilhelm, who would succeed his ailing father after a reign of only 99 days, was anything but liberal. As a result, Rudolf turned militantly anti-German. His growing affection for the French Republic, kindled by his advisors, finally led him to support the idea of an alliance with France and Russia against the German *Reich*.¹⁶

Franz Ferdinand, for his part, persistently tried to avoid a war with Russia and to be on good terms with the Germany of Wilhelm II. Even in the winter crisis of 1912–13, when the archduke was less risk-averse than usual, he called off Austria-Hungary's diplomatic offensive as soon as war with Russia actually looked imminent. Franz Ferdinand had opposed calls for war against Russia in 1909 as well, but he was certainly no pacifist – for example he would have loved to punish the Italians for their acquisition of previously Austrian territories in 1859 and 1866. Still, there was no point in waging a major war before he was emperor because he would not be in control of any shifts of power in the wake of victory – not to mention changes as results of military defeat.¹⁷

Both Rudolf and Franz Ferdinand found themselves in a profoundly paradoxical situation: they were convinced that the reigning monarch's domestic policy was putting Austria-Hungary at risk and that they would inherit an empire already ruined. In Rudolf's case, the spectre also applied to the field of foreign affairs. The sense of urgency that motivated both Rudolf and Franz Ferdinand in their opposition to Franz Joseph's policy was the result of this dire view of the situation of the Habsburg monarchy. Nevertheless, their only hope to start turning things around following their yearned-for accession was the monarch's central position in the political system. So whatever else they wanted to do about political problems now, it must not undermine the prestige of the office of the monarch. Rudolf never dared to challenge his father's policy openly; Franz Ferdinand sometimes had rather unpleasant debates with his uncle, but he was careful not to go too far. Respect for the ruler was akin to self-respect as heir to the throne. Compared to Rudolf, Franz Ferdinand was the stronger personality and could profit from Franz Joseph's terrible experience when the emperor had learned of his son's suicide-cum-homicide at Mayerling in 1889. Moreover, Franz Joseph was really old by now and Franz Ferdinand could afford to be a little more patient. Ambitious men with a career ahead of them had to find favour with him, whether they liked it or not. Therefore, Franz Ferdinand could afford to let his opposition against parts of his uncle's policy be known.

Whether Franz Ferdinand was successful in changing the political situation in Austria-Hungary is debatable, but there is no denying that Rudolf

had failed completely in this particular task. The gap between Rudolf's kind of liberalism and his father's policy was wider than the one that separated Franz Ferdinand's and Franz Joseph's political preferences. But Rudolf's political melt-down was also a result of the methods he relied on. In order to achieve the changes he deemed necessary, the crown prince wrote letters and memoranda to archdukes, ministers, diplomats and the emperor, but mostly to no avail. Amongst the inner circle of Vienna's power elites, Rudolf was not able to make much headway. His father refused to listen to any advice that implied the ousting of Taaffe whose policy the emperor continued to support. Moreover Franz Joseph never so much as entered a debate about political differences with his son. It would be up to Archduke Albrecht, the son of Archduke Carl and victorious field-commander at Custozza in 1866, to put the crown prince right. Having no sons of his own, Albrecht tried to instil in the younger archdukes a sense of duty and allegiance to dynastic traditions. Rudolf became the most prominent recipient of Albrecht's advice, but refused to accept the rigid conservatism offered to him.

Thanks to both men's willingness to commit their political and moral principles to paper, posterity can catch a glimpse of their convictions. The crown prince's admiration for Emperor Joseph II (1741–90), the most ambitious and radical reformer among modern Habsburg rulers, stood in stark contrast to Albrecht's views, just as their views on religion and the social order clashed. Albrecht could not sway Rudolf, but in his letters he warned the crown prince not to fall into the trap of vanity and populism and to steer clear of socializing with the wrong kind of people. A particular worry was that Rudolf might follow in the footsteps of Archduke Johann Salvator (1852–90), another hopeful among the agnates who had ruined his career by impatience, ill-discipline and the search for popularity. Certainly a gifted writer and with a genuine interest in military affairs, this scion of the Tuscan branch of the dynasty had been groomed by Albrecht as a future military leader. He alienated his patron, though, by his behaviour in general and by severely criticizing the Habsburg army's artillery service in a pamphlet he published anonymously.¹⁸

Albrecht had a point. Inspired by his teachers and scholars like the economist Carl Menger or the zoologist Alfred Brehm, the crown prince had started publishing in 1878 and had considered the press as his favourite political weapon ever since. As writing was something he loved to do, he used publications as a means to foster political change and to attack those he disliked by instigating press articles as well as anonymous publications. Rudolf even befriended Moritz Szeps, a liberal-democratic journalist and the publisher of the *Neue Wiener Tagblatt*, and supplied him with confidential information about political questions. He also passed on gossip about the strange behaviour and attitude of Austria's not-so-noble nobility. Rudolf's network of journalists included some Hungarians, and the leading German-language newspaper in Hungary, the *Pester Lloyd*. Its editor-in-chief Max Falk not only

conveyed the national Magyar views of the Hungarian elite but also those of the crown prince. The problem was that Rudolf's clandestine opposition to Taaffe and all the others he hated and feared turned out to be more embarrassing than effective. The *Neue Wiener Tagblatt* could claim to have a larger audience than any other Viennese newspaper, but when it came to influencing the power brokers in parliament, ministries and the court, it was far less important than the Habsburg monarchy's leading daily *Neue Freie Presse*. Although the *Pester Lloyd* was read in Austria, it was considered a distinctly Hungarian voice by Vienna's political elite. To force a change in policy or to get rid of the Taaffe government, press campaigns based on the support of Szeps or Falk were unlikely to be effective tools.¹⁹

In the 1880s, Austria-Hungary's social life and political culture were going through a process of profound change. As elsewhere in Europe, mass society, mass media and mass movements were transforming patterns of political decision-making. To use the power of the press or to form an alliance with modern political movements in order to serve a progressive political agenda seemed to be a reasonable idea. The crown prince tried to build a network of friends in politics just as he did among journalists. The problem was that the liberals with whom he sympathized were losing out to other movements and represented a rather old-fashioned political culture dominated by notables. Fragmented and weak since the conservative turn in 1879, Austrian liberals found themselves in a crisis. Just like the future German Emperor Friedrich III, Rudolf engaged with liberalism past its peak. Publishing anonymously every once in a while, even in newspapers with wide circulations, was no substitute for a broad political alliance and press campaigns. Since he did not have formidable allies and because he could not risk antagonizing the emperor, the crown prince stuck to his clandestine methods that undermined trust and led to isolation. Rudolf's intimate cooperation with the democrat and Francophile Szeps did not go down well with the court and government in Vienna. Press campaigns and personal contacts with politicians who shared Rudolf's views on domestic or international issues made the crown prince a liability in the eyes of officials in Vienna and Berlin. Franz Joseph did not step in to stop his son from volunteering as a pamphleteer but he also ignored all the attacks on his ministers and their policies.

Franz Ferdinand achieved much more. He helped to topple his former advisor, Vladimir Beck. The Austrian Prime Minister had dared to implement an election reform against the archduke's wishes.²⁰ The Belvedere brought down two war ministers and at least one chief of the general staff. Franz Ferdinand fought against Alois Lexa von Aehrenthal, the Foreign Minister he had supported before, and had a say in the selection of Aehrenthal's successor Leopold Count Berchtold. Numerous diplomats and bureaucrats had to go or were denied promotion because of the Belvedere. In the military sphere, Franz Ferdinand's influence was particularly pronounced. Had it not been for Gavrilo Princip, he would have fired the chief of the general

staff and the former chief of military intelligence before long. In many cases, these purges and promotions were meant to press ahead with the Belvedere's anti-Magyar agenda, but sometimes it was rather personal.²¹

In Austria, Franz Ferdinand could rely on publicists and politicians from the Christian-social Party and related Catholic-conservative groups to do his bidding. In Hungary, though, there were no strong allies because of the Belvedere's strictly confrontational policy. Leaders of national minorities could not make up for this. Since the Belvedere did not manage to force the kind of election reform on Hungary that would have ended the Magyar elite's complete dominance of the diet, Franz Ferdinand could do nothing to loosen István Tisza's grip on power. The son of Kálmán Tisza, the leading figure of Hungarian liberalism and Prime Minister in Rudolf's days, had founded the National Party of Work in 1910. At the helm of Hungarian politics since 1912, István Tisza managed to discipline Budapest's unruly parliamentarians and to make sure that Hungary would speak with one voice in Habsburg politics. Because of this, the archduke's pet project – improving relations with Bucharest by accommodating Transylvania's Romanians – also failed.²² Still, his influence on foreign policy in 1912–14 was strong – strong enough to be considered a major, if not *the* major, obstacle to an assertive Austro-Hungarian foreign policy.²³ Rudolf never got anywhere near to exerting the level of influence enjoyed by Franz Ferdinand. All the crown prince could do was to maintain a correspondence with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Count Gustav Kálnoky. Rudolf was trying to get information otherwise denied to him and the minister was happy to accommodate him, but that was as far as it went. Unlike Franz Ferdinand, the crown prince did not manage to impact on Austro-Hungarian foreign policy.²⁴ Even more striking is the contrast between the two when it came to military affairs – a field in which both archdukes were supposed to have expertise.

Both Rudolf and Franz Ferdinand, like the other archdukes, enjoyed fast-track careers in the military. The army had saved the monarchy in 1848–49 and since the Compromise of 1867 there were almost no other fields of activity open to the Habsburgs – parliaments and prime ministers were not supposed to give orders to an archduke. In the army, this could not happen. So the crown prince would be trained for a military career and prepared for the role of a future commander-in-chief of Austria-Hungary's armed forces. He became owner of a regiment on the day he was born, his first tutor was an officer, and military subjects ranked high on the educational agenda. Rudolf took over as commander of an infantry regiment in Prague at the age of 21 and reached the high rank of *Feldmarschall-Lieutenant* by 1882. In his last year, Rudolf held the newly created post of an inspector-general of the infantry. But this sounded better than it was because the real strong-man of the army and the Emperor's lieutenant as commander-in-chief was Archduke Albrecht, the dynasty's conservative watchdog. Rudolf hated Albrecht for all that he stood for, but with hindsight, the main problem for Rudolf was that

Albrecht made it all but impossible for the crown prince to use the military apparatus as an institutional basis to wield influence. It did not help his cause that Rudolf not only clashed with Albrecht but also with Friedrich von Beck, the chief of the general staff, an old friend of his father and close collaborator of Archduke Albrecht.²⁵

After Albrecht's death in 1895, there was no replacement, and Franz Ferdinand could begin to create his own team within the military. This would prove the main difference between his situation and that of his predecessor as heir to the throne. Thanks to two able chiefs, the archduke's own military chancellery would become – as an internal memorandum put it – a kind of imperial chancellery in disguise, an institutional framework that allowed him to obtain and process information from both official and unofficial sources, to place requests with ministries and to build a network of supporters. Rudolf had to resort to publishing articles in order to make his voice heard; he had to make friends with journalists and meet them stealthily; he had to mould his actions as if he were at the heart of a conspiracy. Franz Ferdinand, on the other hand, was in a much more comfortable position: his chancellery turned out to be a highly efficient tool which allowed him to accumulate and wield influence within the military and even beyond. He did not put pen to paper to compose memoranda or draft articles – he had people to do that for him; he had no need to lead the attack on those he wanted dismissed – the chief of his chancellery would hunt them down on his behalf; he did not have to make friends among his supporters – he would use them and if necessary drop them. In other words: Franz Ferdinand acted as an emperor, although he was still waiting for his moment in history when he took the fateful trip to Sarajevo in 1914.²⁶

By building his own power base, the archduke had already begun to inaugurate drastic structural changes in Austro-Hungarian politics. Whether he followed this approach deliberately, learned from Rudolf's failure or heeded Archduke Albrecht's advice to build on traditional strengths of the dynasty, is hard to tell. Franz Ferdinand harboured strong resentment against courtiers and bureaucrats, but with his military chancellery he acquired and persistently expanded a platform to push his agenda. He understood the impact of the modern press and the relevance of social and political movements, at least up to point.²⁷ The archduke, not unlike the German Emperor Wilhelm II, followed political principles with a strongly pre-modern flavour to them while being open to modern forms of political communication and an authoritarian vision of top-down decision-making.²⁸ Franz Ferdinand's 'Imperial Chancellery' was a controversial tool to change the political process in the Habsburg monarchy. Little wonder it would be closed down for good as soon as the news from Sarajevo reached Vienna.²⁹

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Part V

Heirs in the Great War

14

A Prince in the Trenches? Edward VIII and the First World War

Heather Jones

Recent historiography has begun to explore the ways in which the First World War challenged and destroyed contemporary 1914 European honour cultures.¹ Yet, the monarchy, central to the concept of honour in British society in 1914, remains under-researched in the new cultural history of the conflict. The whole British 'honour' system was predicated upon the belief that 'the Crown is the fountain of Honour', as Lord Stamfordham, King George V's private secretary, wrote to Lloyd George in a 1917 wartime memorandum.² As a result, the role of the royal family during the war, their input into mobilization, combat and morale was of crucial importance as it served as a leitmotif for the cultural beliefs built around ideals of honour, for which many Britons in 1914 believed they were fighting. This chapter will explore how honour culture evolved during the war, through an in-depth examination of the role of Edward, Prince of Wales, during the conflict.

In 1914 honour was both a domestic and an international relations entity of pragmatic value that influenced decision-making; it was not simply something that was purely symbolic: Britain's entry into the First World War was publicly justified in a language deeply infused with honour rhetoric – to protect the honour of Belgium, of international law and treaties, and of Britain's good name in keeping its word.³ Sir Edward Grey, in his speech to the House of Commons on 3 August 1914, referred to how he 'would like the House to approach this crisis in which we are now, from the point of view of British interests, British honour, and British obligations' and how 'if, in a crisis like this, we run away from those obligations of honour and interest as regards the Belgian Treaty, I doubt whether, whatever material force we might have at the end, it would be of very much value in face of the respect that we should have lost'.⁴ The terrible impact of the war in casualties would dramatically undermine public belief in such cultural honour codes by 1918. The British monarchy, the pivot and embodiment of honour cultures in 1914, thus serves as a particularly important structure for assessing how the war affected such beliefs. How the monarchy navigated this wartime period of transition from the codes of 1914 to the cultural norms of the

post-war world also offers valuable insights into the changing beliefs of British society more generally.

The monarchy's wartime adaptations mirror broader changes in terms of a shift away from honour being associated with political power. In 1914, honour was a fundamental *political* and international currency in diplomatic affairs. Likewise in the decade preceding the outbreak of war, especially under Edward VII, and during the early war years, the British monarch was not merely a constitutional, honorific figurehead, but closely involved in influencing political decision-making. As the war continued, this changed: Edward VII's successor, King George V, the wartime monarch, saw his political influence increasingly limited, particularly under the premiership of Lloyd George, at the same time as the concept of honour was also losing much of its political clout. Less important after the war, honour belief systems still retained relevance in Britain, however, particularly in terms of their symbolic functions; in this regard, their wartime transition appears to have closely reflected that of the monarchy, with which they were so closely intertwined.

Cultural mobilization and the Prince of Wales

These wartime transitions in British honour culture are illustrated by the role of the Prince of Wales, the future Edward VIII, who, as heir to the throne, occupied a unique position within British society. As heir, Edward was both meant to act as an exemplary model to young British men but was also set apart by his role as monarchical successor – a fate which in 1914 was still regarded in many quarters in Britain (and certainly within the Church of England and court circles) as divinely ordained. Edward thus found himself in a deeply contradictory position in 1914, when Kitchener issued his call for military volunteers; he was both expected to lead Britain's young men by example, but also not to place himself in any physical danger, meaning he could not fight.

In contrast to the medieval period, by the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the shedding of the heir to the throne's blood in battle had become taboo, in part due to the exhaustive educational and social training and investment that went into British royal heirs by the nineteenth century, in part because kingship was no longer predicated upon personal success in military conquest but through civic relationships with the political sphere. Thus at the start of the conflict, Edward was barred from going to France with his regiment, the Grenadier Guards, by Lord Kitchener, the Minister for War. Edward's personal desire to fight, expressed in his diary as early as 3 August 1914 was, he suspected, unlikely to be acceptable. He wrote of how he was 'terribly depressed as of course the only topic was the war & I haven't the remotest chance of getting out with the expeditionary force. The knowledge that I must remain in London (for some time anyhow) totally devoid

of a job of any description is becoming almost intolerable'.⁵ Revealing here, is the fact that Edward was already aware, even *before* Britain entered the war, and despite the fact that he had been spending the summer in military training with the Life Guards, that his position as heir to the throne meant he would be prohibited from the combat lines. In seeking to keep Edward at home in 1914, Britain was protecting its heir to an unusual extent compared to other western European monarchies: the Belgian King, Albert I, served as commander-in-chief of his armies during the war and in 1915 had his heir, the future Leopold III, then just 13, serve as a private soldier for several months in the trenches; the Bavarian and Prussian heirs directly commanded in the field, although not at physical risk. Kitchener claimed that the real danger was not that Edward would be killed in battle but that if he was allowed to serve in combat he might be captured by the Germans.⁶ However, there were clearly also cultural beliefs at stake in this decision in this early phase of the conflict; among elite British circles in particular, there was a desire to protect the heir.

The role of wartime heir to the British throne was a paradox: the princely body was both more transcendent and sacralized, but also more constrained than that of the ordinary subject. It was an intensely corporeal role, both in terms of conceptualization and restrictions. The basic concept of the king's heir drew upon projected cultural ideas about hierarchies of descent and bloodlines; yet these beliefs ironically also meant that the 'sacred' princely body was in practice also physically inhibited in war. Edward was heir due to the monarchist belief in the privileged nature of kingly bloodlines that rendered his blood, as first-born male offspring of his father's marriage, sacred in 1914, to a degree that did not apply to his siblings. As a result, at the start of the war, it was believed, particularly among the establishment, that Edward's physical person had to be protected from harm, in a way that his younger brother Albert, the only other of the king's sons who was of military age during the conflict and served in the navy, including in the battle of Jutland, was not. As *The Ladies' Field* reported on 3 October 1914, 'it is the proud privilege of our Brigade of Guards to be found wherever the fighting is thickest; this is something they regard as their right. The danger to which they are exposed is, therefore, very great and it is almost out of the question that the Heir-Apparent should be allowed to risk his life in the general melee'.⁷

In some quarters this view persisted throughout the war, even after Edward had successfully gained permission to go to France in a safe staff officer capacity, still strictly prohibited from an active combat role. *The Daily Sketch* in January 1916 reported an incorrect rumour that the prince was to be recalled from France to London:

It has been agreed that the Prince of Wales shall not return to the front. A great deal of work for which he is needed awaits him at home and he

will now be plunged into all that business of chairmanship of committees and so on in which his grandfather got his training as a Sovereign. He is, no doubt, very disappointed, but he has himself to thank for he systematically got himself into dangerous positions – quite an improper proceeding for the heir to the throne.⁸

The king's private secretary Lord Stamfordham wrote to the Prince of Wales in October 1915, after hearing that his driver had been killed by shellfire, while Edward was inspecting trench lines: 'But, Sir, you who are so thoughtful of others, will not, *I feel certain*, forget Lord Cavan & the heavy weight of responsibility resting upon him in his Command & remember that your safety, your Life, so precious to your Country, is another care which circumstances [*sic*] has devolved upon him.'⁹ If, as Kantorowicz has suggested, a monarch had 'two bodies' both physical and metaphysical (embodying the state), then a Prince of Wales also arguably had two corporeal existences, both physical and sacralized; his purpose, survival to inherit his predestined kingship, thereby fulfilling all the effort, education and training he had received over the course of his youth as well as his biological destiny, overruled all other social and political demands.¹⁰ Throughout the war, Edward was caught between these tensions.

This was particularly clear during the first months of the conflict in 1914, when Edward, who had been commissioned as an officer in the Grenadier Guards in August, was faced with watching his peers, the battalion and company officers with whom he had trained, leave for the front. 'Papa told me he wouldn't allow me to go out with the 1st Batt. I am to be transferred to the 3rd Batt.', Edward wrote in his diary on 8 September. 'This is a bitter disappointment.'¹¹ The 3rd Battalion were due to remain all winter at home at this point; Edward described the decision as having 'broken my heart'.¹² On 14 September 1914, Edward went to the War Office to see Kitchener to protest: 'He is now a gt [*sic*] fat bloated man and he talked to me about not going out with the 1st batt. putting forward various "excellent" reasons for this. As a consolation he offers me a job on French's staff in 3 months time!! A pretty rotten contrast to my gt wish.'¹³ The next day Edward went to barracks 'to see my dear 1st batt. off. ... it was one of the most terrible moments of my life when they marched out of barracks leaving me behind'.¹⁴

From the very outset of the war, the press picked up on rumours circulating in London about the prince's hopes of fighting. *The Times* erroneously published a report on 7 August 1914 that the Prince of Wales was to 'go on active service' and the popular *Daily Sketch* later also implied Edward was 'for the Front'.¹⁵ The War Office even had to take the unusual step of issuing a statement of explanation to the press in September 1914 as to why Edward was remaining at home, claiming it was because he was continuing his training, a statement released perhaps, in part, to make clear that the

prince did, indeed, honourably wish to fight like other men and was being restrained against his will from battle:

Last night the War Office issued the following statement through the Press Bureau. The Secretary of State for War was approached by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales who urgently desired to accompany the 1st Battalion of the Grenadier Guards now under orders for the front. As his Royal Highness had not completed his military training Lord Kitchener submitted to his Majesty that for the present it is undesirable that his Royal Highness should proceed on active service.¹⁶

Edward was thus forced to remain in London, excluded from combat, yet at the same time expected to serve as an example of perfect wartime young martial British masculinity – an inherently contradictory position. For instance, the *Tatler* described him as ‘A Royal Example to the Young Unmarried Men of the Empire’ above an image of him marching in khaki with the Grenadier Guards in London.¹⁷ His role with the Guards was used to endorse recruitment to the armies. Crowds turned out to watch his every route march in London with his unit, something he found deeply embarrassing. This very public experience of being kept back in London was deeply humiliating for Edward, who shared in the war fever of the aristocratic young men he socialized with: in August, for example, he went keenly to the theatre with friends ‘hoping to see war films’.¹⁸

Edward’s status had not isolated him from broader societal trends; deeply infused with the cultural values of the English aristocracy, in 1914, his views on the war broadly reflected those of the upper classes. Although efforts were made to provide him with compensatory roles – he was given the honour of carrying the company colours during route marches; he went frequently to the Admiralty to be briefed on the progress of the war at sea; his charitable role as head of the new, highly successful, Prince of Wales’s Appeal, issued to the public in August 1914 to raise money to alleviate domestic distress in the UK resulting from the war, was extolled by the media – none of this could overcome the contradiction of his position, being described in the press as ‘Our Soldier Prince’, yet barred from leaving for France with his colleagues with whom he had trained.¹⁹

Yet following his ongoing and sustained lobbying, Edward won a significant concession: he was ultimately allowed to leave England to serve on Sir John French’s staff in November 1914. And once in France, although he was never allowed a combat role, he became adept at pushing the boundaries of where he was allowed to go – in the difficult, provisional conditions of the Western Front it was simply far less practicable, or possible, to monitor the prince in the way that was the norm in London. Edward benefitted from considerable freedom of movement, unprecedented for a Prince of Wales, and indeed anonymity, once he went among the troops, resembling just another

junior officer – something he relished. Although initially his first position on Sir John French's staff saw Edward safely ensconced at the general headquarters of the British expeditionary force at St Omer, he was later attached to the less restrictive locations of 2nd Divisional Headquarters and 1st Army Corps, both at Béthune, and in September 1915 he was appointed to the staff of the Guards Division, working for Major-General Lord Cavan, a role in which he was able frequently to visit the front lines to inspect trenches or boost troop morale and to wander the rearward areas relatively freely as part of his staff work, which often involved mapping tasks and independently planning, organizing and supervising supplies on the ground. Edward also visited Egypt in 1916 and accompanied Lord Cavan's corps to the Italian front during the conflict. The end of the war saw him attached to the Canadian Corps.

The press response to Edward's posting to France in late 1914 was largely positive: 'the Prince's enlistment proved a valuable aid to recruiting and doubtless the announcement that he will now join the Expeditionary Force will have a similar effect', the *Standard* reported on 17 November, upon news of his departure 'for the Front'.²⁰ Moreover, there was now a degree of consensus emerging in the press around the idea that the heir could be at the battlefield, and even some acceptance that he might be placed at risk. Much reporting generally implied that the prince was to face real danger – the *Daily Telegraph* referred to the prince 'now at the front' and due 'to receive his baptism of fire at what is probably the critical moment of this vast struggle' and how 'the respect and good wishes of the entire country accompany him on his great errand'.²¹ Another report mentioned a further incentive for Edward's departure: the *Daily Chronicle* claimed that 'all the Kaiser's sons are at the front or wounded and in hospital'.²²

Above all, however, newspapers adopted the rhetoric of honour culture in their descriptions, affirming how the prince acted as a proxy for the monarchy as a whole, a spiritual vector, within 1914 honour culture, between king and people: 'the nation deeply appreciates the implied sacrifice of the King in thus consenting to the eager desire of his eldest son to bear his part in the war. No stronger link between Sovereign and subjects could be forged than this of comradeship on the battlefield', the *Evening Standard* commented.²³ The *Pall Mall Gazette*, the voice of elite society, emphasized that Edward must be better protected than ordinary soldiers due to the importance of his role as heir, because 'the life of the Heir to the throne is not his own. It is Britain's; it is the Empire's', effectively an assertion of complete public ownership of Edward's life which debarred him from any personal right to sacrifice himself in battle.²⁴ Yet, it added how English 'lads' fighting alongside him 'in days yet far distant, if GOD may send victory and a safe return, ... may be able to say, "My KING and I fought together for freedom and for right"'.²⁵ The choice of capitalization conflated the divine and the monarch, the honour rhetoric language clearly evident in ways that

would disappear from the press later in the war. Overall, throughout the mainstream papers there was a clear message of solidarity across the class system and communal sharing between monarch and people, in what was portrayed as the king's willingness to sacrifice his son: 'the knowledge that palace and cottage are sharing the risks of this momentous campaign will inspire further confidence and will touch the people's imagination as few other things can do', the popular working-class *Daily Sketch* reported.²⁶

Honour culture clearly infused this reporting. Edward had gone to battle 'in defence of the national honour and the liberties of Europe'.²⁷ Moreover, the idea of a 'soldier prince' encapsulated many of the romanticized views of war that still existed in 1914 and much of the press coverage reflected this, with many references to the last time a Prince of Wales fought in France (the fact that he had fought *against* the French was glossed over in most references): 'the last Prince of Wales to leave this country on a warlike expedition to French soil was the Black Prince who won the great victory of Poitiers in his second foray into France in 1356'.²⁸ 'Stirring days of the Black Prince recalled. The romance and chivalry of far off days are recalled by the news that the Prince of Wales has gone to the front', reported *Lloyd's Weekly News*; the *Daily Telegraph* referred to Edward winning his 'spurs'.²⁹ The *Pall Mall Gazette* typified the tone of much of the reporting:

It is five hundred years and more since a Prince of Wales was with a British Army on the battlefield. Edward, the Black Prince in full vigour of his manhood brought back great victories for the arms of Britain, a Royal prisoner and the proud yet humble motto, 'I serve'. Once more a Prince of Wales is in the field, an English lad scarce grown out of boyhood, eager to do his duty and to have his share in the victory which shall crown the righteous war. Edward the White Prince goes forth, not to lead armies into impossible situations, nor to issue vainglorious proclamations to his men, but, true to his motto, to serve. With him go the thoughts and prayers of each one of his Royal Father's subjects. Many and many another English lad in the springtime of life has gone or is about to go and many a one will not return. All the flower of British youth which is facing death with high courage and incurious eyes is for us personified in the gallant young Prince.³⁰

The press language, its references to the 'white Prince', gallantry and chivalry, reflected staples of an honour belief system which underpinned the public discourse of 1914 and which would not outlast the short war illusion of the first year of the conflict; by 1916, the language of war sacrifice was framed very differently. The fact that Edward lobbied Kitchener to be sent to France in 1914, however, showed his own awareness of the growing importance to the public – and also to his own friends – that the Prince of Wales be seen to be playing a full part in the moral economy of wartime and

not shirking. In this, Edward's actions were prescient, anticipating public opinion – and demands – which increasingly during the war came to expect that the royal family would sacrifice its military-age sons in the same way that ordinary citizens were expected to do, particularly after the introduction of conscription in 1916.

The heir as combatant

As the war continued, the traditional, familiar, dynastic role of the heir to the throne became part of wartime cultural mobilization, as did the roles of the other members of the royal family, and was infused with new forms of popular national and imperial symbolism: as representative of the future of the monarchy the Prince of Wales was an integral part of the moral economy of wartime – serving as a constant illustration of the ways in which the royal family were participating in the national sacrifice that total war entailed. Among the general public, Edward's 1914 proactive lobbying to be allowed to fight was seen very positively and made him immensely popular, particularly with soldiers: 'what young man of spirit in any rank of life would not have "kicked"?', wrote the *Daily Sketch* approvingly in its report referring to Edward's refusal to accept being initially prohibited from going to France.³¹ Edward was lauded for his desire to be treated as an ordinary junior officer and for his rejection of luxury. Frequent press stories recounted how the prince went among the troops virtually unrecognized and moments where he was mistaken for an 'ordinary' British citizen were played up, reflecting a longer British literary trope of the king who goes incognito among his people to ascertain their needs in 'prince and the pauper' fashion.

Yet there was more at stake here too: this representation of Edward increasingly depicted him as a 'democratic' prince because of his supposed love of anonymity and rejection of privilege, thereby promoting the idea of a democratic Britain. This dovetailed with the monarchy's growing concern, as the war continued, to be seen to be sharing the burdens of the conflict with the people and as in touch with the public suffering; the policy emphasis here by King George V, Stamfordham and others that the monarchy should epitomize a 'democratic' British state was intended as a direct contrast to how the Kaiser's version of monarchy was portrayed in the British press. Indeed, by the second half of the conflict, the king and British court circles became particularly keen to emphasize that the monarch wanted to see Britain become even more democratic after the war – accepting the expansion of the suffrage to women and working-class male groups hitherto excluded, as well as an increase in the standard of living of the poor.³² Thus as the war dragged on long beyond initial expectations and the extreme nature of battlefield violence became publicly known, the representation of Edward, as a prince in France who was roughing it akin to any other man of

military age, was important to the monarchy's overall wartime image. The honour culture of 1914 was supplanted by new languages which approvingly emphasized Edward's attempts to pare down the special privileges of birthright due to the royal heir.

This press discourse was also not entirely manufactured: Edward did feel a strong desire to be useful. His war diary reveals how he stayed up all night, working night shifts on staff work; he sometimes slept in his 'office' on a camp bed.³³ The press accounts of him eschewing luxury in terms of the work he was doing and the billets he occupied are largely correct, particularly as the war went on and he was appointed to the staff of the Guards Division. In September 1915, he wrote in his diary of how he spent one evening 'put on sort of police work at the [cross]rds at the W. entrance of the town ... to regulate the traffic & was there standing in the rain & mud till nearly 9.00!! And it was some job too sorting all the waggons & limbers as they streamed in from the West'.³⁴ The Prince of Wales, standing in mud, anonymously directing traffic in the rain, highlights the kind of physical deprivation Edward deliberately sought out in France, which so endeared him to the troops. Indeed, Edward's workload, tasks and living experiences were very similar to those of an ordinary junior staff officer.

At a personal level, Edward's attempts to make himself useful and act 'ordinary' were a strategy that he employed to cope with the war and with the ongoing reality that he was not actually allowed to go into battle. His diaries continually lamented his prohibition from combat which he clearly felt was emasculating and humiliating. In December 1914 he went up the line to visit the 2nd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards at Le Touret, about a mile from the frontline trenches, but was singled out by a superior who spotted him and 'told me to return to Bethune as I was too close!! Bloody having to say good bye to them all & it did bring it home to one how wretched it is to be the bloody P. of Wales!! I almost broke down & had an awful walk back to 2nd Div. HQ'.³⁵

Edward felt deeply insecure about his special protected position as heir: 'I am in the depths of depression realising at last that there is no job I can take on out here & so am really the only man out here who has nothing to do or anything to work for', he wrote in March 1915.³⁶ A Christmas card sent by Edward in 1915 highlights his ongoing infatuation with the ideal of war combat (see Figure 14.1).

Combat played such a central identity function for his contemporaries – the male friends from the aristocracy with whom he socialized both before and during the war – that he felt an outcast, barred from the central purpose of fighting and dying with honour in battle that dominated their lives and caste culture. He recognized the toll the war was taking on his peers, writing before leaving for France in 1914: 'Papa gave me the very sad news that poor Cadogan had been killed; he will be a really great loss to me for he was such a good kind chap. I shan't have a friend left soon.'³⁷ These insecurities were



Figure 14.1 Christmas card image sent by Edward, Prince of Wales to a friend in 1915, MC P163/14 © Reproduced by kind permission of the President and Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford

aggravated for Edward due to his short stature and his youthful appearance, as well, perhaps, as the fact that on leaving for France at the age of 20 he had virtually no experience with women and was extremely shy around girls of his own age – his 1914 diary barely mentions girls, except from a far off distance. Eyewitnesses he encountered in France often described him as a boy: Leo Amery described how on a visit by the king and the Prince of Wales in 1914 to a staff lunch that ‘the P. of W. looked more of a child than ever’ (as shown in Figure 14.2).³⁸

At first Edward was, indeed, rather lost in the face of the shock of the sights of ruin and of the wounded he visited in casualty clearing stations on the Western Front after his arrival in 1914. In November, still adjusting to his new life, the prince wrote in his diary: ‘I feel a bit lonely. Papa may come out on Monday!’³⁹ The young prince was relieved to see his father during the king’s first visit to his troops in the field: ‘it is grand his coming out’, he wrote in eager anticipation, and he spent long hours helping the king in his room with work during the visit.⁴⁰ The king’s departure left him rather down: ‘sad it’s Papa’s last evening’, he wrote on 4 December 1914, and the next day he commented on how he was very ‘sorry to take leave of Papa’.⁴¹ The British press described the lonely figure of the Prince of Wales, saluting his father’s ship before it sailed for Britain; *The Daily Express* reported: ‘a very boyish little figure standing alone in the rain on the quayside’.⁴² This first year of the war was a period of relative affection between the father and son, one which, as the conflict continued, hardening Edward’s character, would

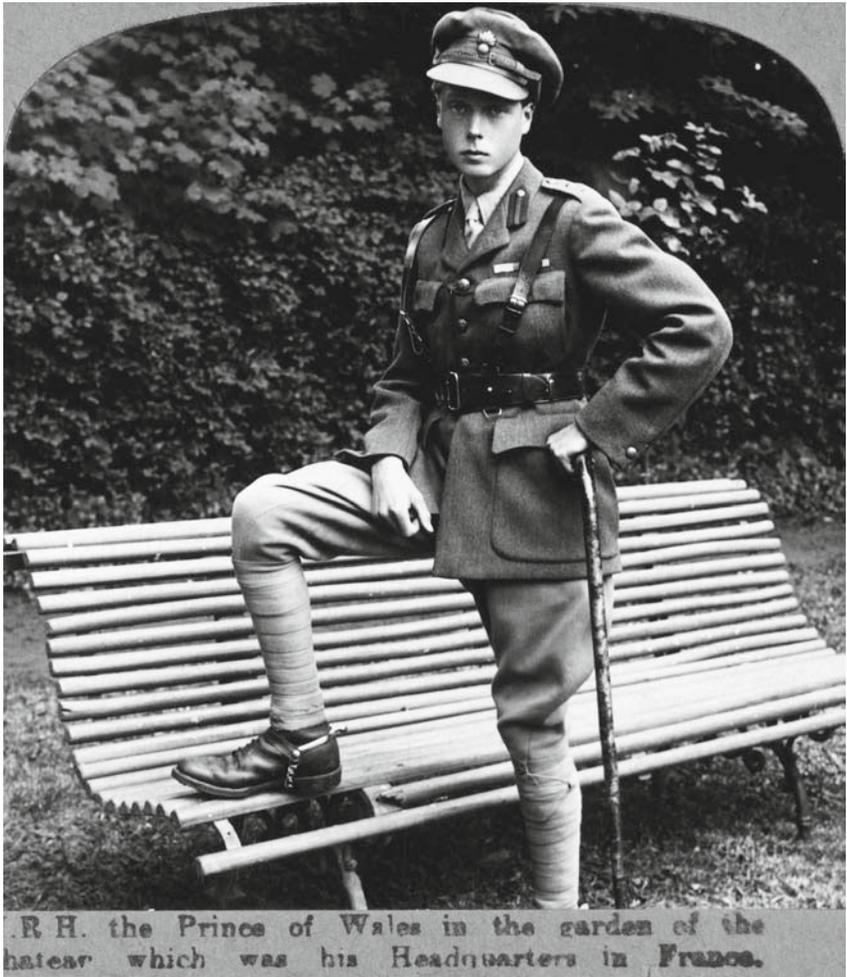


Figure 14.2 HRH The Prince of Wales in the garden of the chateau which was his Headquarters in France, 2001-02-256-11 © Image reproduced courtesy of the Council of the National Army Museum, London

disintegrate. Edward initially took on a more political role in France as he became a crucial source of information for his father regarding British army generals, their performance and British politics more generally; his training in politics thus differed to the civic norm for a future king.⁴³ He was in this regard a proxy for his father in France – a vector for information that the king could trust, as well as a surrogate: the prince reviewed troops at the front and on occasion distributed medals, a continuation of older honour cultures associated with the monarchy ideal. However, it was also clear that

in France he was often viewed as a boy among men by both his colleagues and the troops and was himself at first lost and a little childlike.

Edward responded to the army's protection of his monarchical '*corps sacré*', defined by its divinely ordained, predestined future kingship and its special, set apart, royal heir bloodline, by punishing his actual physical body: while before the war there had been concerns at him over-exercising, on the Western Front he pushed his body even harder, running daily for miles at dawn and making huge physical demands of his slender physique. However, Edward also adopted strategies of compensating for his inability to fight through acts of bravado, which he used both to exhibit his courage to others and to test his own mental and physical strength. Unable to participate in that supreme test of Edwardian masculinity which the First World War battlefield represented in British wartime culture, Edward looked for substitute moments of danger. This often involved circumventing the unwritten boundaries of how far forward in the trench system he was allowed to go. On several occasions in 1915 he came under shellfire; indeed his driver was killed while waiting for him to return from a tour of front area trenches. On 31 December 1915, he wrote of how, while he was visiting an observation post, the Germans began 'shelling all round the O.P. hitting the house a few yds [*sic*] in front & the house next door & put some just over but unpleasantly near. So we got down into an excellent dugout below on the ground floor'.⁴⁴ The fact that he was prepared to take such risks, without official approval, and that, without actually having to place his life in danger, he chose to do so, endeared him enormously to the troops. It was common knowledge that he could have chosen to stay safely in staff officer quarters far behind the lines, given he was employed as a staff officer. A British officer, Alan Maciver, serving at a particularly dangerous front position at Passchendaele recounted in interview how 'at that time we literally hardly ever saw any officer from any higher formation'.⁴⁵ Maciver noted on one occasion they had not

seen anyone from divisional headquarters for six weeks... The only really senior commander, senior officer, I ever saw, top officer, during this period was the Prince of Wales who had insisted on being taken up to the front line and he came up with the Corps chief staff officer and I had quite a long interesting conversation with him.⁴⁶

Maciver's choice of words 'top officer' to describe the prince – who visited him in a position that other commanders feared to visit so much they did not venture there – is very revealing. Another officer Captain Scotland recalled Edward arriving on site immediately after the German aerial bombing of a casualty clearing station to question him about what had happened.⁴⁷ It is clear from such sources, as well as from his own diary, that on many occasions Edward did run real risks of being hit by shellfire during his frontline

expeditions. This mitigated against any potential accusations which could have arisen, particularly by 1917, when, in light of food shortages, mass war casualties and the Russian revolution, the British public mood was far less complacent towards inherited monarchical privilege, that as a staff officer he had shirked the hardships and dangers of the frontline – an accusation that, in contrast, dogged the Kaiser's eldest son Crown Prince Wilhelm.⁴⁸ In fact, the expectation developed, as the war went on, among the British public and the press – if not among all court and establishment circles – that the heir to the throne *should* share in some of the war's dangers and the popular perception was that Edward was incurring real risks in France. This fitted with Edward's own agenda: he felt obliged to prove his courage, given that he could not do so in the ordinary manner through combat. This led him to try to overcome the genuine fear he felt when he came under shell-fire, by deliberately and constantly exposing himself to this experience, if necessary taking risks to do so.

Indeed, by 1918 the view was so strong that the king's son should be serving in the same way as every other male citizen of military age that when Edward happened to be in London on leave when the Ludendorff offensive was launched, George V's immediate reaction was one of horror:

One evening at Buckingham Palace my father suddenly looked up from his war maps and said: 'Good God! Are you still here?...' he told me I must be off by morning, adding that he could not have me seen around London with the British line broken and the Army with its back to the wall. I left immediately.⁴⁹

Edward's personal sense of crisis, which was caused by not being allowed to serve in a combat role during the war, thus provides insights in new and powerful ways into the honour culture of the Great War and how it changed. His role in the British army, as an 'ordinary' officer, as it was portrayed at the time, allowed him to serve as a representative of the nation and a role model. His personal experience also provides an insight into the trajectory of the war experience for Britain in general and into the construction of elite masculinities – Edward's own feelings expressed in his diary which move from optimism, a powerful sense of duty and belief in the British cause, and evolve into pessimism and terrible war weariness by 1916, offer a detailed depiction of how officers on the Western Front, even those protected from actual combat as Edward was, struggled to cope with the difficult living conditions, long working hours, war bereavements and homesickness.

Demobilization and the heir as post-war political asset

Edward's war role had earned him a reputation for heroism among British troops and in the British media, which bolstered the popularity of the

British royal family at a time of revolution and dynastic upheaval elsewhere in Europe. This success, however, came at a personal cost. By the end of the war in 1918, the young idealist of 1914, who was patriotic, innocent of women and shy, and who, before leaving for war had often spent evenings reading with his father, had become a man who based his masculinity on machismo, a degree of misogyny and an obsession with bravado, increasingly alienated from his family. As the war went on, Edward's closest bond shifted from his family to the small group of officers with whom he worked in France: indeed, on 20 December 1916, Edward postponed his leave so as to avoid being in London at the same time as the rest of his family: 'I simply couldn't arrive in London to find the family there!!'⁵⁰

The war thus exposed Edward to entirely new, and often coarsening, influences. Like many troops in France, he frequently witnessed unburied corpses near the front and became accustomed to the sight.⁵¹ Although he drank less often than his peers, he joined in the communal drinking sessions in the officers' mess; frequently these alcohol-fuelled occasions that Edward attended were a way of letting off steam for officers due to shortly go up the line to the front. Edward also encountered a new, more independent, friendship circle as well as the sexual objectification of women; he wrote on 12 December 1915 of how 'Alby Cator showed us the famous panel of a cupboard which he & others have artistically decorated with obscene pictures of women etc. cut out & pieced together'.⁵² By December 1916, his diary evidence shows that he had, partly through the help of his new officer friends, become involved with a French prostitute named Paulette, who was the mistress of an RFC officer.⁵³ Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that, as the war went on, Edward saw the sexual objectification of lower-class women as a way to further compensate for his inability to prove his masculinity to his friends through combat.⁵⁴ Ironically these attitudes were developing at the same time that the press in Britain began to clamour for him to marry an Englishwoman in order to 'dilute' the German blood of the royal family; the German origins of the royals was by 1917 a matter of public criticism, leading to the change of name to Windsor the same year. Even without the war, Edward's future marriage would always have been of crucial dynastic importance; however, by 1917 his future physical lineage was seen as key to saving the dynasty from potential revolution. His sexual obligations as heir and his newly developing sexual life as an insecure staff officer were, at this point, in complete contradiction: the latter was, however, a more powerful way to compensate for his sense of emasculation at not being allowed to fight.

Edward's diary and letters also depict a growing disillusionment with the war and with his own role – 'Here beginneth the 5th volume of my diary & may it see the end of this bloody war!!' he wrote on 20 July 1916.⁵⁵ After one narrow escape from shelling on 3 June 1917, Edward returned to his

base, only to be told off by his commanding officer for 'not reading the papers & taking no interest in World politics!! Of course he is right really & I dont [*sic*] attempt to be P of W or prepare for being so, but how I hate all that sort of thing & how unsuited I am for the job!!'⁵⁶ By July of the same year, he stopped bothering to keep a diary. The role of heir – and the demands of that particular sacral and political identity within Edwardian culture – which Edward acknowledged in 1914, had by this stage in the war been overcome by the need to act out risk-taking behaviours, such as excursions to the front, prostitution and experiencing shellfire, in an attempt to compensate for his sense of masculine failure at being prevented from undergoing the supreme wartime test of courage, leading men over the top in battle, as faced by his peers.

Edward's wartime risk-taking masculinity, which has been largely ignored by historians, was central to forming his private interwar character; as important to his public image, however, was his perceived status as a war veteran.⁵⁷ After the war, the widespread public belief was that the prince had been 'at the front' as numerous wartime press photographs of him in France and Italy had been captioned. This won him much ongoing popularity. This also made him a frequent choice for the unveiling of war memorials: in 1923, the Prince of Wales was praised in a speech at the dedication of the Metropolitan Police War Memorial as follows:

A large proportion of these men were Reservists in His Majesty's Guards with which Division, Sir, you served for so many months. You will therefore specially appreciate the valour of those who fell and it is quite possible that you may have been actually present on occasions when those casualties occurred, for it is within the lively recollection of all who are here present that you served almost continuously with the Armed Forces of the Crown during the War.⁵⁸

Again here one finds the public assumption that Edward was in the front line in danger. Edward was thus the royal who, as heir to the throne and veteran, was chosen to visit Australia in the wake of the war to thank it for its wartime sacrifices. This also explains why Edward was the royal who in the early 1930s was most engaged in Anglo-German reconciliation, supporting initiatives that brought ex-servicemen from the former enemy states together. In 1935, he even supported a proposed visit by British Legion war veterans to Germany to promote the cause of post-war reconciliation, something which delighted the Nazi press.⁵⁹ As late as the 1950s, Edward believed that he was still remembered as the prince who was in France: 'even now, after three decades, I still meet men who will suddenly turn to me and say, "The last time I saw you, you were on your bicycle on the road to Poperinghe" – or Montauban, or any one of a hundred French villages'.⁶⁰

Conclusion

As a veteran, Edward's post-war position had particular moral weight with British ex-servicemen and the public. This is clear from the tone of letters sent to Edward from veterans during the abdication crisis in 1936. With Edward no longer heir, but now king, veterans considered that the shared experience of wartime comradeship had created a special bond between them and the new monarch. As one 'ex-private soldier' Ben Richards from Dorset wrote: 'you are...a man, you went through it like the rest of us'.⁶¹ In another letter 'four would-be-soldiers' from across London, advising Edward to give up Wallis Simpson, framed their intervention on the claim that 'our fathers fought for your father'.⁶² The public claim upon Edward was no longer one couched in terms of the honour culture of 1914 and sacred bloodlines, but upon the classless community of veteran camaraderie and the legacy of shared wartime sacrifice – one which, by serving, and by risk-taking against official policy to access dangerous areas, Edward had helped interweave into the British monarchy as a new right upon which its assertion to reign was grounded, thereby protecting it in the unstable European 1920s. The honour culture of 1914, with its active political and social dimensions, had long since vanished; in the wake of total war, the monarchy, as with other parts of British society, would relegate ideas of honour to a more restricted symbolic function. However, through this shift the monarchy would ultimately flourish.

Notes

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12. RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1914: 13 September.
13. RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1914: 14 September.
14. RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1914: 15 September.
15. *The Times*, 7 August 1914; *The Daily Sketch*, 12 September 1914.
16. *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 September 1914.
17. *The Tatler*, 12 August 1914.
18. RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1914: 28 August 1914.
19. *The Queen*, 12 September 1914.
20. *The Standard*, 17 November 1914.
21. *The Daily Telegraph*, 17 November 1914.
22. *The Daily Chronicle*, 17 November 1914.
23. *Evening Standard*, 17 November 1914.
24. *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 17 November 1914.
25. *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 17 November 1914.
26. *The Daily Sketch*, 17 November 1914; see also the *Evening Standard*, 17 November 1914.
27. *The Daily Graphic*, 18 November 1914.
28. *The Daily Chronicle*, 17 November 1914.
29. *The Daily Telegraph*, 17 November 1914; *Lloyd's Weekly News*, 22 November 1914.
30. *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 17 November 1914.
31. *The Daily Sketch*, 18 November 1914.
32. RA PS/PSO/GV/C/O/1106/30: 'Unrest in the Country'.
33. RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1916: 4 December.
34. RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1915: 25 September.
35. RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1914: 23 December.
36. RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1915: 14 March.
37. RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1914: 13 November.
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39. RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1914: 19 November.
40. RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1914: 28 November. On working late with his father see RA EDW/PRIV/DIARY/1914: 2 and 4 December.
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15

Wilhelm's War: A Hohenzollern in Conflict 1914–18

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As soon as news broke about the assassinations at Sarajevo on 28 June 1914, Crown Prince Friedrich Wilhelm Victor Ernst August, heir to the Prussian and imperial German thrones, appeared on the public tennis courts in the Baltic seaside resort of Zoppot with several local young ladies, determined to squeeze in a few last games before the Prussian court declared a period of official mourning.¹ Such scandalous displays of self-indulgence by the Kaiser's eldest son were not uncommon before 1914. Banished by his father to Danzig in 1911 and often evading parental strictures, Wilhelm (as he was generally known) enjoyed an informal, carefree and rather wild existence in the years prior to the First World War, allowing neither his regimental duties nor his wife and four young sons to inhibit the pursuit of his own pleasure. Wilhelm basked in his celebrity, mixed across social classes and was known to have a taste for sport, hunting, foreign travel, fast cars, fashionable clothes and pretty women. He competed in steeplechases and flew with Orville Wright. While he was seen as refreshingly natural by members of the younger generation, his behaviour was judged reprehensible by the more sedate sections of German society. Within government circles and on the left, he was viewed as a political liability on account of his extreme right-wing views.² 'Take care not to shoot the Kaiser', the diplomat and foreign secretary Alfred von Kiderlen-Wächter quipped when an acquaintance was invited to a royal hunt, 'he who comes next is far worse'.³

Crown Prince Wilhelm became one of the most instantly recognizable and caricatured figures in the First World War so it is baffling to note that he has been largely neglected by recent historical scholarship. Despite the revival of interest in the personality and role of Kaiser Wilhelm II, the political and military significance of 'little Willie'⁴ has received but scant attention and it is over 50 years since a biography of the Prussian heir to the throne was translated into English.⁵ Wilhelm was 32 years old when war was declared in 1914, but he was catapulted into a command position and became closely identified with Germany's fortunes on the Western Front, especially the infamous assault on the fortress at Verdun in 1916.

Politically, too, he was most active during the war, openly criticizing the imperial German political leadership, seeking a compromise peace and willing to intervene directly in politics to help remove some of his father's most trusted advisers.

'Life, limb and fortune were risked by all the combatants in the Great War', Winston Churchill later wrote, 'but the inheritance to the Imperial throne, turning so nakedly on the general result, exercised from the first days of the war a sobering and concentrating effect upon a hitherto careless mind'.⁶ Exactly how the First World War affected Wilhelm's character and behaviour, what expectations and duties were attached to the heir to the throne during the conflict and why he emerged from it so discredited will be explored in this chapter. Military failure stigmatized the crown prince but defeat alone cannot account for the drastic weakening of his personal authority which contributed to the collapse of the Hohenzollern monarchy in 1918. Wilhelm was aware of Germany's sacrifices during the war and the dangers to his dynasty. But he was too steeped in Prussian tradition to embrace liberal reform, too gullible and naive in formulating his political views. Seduced and manipulated by stronger personalities, his political interventions proved counter-productive and his private pleasures invariably took precedence. Wilhelm was weighed down by his relationship with his father and lacked both the personal qualities and institutional means to steer an independent course. Finally, the heir to the throne was unable to counter a catastrophic decline in his public image during the war which was aggravated by the effects of enemy propaganda. By the autumn of 1918, when a majority of Germans still preferred a constitutional monarchy, he was considered even more unpopular than his father.⁷

Like the Kaiser, Wilhelm was forced to abdicate his sovereign rights at the end of the war and went into exile in Holland. During five long years on what was then the isolated island of Wieringen in the Zuidersee, he sought to come to terms with the loss of his inheritance through reading, writing and reflection. On the basis of his wartime diaries, he wrote a military account of his war experiences as a monument to his soldiers.⁸ In collaboration with the journalist Karl Rosner he also published his memoirs which were received positively in Germany and helped secure his return there in 1923.⁹ Struggling to control his emotions, Wilhelm aspired to objectivity 'even where recollection's turgid wave of pain, anger and bitterness breaks over me and threatens to sweep me along with it in its recoil'.¹⁰ Wise after the event and written with an eye to a future Hohenzollern restoration, these works may not accurately reflect all his views during the war but nevertheless confirm how it represented a personal and political turning-point for him. Wilhelm's war threw into stark relief an inner conflict about his future role as German Kaiser even before the circumstances surrounding Germany's defeat destroyed his erstwhile destiny.

The pursuit of glory

Crown Prince Wilhelm had few forebodings about a prospective European war before 1914. Destined to become Supreme War Leader, he had received a military education, become a lieutenant at the age of ten and risen with unseemly haste to be a regimental commander in Danzig from September 1911 until he was transferred to the general staff in Berlin in January 1914. A great admirer of Napoleon, he identified war with military glory, imperial expansion and national regeneration. 'I personally hope for a war', he wrote to his father in 1911 during the Second Moroccan Crisis. 'As people begrudge us our place in the sun, we must take it by force.'¹¹ In 1913 he defended the interests of the Army, 'our last and only asset', in the Zabern affair and penned the introduction to a patriotic children's picture book, designed to revive the Germans' martial spirit.¹² Not surprisingly, Wilhelm was widely regarded as hot-headed and bellicose before 1914, the unofficial leader of a 'war party'.

The crown prince, however, was not initiated into German policy during the July crisis of 1914 and played no role in the decision-making that led to the outbreak of war. On 4 July he urged the Kaiser from Zoppot to dismiss the chancellor Theobald von Bethmann Hollweg, appoint a 'man of iron' and crack down on the socialist rabble and anarchists; a few days later he told Bethmann that he should adopt energetic measures and expel 'all the filthy Serbs hanging around in Germany'.¹³ Concerned that he might make belligerent statements that undermined Bethmann's diplomacy, Wilhelm II forbade his son on 20 July to make political comments in the tense situation.¹⁴ The crown prince was summoned back to Berlin only on 30 July, arriving just in time to help stiffen his father's wavering resolve.

War had played a crucial role in the elevation and aggrandizement of the Hohenzollern dynasty and the outbreak of the First World War appeared to offer the heir to the throne a renewed opportunity to acquire military glory on the battlefield, stabilize the imperial monarchy and secure the loyalty, affection and gratitude of its subjects. Conscious that Wilhelm's grandfather had successfully led an army in the field at a young age in the wars of German unification, the Chief of the General Staff Helmuth von Moltke suggested that the crown prince take command of the Fifth Army, one of seven German armies that invaded Belgium and France in August 1914.¹⁵ It was never planned that Wilhelm would assume such a senior command position; he manifestly lacked both seniority and experience. But the fortuitous illness of one of the designated commanders, the chancellor's concerns about Wilhelm's safety and considerations of dynastic and imperial prestige conspired to recommend his promotion. Wilhelm's command gave him parity with Duke Albrecht of Württemberg (heir to the Württemberg throne from 1917) and Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, whose respective commands of the Fourth and Sixth Armies were more obviously based on seniority and merit.

Wilhelm thus began the First World War as the youngest and most inexperienced commander of an army in the field, carrying the burden of expectation of the Hohenzollern dynasty. The circumstances of his appointment ensured, though, that his role would be severely circumscribed. Wilhelm assumed formal command in 1914, but he was instructed by his father to rely exclusively on his Chief of Staff, Constantin Schmidt von Knobelsdorf, who had formerly instructed the crown prince in the general staff. 'Whatever he advises, you must do', the Kaiser told Wilhelm, which appeared to place his son in a purely symbolic role.¹⁶ However, Knobelsdorf himself insisted that Wilhelm countersign all his orders if they were to be valid, in effect forcing the heir to the throne to assume responsibility for his decisions.¹⁷ Wilhelm had great confidence in Knobelsdorf in 1914, but the nature of his command reinforced impressions of his youthful immaturity and superficiality, making it doubly difficult for 'the little Crown Prince' (*das Kronprinzchen*, as he was secretly called in the War Ministry) to be taken seriously in military circles.¹⁸

As a regimental commander before 1914, Wilhelm had longed to prove to his father 'that we can still attack and die just as well as in the days of the Great King [Friedrich II]'.¹⁹ It was doubtless unfortunate that he was called upon to make his mark, not in an old-style cabinet war with cavalry charges and battles lasting a day, but in a twentieth-century industrialized struggle, which mobilized millions of men and pitted them against machines. Wilhelm clung to chivalric ideas in 1914 but the character of the First World War on the Western Front challenged traditional notions of command and, despite individual acts of heroism and a new form of gladiatorial combat in the air, militated against the emergence of a national war hero.²⁰ The failure of the audacious Schlieffen-Moltke plan in 1914 meant that Germany's three princely contenders for the military laurels became mired in a costly war of attrition from which they all emerged empty-handed in 1918.

In August 1914, however, there was every expectation of a quick victory in the west and Wilhelm's reputation was tied to the progress of the Fifth Army as it marched towards the river Meuse. The capture of Longwy, a relatively minor border fortress, on 26 August brought the crown prince his first victory. Over a million postcards were printed in celebration and – despite the admonition of Moritz von Lyncker, the chief of his Military Cabinet that it was 'Knobelsdorff, Your Majesty!' – the Kaiser bestowed on his son his first war decoration.²¹ After the setback on the Marne, the crown prince, who still believed that his army was in a position to capture the fortress of Verdun and that victory was in sight, was devastated when he received Moltke's order to retreat on 11 September. He protested but could exert no influence.²² The Hohenzollern did not completely abandon their dreams of dynastic glory in 1914 and throughout 1915 the Kaiser still urged offensive action for the sake of his son.²³ But the attention of the second Supreme Army Command (*Oberste Heeresleitung/OHL*) under Moltke's successor, Erich

von Falkenhayn, shifted to the east where the surprise victories of Paul von Hindenburg and Erich Ludendorff fostered a popular mythology which challenged monarchist assumptions. Critical of Falkenhayn for stripping the army in the West of its reserves in 1915, Wilhelm recalled how 'enviously our thoughts lingered with our comrades on the Eastern front, who had the opportunity to win fresh laurels in the war of movement'.²⁴

The presence of the crown prince's army in the vicinity of the French fortress at Verdun contributed to Falkenhayn's recommendation of Verdun, rather than Belfort to the south, as the location for a renewed German offensive in early 1916. Falkenhayn appreciated how another opportunity for Wilhelm to lead a successful assault would both gain the Kaiser's approval and perhaps deflate the Hindenburg myth. Well-informed military circles were quick to see Operation Gericht, which was launched after a significant delay on 21 February 1916, as an action '*ad maiorem Kronprinz gloriam*' (for the greater glory of the crown prince).²⁵ 'Fate kept me tied to Verdun for three and a half years', Wilhelm later wrote, and there is no doubt that the failed offensive of 1916 was the darkest episode in his military career.²⁶ Far from bringing him military glory and securing his dynasty's future, the horrific number of casualties (some 80,000 on the German side in the first five weeks) and the fact that this carnage occurred over an area of less than ten square miles meant that Wilhelm became identified with the senseless slaughter of the 'meat grinder' or the 'mill on the Meuse'. 'My recollections of these months of battle before Verdun are among the most painful of the whole war', Wilhelm admitted. 'It was no easy matter for me, the responsible commander, to abandon my dreams of hope and victory!'²⁷

The Verdun offensive highlighted Wilhelm's frustration over the strategic direction of the war, the difficulties of his command and the limits of his military influence. Wilhelm never had complete confidence in Falkenhayn, whom he sought unsuccessfully to have replaced by Hindenburg at the end of 1914 and undermined by persuading his father that as chief of the general staff he should not also be war minister.²⁸ In 1916 Wilhelm was dismayed when Falkenhayn rejected aspects of the Fifth Army's plans for the seizure of Verdun because he did not wish to commit resources to an attack on both banks of the Meuse.²⁹ Falkenhayn refused to send timely reinforcements in February 1916, intending the heavy artillery to carry the burden of the battle, and was only belatedly persuaded by Knobelsdorf to release precious reserves so that the offensive could be expanded to the west bank. Denied the opportunity to capture Verdun and convinced that repeated infantry attacks against well-fortified French positions were useless, Wilhelm undoubtedly wanted the bloodletting halted. But his attitude to Falkenhayn's alleged 'bleeding white' strategy was more ambiguous than he later implied.³⁰ Like Falkenhayn and Knobelsdorf, he believed that the French suffered more and realized that the offensive could not be called off until the German infantry were in defensible positions. The crown prince

continued to indulge the illusion of victory until a renewed attempt to take the Meuse heights on the east bank failed in July.

Wilhelm's relationship with Schmidt von Knobelsdorf broke down during the Verdun offensive. Fixated on capturing Verdun at any cost, his chief of staff excluded him from decision-making, deceived him about the real state of play and brusquely rejected all his ideas and suggestions.³¹ When the crown prince refused to sign new orders to attack in May 1916, Knobelsdorf secured instructions from Falkenhayn and forced him to comply.³² Wilhelm also proved unable to prevent the transfer of his loyal First General Staff Officer, Gerhard von Heymann, against his will.³³ Unable to assert his authority and increasingly a spectator on the sidelines, Wilhelm finally lost his temper with Knobelsdorf on 18 August, prompting the chief of staff's immediate resignation.³⁴ Heymann later maintained that both Falkenhayn and Knobelsdorf ruthlessly used the crown prince as a cloak for their ambition, justifying the continuation of the offensive by arguing that it was impossible for the German heir to the throne to suffer a defeat.³⁵

Responsibility for the Verdun offensive ultimately did not rest with Wilhelm, who played a relatively minor role behind the scenes. But he was the responsible commander in the eyes of the soldiers and public; from the original order to attack with the battle cry *Hurra Kronprinz*, the offensive was indelibly associated with his name.³⁶ In the autumn of 1916 Ludendorff relieved Wilhelm of his command of the Fifth Army. In the restructuring of the army under the third OHL, he was appointed commander-in-chief of his own army group, an elevated but more obviously symbolic role. His experiences at Verdun, however, left a deep impression on him and in the autumn of 1916 Crown Prince Rupprecht found him 'considerably more mature'.³⁷ 'Doubt as to my own competence, self-commiseration, bitter feelings, unjust censures passed in quick succession through my mind and lay like a heavy burden on my soul', Wilhelm later acknowledged, 'and I am not ashamed to confess that it was some time before I recovered my mental balance and my firm confidence in ultimate victory'.³⁸

Behind the lines

For most of the First World War, the crown prince was tied to his military headquarters, initially in Luxemburg, then at Stenay in Lorraine (from September 1914) and later (from March 1917) at Charleville in the Ardennes. Between late 1914, when his hopes of military glory evaporated, and February 1916, when the Verdun offensive started, he necessarily faded from public view. To some extent his experience mirrored that of his father, cocooned at Supreme Headquarters behind what Wilhelm decried as the 'Great Wall of China'.³⁹ But Wilhelm was better placed than the Kaiser to judge the war objectively and he also particularly resented the restrictions

to his personal freedom that the war entailed. 'If only this war were over! I am sick and tired of it!' he remarked in July 1917.⁴⁰

At Stenay, about 30 miles from the front line, Wilhelm lived comfortably with Knobelsdorf and Heymann in the Chateau des Tilleuls, which he described as 'a very beautifully situated house, surrounded by a well-kept garden, on the outskirts of the town'.⁴¹ He attended the situation reports given each morning by Heymann at staff headquarters in the local boys' school, but otherwise had little to do. Hence he decided 'to devote myself to what I regarded as my special task of exerting my personal influence with the troops and keeping in touch and conversing with subordinate staff'.⁴² Forbidden to travel into the battle zone, he visited staff and troops behind the lines, regularly traversing the same areas in his conspicuous red car with its lucky horseshoe (as shown in Figure 15.1). He reviewed troops, bestowed iron crosses, distributed cigarettes, visited the wounded and granted special requests. His tours of duty were also occasionally used to deceive the enemy, as when he visited Belfort in early 1916 before the German offensive against Verdun.⁴³

Wilhelm professed sympathy with his men but, along with his staff, he mainly viewed the war abstractly by means of situation reports, telephone calls and casualty figures; only rarely could he observe the fighting.⁴⁴



Figure 15.1 Crown Prince Wilhelm of Germany in his car equipped with his lucky horseshoe on a French road occupied by Germans during WWI, private collection Katherine Anne Lerman

From 1914 he found it difficult to visit the military hospitals and admitted that words of comfort and expressions of confidence in victory stuck in his throat.⁴⁵ Wilhelm distracted himself by playing tennis at the chateau and fraternizing with the young French women who showed an interest in him, smiling and waving whenever he drove past.⁴⁶ He held musical soirées and visited his father, brothers and others such as the state secretary of the navy office, Alfred von Tirpitz, who resided within easy driving distance at Supreme Headquarters. The Kaiser frequently visited Stenay on Sundays for lunch cooked by the chateau's excellent cook. Unbeknown to the German public, even Crown Princess Cecilie and two of their children spent a few days there in 1915. Their arrival attracted French notice and an air raid on 3 June resulted in some 30 casualties.⁴⁷ 'What a frivolous, easy-going view of war these highly placed personages have', Lyncker expostulated.⁴⁸ Wilhelm wanted London bombed in retaliation but had to be content with closer targets. 'After that we were spared such disturbances of our peace', he confirmed.⁴⁹

Well before the Verdun offensive, Wilhelm's conduct behind the lines undermined respect for the heir to the throne and brought the monarchy into disrepute. The crown prince was publicly accused of pillage and plunder. In September 1914 Baroness de Baye wrote to *Le Matin* that he had taken arms, jewels, gifts from the tsar and other relics from her chateau's collections at Champaubert.⁵⁰ Other French properties were also despoiled. But it was Wilhelm's sexual transgressions that damaged him most in the eyes of more serious-minded officers. Wilhelm was never discreet about his relationships with women even before the war, and his 'unrepressed sexual drive' was acknowledged by one of his closest friends.⁵¹ He openly installed a butcher's daughter at his headquarters in Luxemburg; at Stenay his conquests included a French widow and a young florist who was known locally as 'the Crown Princess'.⁵² Relationships with women under wartime occupation were often seen in military circles as emasculating and potentially treacherous even when they did not involve the heir to the throne. German officers who found it difficult to take Wilhelm seriously as a military commander questioned his suitability as a future ruler and figurehead.

Rumours about the crown prince circulated without denial during the war and he proved a gift for enemy propagandists. Depicted by the French as '*l'homme qui rit*' (the laughing man) and lampooned in the *Daily Mirror* as 'little Willie', Wilhelm later acknowledged how his ease of manner and ready smile were used against him even by German newspapers.⁵³ Humour gave way to vitriol during the Verdun offensive, after which he was habitually portrayed as a demonic and deranged murderer in his shako cap, laughing in front of skeletons and corpses. Several books published by the popular writer William Le Queux, purporting to be based on the revelations of Wilhelm's aides, depicted the crown prince as 'the Royal Bounder of Europe', a playboy prince with perverted tastes who was adept at deception

and subterfuge. His shameless exploits during the war included frequenting hashish dens in Constantinople, precipitating Rasputin's murder and flying in a Zeppelin to Bucharest in order to bribe a former lover to murder her husband, a cabinet minister who supported the Entente.⁵⁴

Some efforts were made by the German military authorities to counter the wartime propaganda and improve Wilhelm's image. War artists and photographers were employed to record him conscientiously performing his duties and keep him in the public eye.⁵⁵ But even Walter Bloem, who headed the small propaganda office set up in the general staff in March 1916, acknowledged, 'how much is done in this regard for Hindenburg, how little for the Kaiser, the Crown Prince!'.⁵⁶ After Verdun, Hindenburg himself felt obliged to protect the heir to the throne with his authority, rebutting the idea that he was responsible for the failed offensive and seeking to counter allegations about his private life.⁵⁷ A lavishly illustrated book focusing on his military activities was published in 1918 and the third OHL deported his latest mistress to Lille.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Wilhelm's defenders faced an uphill task. As Colonel Max Bauer noted in February 1918, 'it is all the more serious that the crown prince has made the work of the enemy easier by many careless acts'.⁵⁹

Politics and revolution

Military disappointment and resentment at being based for so long in the 'godforsaken hole' of Stenay propelled Wilhelm to become more active politically during the war.⁶⁰ Although it was suspected in the Kaiser's entourage that the crown prince wanted an end to the war at any price simply because he no longer wanted to make the personal sacrifices that war entailed,⁶¹ Wilhelm understood perhaps better than most within the Wilhelmine elite from late 1914 that Germany could not win the war militarily and there had to be a political solution.

As early as February 1915 Wilhelm sought to detach Russia from the Entente and confidentially encouraged the Grand Duke of Hesse to intercede with his brother-in-law, the tsar. 'Our diplomats are so stupid and incapable that one must lend a hand oneself if anything good is to come out of it.'⁶² Originally an annexationist and increasingly Anglophobic, the crown prince became willing to countenance significant concessions, even in the west, if it led to a negotiated settlement with France or Russia. He tried to prevent Bethmann's proclamation of an independent Poland in November 1916 because it undermined the chance to prise Russia away from the Entente.⁶³ Wilhelm's views exposed him to charges of defeatism within the army and imperial entourage. 'The crown prince is completely pusillanimous, speaks of "peace at any price", return of Alsace-Lorraine to France', Lyncker noted in 1916. 'Think of that! So little backbone and commitment.'⁶⁴

Wilhelm's political interventions were often the product of deep-seated personal prejudices that had been formed well before 1914. Resentful because

he was excluded from political influence, he had nothing but contempt for the 'eternally vacillating' Bethmann Hollweg whom he persistently sought to replace whenever frictions arose.⁶⁵ Wilhelm scorned the chancellor's bureaucratic mentality, his lack of diplomatic experience and inadequate knowledge of the world. 'Bethmann is not a man, that is the nub of the matter', he wrote in 1911 and he described the day the chancellor resigned in July 1917 as the happiest day of his life.⁶⁶ Wilhelm was equally scathing about the role of his father's cabinet chiefs and entourage whom he accused of shielding the Kaiser from bad news. In 1907 the reticence of Wilhelm II's advisers meant that it had fallen to him to initiate his father into allegations of homosexuality surrounding his best friend, Philipp zu Eulenburg.⁶⁷ 'If I should ever come to the throne', he told Tirpitz and others in February 1915, 'the whole lot of them would be kicked out. I want to talk to people who openly tell me the truth'.⁶⁸ Wilhelm complained how the Kaiser rarely saw him on his own and used 'one or other of his creatures' to discipline him. Lyncker had been Wilhelm's military governor when he was a teenager and repeatedly reprimanded him during the war.

An apprentice in politics as well as military affairs, Wilhelm struggled to develop a political critique of what was wrong with the imperial German monarchy during the war. Conscious of his father's inadequacy as Kaiser and Supreme War Leader, he invariably saw the solution as installing 'strong men' at the top of the military and political hierarchies. Wilhelm supported Tirpitz's candidacy as chancellor, seeing the navy secretary as a powerful personality with impeccable nationalist credentials who could deal with the wartime emergency.⁶⁹ Both marginalized politically, Wilhelm and Tirpitz discussed in 1915 how they might force the Kaiser to abdicate on account of his mental instability, although the subsequent ascendancy of Hindenburg largely forestalled such an eventuality.⁷⁰ Wilhelm's deep ambivalence about his father was evident throughout the war. Damning about his deficiencies and oppositional by nature, he nevertheless desperately sought Wilhelm II's approval and submitted to his authority. The Kaiser, too, never overcame a fundamental coldness towards his eldest son which manifested itself in heightened irritability and mistrust whenever Wilhelm interceded on behalf of a particular course. The crown prince's criticisms of men like Falkenhayn, Bethmann, Rudolf von Valentini, the chief of the civil cabinet, and Gottlieb von Jagow, the foreign secretary, only reinforced the Kaiser's desire to retain them. Wilhelm also naively supported the return of Bernhard von Bülow as chancellor in 1917, who his father detested even more than Tirpitz.⁷¹ The former chancellor had 'always listened readily to my worries and thoughts', the crown prince recalled and blamed Valentini's 'pernicious influence' for the failure of his candidacy.⁷²

Wilhelm's political actions during the war were rarely consistent but generally reflected the influence of his military milieu and conservative mentors such as his confidant, Hans Jasper von Maltzahn. Despite

reservations, he ultimately prioritized the successful prosecution of the war and, once Hindenburg and Ludendorff took over in 1916, instinctively toed their line. Denied an effective political entourage or even regular access to moderate opinion, his understanding of political developments in Berlin was superficial and sporadic. Foreign policy always interested him more than domestic issues, about which he knew woefully little. While he sometimes impressed interlocutors on account of his reasonableness and ability to listen, at other times he was cavalier and impatient, reluctant to spend more than 30 minutes with a new chancellor and inclined to pursue the first course of action that came into his head.⁷³ In 1917, however, his conversations with the journalist Victor Naumann resulted in a political memorandum of 18 July that contradicted the policy of the generals and has been seen as a work of statesmanship.⁷⁴ Recommending, amongst other measures, peace with Russia on the basis of the status quo, it accorded with the views of the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister, Ottokar von Czernin, to whom Wilhelm naively passed a copy of the document. It was promptly leaked to the French. The episode embarrassed the crown prince and damaged his relationship with the generals. Significantly, he subsequently suspended his independent political judgement and adopted Ludendorff's view that Germany must win the war or perish.

Wilhelm later claimed that he 'always possessed a leaning towards the British constitutional system', but his 'progressive ideas' before the war were mainly concerned with modernizing military uniforms.⁷⁵ He resisted Germany's democratization during the war. Briefly persuaded by Valentini that the Prussian franchise reform was necessary, he quickly reverted to opposition.⁷⁶ Intent on preserving the power of the Crown, Wilhelm wanted to bolster the popularity of the monarchy and feared the consequences of a military defeat, especially after the revolution in Russia in 1917. But his recipe was not to support structural reform or greater political participation. Rather, he simplistically attacked the growing influence of the cabinet chiefs and advocated an energetic dictatorship that would suppress revolution, punish deserters and shirkers, and maintain army morale.⁷⁷

Wilhelm played a highly controversial role in precipitating the fall of Bethmann Hollweg in 1917. Ordered to Berlin on Valentini's advice, on 12 July he consulted individually with six parliamentarians from the main political parties, previously vetted by the army command, about the suffrage reform and their confidence in the chancellor.⁷⁸ He then relayed to his father that only the left liberal, Friedrich Payer, had unequivocally supported Bethmann's continuance in office. Like Hindenburg and Ludendorff, Wilhelm threatened to resign his command in 1917 if the Kaiser did not replace a chancellor whom he maintained was only supported by 'Jews and... social democrats'.⁷⁹ He was triumphant when Bethmann drew the logical conclusion and resigned voluntarily on 13 July. Wilhelm failed to see how his own actions damaged the Crown's prerogative to choose the

chancellor and government ministers until Valentini enlightened him.⁸⁰ The inferiority of Bethmann's three successors as chancellor never subsequently caused him to question his political judgement. Wilhelm's intervention in July 1917 represented the highpoint of his political activity but had no impact on the position of the heir to the throne (or the political parties) within the government system. The crown prince was systematically excluded from all subsequent personnel decisions relating to the chancellorship. Once Bethmann was removed from office, Wilhelm turned his ire on Valentini, infuriated by his plain speaking and loyal defence of the Kaiser's interests. Again, he joined forces with Hindenburg and Ludendorff to secure his aim in January 1918. It is unlikely, though, that the generals could have achieved Valentini's departure without the crown prince's involvement.⁸¹

In April 1918, as the military situation deteriorated, Wilhelm still cracked joke after joke at lunch with his father.⁸² By the summer, however, after the failure of the Rheims offensive and the death of his close friend, Alfred von Mitzlaff, he was increasingly fatalistic about the impending catastrophe. 'The drives to the front, which had previously been a pleasure and recreation for me, were now filled with bitterness', he recalled, insisting that 'the source of disintegration lay at home'.⁸³ Wilhelm Groener (who replaced Ludendorff as first quartermaster general in October 1918) observed at Wilhelm's headquarters in Charleville how 'one simply lived in the war, all the other considerations played no role, and Berlin was a frightful lair in which the politicians chatted and did useless things'.⁸⁴ The crown prince was not consulted about the appointment of Prince Max von Baden as chancellor on 3 October, the installation of parliamentary ministers or the request for an armistice. As internal and external pressure mounted on the Kaiser to abdicate, Wilhelm belatedly put about that he was a liberal.⁸⁵ But he nevertheless promised his father he would not usurp him and sought unsuccessfully to induce the federal princes to support them.⁸⁶ Like his father, Wilhelm missed the fleeting opportunity to surrender his rights voluntarily and perhaps secure a regency until his 12-year-old son came of age.⁸⁷

In the last days of the imperial German monarchy the crown prince, overshadowed by his father, remained a subaltern figure without significant military or political support. Lacking the ruthlessness, clarity and intelligence to act independently, his peculiar mentality was evident at Spa on 9 November, when he arrived late for the crucial discussions, stayed a mere three hours and relied on his chief of staff, Friedrich von der Schulenburg, to represent him. Wilhelm favoured resistance but his belligerence was laced with nonchalance. The crown prince preferred to be elsewhere and Groener later confirmed that he had returned to the same woman who had delayed his arrival that morning.⁸⁸

Wilhelm was presented with a *fait accompli* when Prince Max von Baden announced the Kaiser's abdication and the crown prince's renunciation of his sovereign rights on 9 November, handing power over to the socialist leader

Friedrich Ebert. Even after the Kaiser's flight to Holland on 10 November, he naively expected that he could retain command of his armies and lead them home.⁸⁹ The transfer of the Kaiser's military prerogatives to Hindenburg quashed this illusion; Hindenburg wanted no competition from the younger Hohenzollern and promptly withdrew his command.⁹⁰ Wilhelm's decision to follow his father into exile was not a foregone conclusion, however, and further undermined support for a monarchy. While he was never likely to seek a 'heroic death', it was conceivable (as Ebert confirmed) that he could have returned to Germany as a private citizen.⁹¹ The crown prince nevertheless left for Holland on 12 November. Concerned about his personal safety in the developing revolution and his possible extradition for war crimes, he also requested help 'to get to some neutral territory with his French tennis partner' and free himself from his wife.⁹² On account of this behaviour in November 1918, Schulenburg's son spoke out strongly against Wilhelm's candidacy when the army conspirators were discussing a monarchical restoration in 1941.⁹³

The heir to the Prussian throne, like the military monarchy itself, could never be smoothly integrated into the imperial German constitutional system. During the First World War, Crown Prince Wilhelm carried a huge burden of expectation but his conflicting responses reflected the tensions between his role as a soldier, subject to military discipline, and his political aspirations. Conscious of Prussian traditions, he pursued military glory, defended the Kaiser's autocratic powers and instinctively prioritized the needs of the army. But his ambivalence towards his father, propensity to opposition and need for recognition also encouraged him to seek political alternatives to the military impasse. Immature and rather mediocre, Wilhelm might have performed his royal duties adequately in a limited constitutional monarchy such as pertained in Britain, but he could never play a constructive role in adapting the imperial German monarchy to a more democratic age. Once the Hohenzollerns hitched their fortunes to his military command in 1914, his course was effectively set. A more illustrious military record would only have further entrenched his hostility to reform.

Defeat in the First World War and the fall of his dynasty left a bitter legacy for Wilhelm. He was uprooted from his homeland, separated from his family and denied his personal freedom. He may have ended up caring less about the institution of monarchy. 'A crown is not the only thing worth striving for', he wrote to his sister from Wieringen. 'To be one's own master on one's own land (*Grund und Boden*) also means a great deal.'⁹⁴ After his return to Germany in 1923, Wilhelm continued to indulge his private passions and periodically deluded himself that he might play a significant role in politics. As Germany headed towards another conflagration in the 1930s, however, it was the personal toll of the war that preoccupied him most. 'All my best friends from youth fell in the world war', he wrote privately to Neville Chamberlain after the Sudeten crisis in 1938; and, with his customary

credulity, he thanked the British prime minister for saving Europe and his four sons from the catastrophe of war.⁹⁵

Notes

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16

Germany's Ersatz Kaiser? The Political Opportunities of Max von Baden: Royal Heir and Imperial Chancellor

Lothar Machtan

Three weeks before he appointed Max von Baden chancellor, Kaiser Wilhelm II made his final major public appearance. The setting of the events on 10 September 1918 was a factory of the armaments giant Krupp in Essen, where the Kaiser once again played the part of commander-in-chief before an audience of carefully selected workers. Striking a heroic pose he called for allegiance to the crown: 'anyone whose heart is in the right place', so read the text in the event's press statement, 'anyone who wishes to be loyal, let him now stand and swear to me, on behalf of all German workers: we wish to fight and hold on to the end'.

It was the head of his *Geheimes Zivilkabinett*, Friedrich von Berg, who had encouraged the monarch to appear at this event and provided him with his speech. However, the emperor, ever the agitator, did not keep to his advisor's text for long before turning to an improvised performance during which he got so agitated that he repeatedly swung his sabre as he spoke. Yet he failed to achieve the hoped-for effect upon his audience. 'I looked at those listening', a *nota bene* monarchist – attendant noted at the time, 'the meaningful connection generated by the beginning of the speech ebbed away. The faces of the audience grew stiff, and the more the Kaiser worked himself up, the more obvious the audience's rejection became'. Afterwards, the Emperor's entourage was dominated by the feeling that Wilhelm II had spectacularly wasted this potentially final chance to rally the people around his person and his cause. Indeed, amongst that entourage it was clear that the Emperor's actual spoken words would not be published under any circumstances. Yet even the edited text of the speech makes clear just how much Wilhelm II had become divorced from the current state of affairs with his backward-looking rhetoric and haughty attitude: his lack of empathy vis-à-vis the suffering and deprivations of the people, his inability to understand their hunger for bread and peace and political participation. It was precisely the sort of self-stylizing, self-referential theatricality on display at Krupp that no-one wanted anymore.

Thus, as it stood, the Prussian-German imperial order as represented by Wilhelm II was in very real danger of becoming a terminal case. It was on the verge of endangering the monarchical idea in Germany as a whole. Kaiser Wilhelm's authority was simply no longer up to the task of dealing with the situation in his war-wearied country.¹

On the very evening of his misjudged appearance in Essen, the monarch received the personal adjutant of Prince Max von Baden, who passed on to him a collection of private letters from his master.² Most important was a Cassandra-like message on the political situation penned by the heir to the Grand Duchy of Baden urging Wilhelm to act without delay and appoint a government of national unity headed by a trusted figure to take on the leadership of the nation in the emperor's name. Max stressed that there was still time for such an act to salvage the situation, but only as a people's emperor (*Volkskaiser*) could Wilhelm hope to rebuild trust. Naturally, should the emperor be in need of a devoted political counsellor, that is, a new chancellor, then Max would make himself available for the task. Wilhelm gave Max the obligatory thanks for the advice proffered, only to wave it aside immediately: 'our views are fundamentally in agreement, I work in this direction and all of my instructions are given on that basis'. At the present time, Wilhelm added, no change in policy could be envisaged. This was a polite but clear rejection.

Nevertheless, three weeks later Max von Baden was playing the starring role on the political stage of the German Empire and thus made it into the history books as the chancellor who oversaw its final days: for some as the gravedigger of the monarchy and for others as the liberal who finally overthrew the authoritarian state.

How did it come to pass that the barely known heir of the politically unimportant Grand Duchy of Baden rose to play such a (highly controversial) historic role? How in the first place did he find himself at the forefront of the cast of characters in Berlin who ultimately played out the drama of the downfall of the German Empire? This political story can only be properly understood if it takes account of the life lived by Prince Max to that date. Indeed his life constitutes a rather curious drama of its own in the context of his historical role, even more so in view of the fact that he effectively stumbled his way into the unforgiving world of high politics. Yet he was no mere passive observer during the epochal changes that gripped Germany towards the end of the imperial era: he also helped to shape it in his own way. The caesura for which he is partially responsible is worth focusing upon, particularly from a dynastic-political perspective.

Who was Max von Baden?

In my biography of Max von Baden, I explore his life in four broad, chronologically organized sections. The first of these is concerned with his

socialization as a prince. He became the heir apparent to the Grand Duchy of Baden literally overnight after the death of his cousin. The central question here is precisely what impact this switch from the junior to the senior branch of the Zähringen dynasty had on Max himself. A number of the features of his political career can best be explained by the new dynastic context in which Max found himself after 1888. The network of close and distant relations within and amongst the interrelated ruling houses of Europe with the distinct culture of the high nobility became the dominant factor of his life. The most important frame of reference thus remained the dynasty itself, which had embodied the monarchy in Baden since the days of Napoleon.³ Bismarck's foundation of the German Empire 'from above' explicitly reaffirmed the principle of the monarch as the sole possessor and executor of sovereign power. Having been socialized in this setting, Max considered the ideal of the sacral, nigh-on divinely ordained monarch a fundamental constant throughout his political life.

Reflecting upon this fact can provide further insights into Max von Baden's basic perception of his world and how it influenced his decision-making. It has repeatedly been attested that princely conventions struck him as particularly oppressive. Even before his elevation to heir-apparent he had shown a notable awareness of his own individuality. Yet the life of an aristocratic aesthete that he had envisioned for himself ceased being a realistic possibility the moment that the responsibility for the very continuation of the monarchy of Baden was placed on his shoulders. The familiar steps followed: the obligatory military service in a Prussian regiment, countless representative duties at court in both Berlin and Karlsruhe, grand tours throughout Europe, and the process of scouting out a suitable bride. During these experiences he honed his methods of presenting his thoughts and actions to the world so as to cut an appropriately dignified figure and impress his peers. Despite this, politics was not his calling, nor did this change when he was entrusted with the presidency of Baden's upper house of parliament. Nevertheless, that position provided him with ample opportunities to present himself to Baden's political public as the congenial, much-loved heir. Max's marriage to Princess Maria Louise from the Guelphs, the royal House of Hanover – the dynasty which had been deposed by Bismarck – contributed to this image. Moreover it was a masterpiece of dynastic politicking on Max's part which rehabilitated the Guelphs. Following the birth of their son Berthold in 1906, Max von Baden's position as the future of the grand-ducal family was firmly established.

The second section of my biography deals with the delicate question of Max's private life up to 1914, his close circle of friends, his main areas of activity, and of course his strategies for survival. Uncovering and decoding his private behaviour is important for a deeper understanding of his public persona, for, as far as his private life was concerned, the prince was entangled in a web of irresolvable contradictions. His urge for a genuine private

life – which was his innermost yearning – clashed again and again with the demands made of him by the world of which he was a part. He constantly had to devote a considerable portion of his willpower to dutiful self-restraint merely in order to make it through the day. The issue of his homosexuality was a further complicating factor. This part of his nature meant that his life consisted of a constant Herculean effort to conform to the ruling norms of the world he inhabited. It also made him vulnerable. Of course there were means at his disposal to bolster his strength or deflect the stress caused by the dominance of dynastic imperatives in his life. There were protective measures, such as the solace Max always drew from his Russian mother or from experienced confidants-cum-therapists such as Axel Munthe, Cosima Wagner or Johannes Müller, all of whom helped to see him through acute crises. He made use of refuges like Salem Palace on Lake Constance. There was also the distraction offered by travel: the sunshine of the south or the lonely peaks of the Alps, or finally the escapes to the mystical sounds of the *Götterdämmerung* theatre at Bayreuth where he sought redemption. In this respect, he did not have to subordinate the entirety of his life to the ruling behavioural norms, yet his public persona remained, and had to remain, firmly within those very confines.

The third section of my book is devoted to a more focused political biography of the years 1914–18. In his earlier years there had been little indication of political ambitions on Max von Baden's part; there was neither the posturing of a potential statesman nor any particular interest in the great questions of the day. He merely remained convinced of the fact that any existing popular democratic yearnings could be successfully countered and subverted by a more refined monarchical style. In his view, the common people ultimately had a deeply anchored monarchical feeling, a natural respect for authority which he felt should be consciously fostered, and he saw in himself a suitable medium for propagating this attitude. This cultivation of his own image came to a sudden end in August 1914 as Max's own daily life changed to a wartime footing. The brutal confrontation between the Great Powers marked the beginning of a new era in his life. The embarrassing experience of his voluntary withdrawal from front-line service overshadowed his life in ways previously undreamt of and he at times felt so lost that he was gripped by an existential crisis of sorts. His desire to compensate for this, to make up for his failures by taking an equivalent responsibility in high politics, grew directly from that sense of shame that was both public and privately felt.

The ignominy of his flight from front-line service weighed especially heavily upon a man like him, a noble with the rank of a general who had internalized the rigorous sense of self-worth based on honour. One who knew all too well that no true soldier could remove himself from service on the front and still retain his honour. He also knew that service in other military fields, in his case in provision for prisoners of war, was no true

substitute. His avoidance of front-line service not only brought a loss of prestige onto his own house, it also affected his identity as a prince and his royal self-respect precisely because his actions constituted a blatant deviation from the culture of sovereign dignity which the ruling families of Germany still upheld as an integral part of their being.⁴ A general's uniform was one of the most important props for princely performance in a military monarchy such as the Prussian-German Empire. Before August 1914, Max von Baden had quite gladly performed this part and let himself be portrayed in such a way, only to have his critics juxtapose that fact with his reluctant wartime role afterwards in order to mock him (See Figures 16.1 and 16.2).

From 1917 onward Max inwardly moved on and began to conceive of himself in a new role: that of the prospective national hero whose destiny was to save the German Empire from the threat of mortal danger. He imagined himself as a new Marcus Curtius, the mythological Roman who saved his city from certain doom through heroic self-sacrifice. As Curtius leapt into the chasm that had opened in the Roman Forum, so would Max voluntarily throw himself into the dark unknown of high politics during the vicissitudes of war in an attempt to make amends for the stain on his honour. The long-held wish to act as a prince should was father to the thought of undertaking a genuine political task. Having decided to face a task of the highest order, his life soon became a drama of the highest order.

Once he had found his way into high politics, Max considered it particularly important that he be the sort of figure who was called upon by others to take up a position and was sought out to play a role. And indeed political operators – spin doctors – gave their best to turn the heir to the throne of Baden into the advocate of a higher political mission, a new figure on the scene who – so it was claimed – had a grand plan for Germany in reserve. A programme of so-called ethical imperialism in which the German pretences to world power were to be justified culturally and no longer with the usual economic reasoning and pragmatic questions of power politics. This programme could and would help Max, the irreproachable aristocrat, to attain the eminence that came with the highest offices of state and with that international recognition. The blueprint for such a plan was the vision of German cultural-intellectual influence permeating the world, leading by example and active advocacy, while simultaneously reforming German political culture along British lines. The intellectual fathers of this programme – Paul Rohrbach, Kurt Hahn and Alfred Weber – had imprinted these ideas on Max's political conceptions. Meanwhile, it was 'five minutes to midnight' before Max was called upon to take the role he had envisioned for himself. The precariousness of the situation was clear to him as military defeat in the Great War loomed on the horizon. The political leadership was insecure and some form of political day of reckoning seemed near.⁵

As of September 1918, waiting was no longer an option for Max von Baden. He was overwhelmed by his perceived mission to 'have to save' the empire.

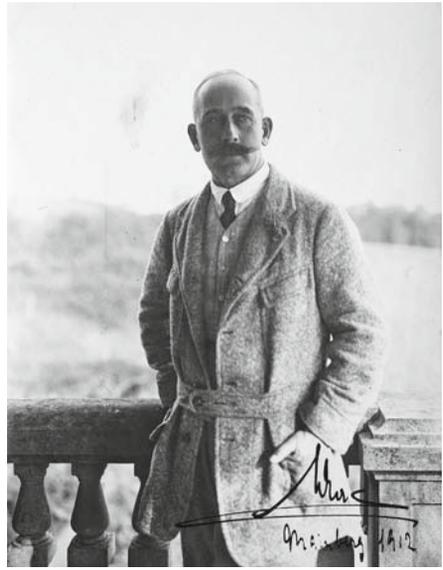


Figure 16.1/16.2 Half prince/general, half human being: Representations of the heir to the Baden throne, Prince Max, in 1912 and 1914, private collection Heidi Mehrkens (16.1) and Lothar Machtan (16.2)

Yet he perceived this very mission as one of grievous self-sacrifice even as he viewed his appointment to the chancellorship as a historical necessity. As he told his confidant Johannes Müller, it was ‘a matter of belief and of dedicating oneself to the preservation of Germany and her proud emergence from this confusion’.⁶ Such a moral position may indeed impress, just as it may make the new chancellor appear in a sympathetic light if only one were not immediately forced to anticipate his coming failure.

In 1918 being a truly effective operator in the world of German high politics was an impossibility for a royal personage such as Max. He had no real knowledge of how business was dispatched in the Wilhelmstraße nor how to navigate rougher waters. He had no realistic conception of the high expectations placed upon the chancellor in this perilous situation. He did not possess what one would call risk management skills today, nor was he prepared for the possibility that his panacea plan – suggested to him by others – may very well not have the desired effect. Rather he remained convinced that a public appeal to conscience and rationality would be sufficient to bring an end to the war and, once accomplished, the next steps would naturally take care of themselves. It never in fact occurred to him to consult and seek reassurance from the governing elite to ascertain from them whether or not his concept of ethical imperialism had any chance

of being realized at all. Parliamentary procedure was equally alien to him. Thus there was a palpable divide between the world of political ideals where Max von Baden's conceptions were located and the actual world of German politics in late 1918. What then was to be done?

Max had a pronounced sense of emotional intelligence and intuition. On this basis he naturally sensed some of the steps that were necessary to remedy the stagnation that had gripped both Germany's politics and governance. Yet these qualities alone were not enough to introduce the sorely needed changes. Although Max himself realized this and even mentioned it openly at times, he nevertheless allowed himself to be convinced during September 1918 that he was capable of performing a task for which he was never trained nor had any practical experience in, namely to steer the ship of state through the crisis. That he presumed to undertake this was not so much a case of Max recklessly overestimating his ability as falling victim to naivety and self-persuasion.

Suddenly to burst forth from the familiarity of his closed-off monarchical cosmos and leap into a world dominated by a constant struggle for power, influence and leadership was an undertaking of such unreasonableness that it can only be explained by such an interpretation. His transition from the ritualized world of the princes into the minefield of daily politics would have been challenge enough during peacetime. Four years of total war had brutalized domestic politics as well. How could one reconcile the tradition of the ancestral privileges and constitutional position of a ruling prince with the position of public political leadership? It was not without reason that the empire had not yet seen a chancellor with a royal background, that is, one who ruled 'by the grace of God' as well as by the emperor's pleasure. Thus, this late-life career decision was not only a bet against all odds, but also clashed against the basic nature of the model of the monarchical system constructed by Bismarck.⁷

Political ambitions without willpower

Overwhelming pressure from the Supreme Army Command (*Oberste Heeresleitung*) forced a reluctant and sceptical Kaiser Wilhelm II to appoint his cousin Max to the chancellorship on 3 October 1918. It was made clear from the beginning that the new chancellor would not enjoy the power of political initiative that otherwise came with the office: his signature on both the armistice request to be sent to President Wilson as well as the new government's policy programme statement were the *sine qua non* demanded of him by the Supreme Army Command. Consequently, he was to all intents and purposes demoted to a mere office holding functionary with neither personal clout nor a mandate to work in the interest of the people. Amidst Germany's crashing political scenery, Max von Baden's continued attempts to dance the dance on the centre stage of Berlin high politics eventually led

to his one single starring scene, at the end of October 1918. At that time there was a real possibility of preventing the downfall of the monarchical system in Germany. It is notable that Max wholly understood the dynamic brought about by his new role and prepared himself to make use of it.

When considering the existential crisis in which the entire monarchical system in Germany found itself in October 1918, one is struck by the increasingly desperate attempts by the Hohenzollerns to cling to the throne. In the rest of Germany, the ruling princes sank into a collective passivity, a sheer unwillingness to get involved in the political leadership of the endangered empire even though they were the constitutional bearers of sovereignty. The third main feature of this period was the chancellor's colossal efforts to fulfil his solemn vow to preserve the rule of his cousin Wilhelm II and the federal structures of the Reich. Yet, as became clear around 20 October, the monarchy could simply not be saved as long as this particular emperor ruled, and Max seems to have released himself from his vow and began searching for alternative solutions. Into early November he and his cabinet continued to speak publicly in defence of their much-maligned monarch even as behind closed doors he began to prepare a plan that would facilitate the departure of his hopelessly compromised cousin from the stage – albeit in as honourable a way as possible.

The guiding principle of Max's plan was a concept that had been encouraged by the banker Max Warburg and some of his other private advisors:⁸ a dynastic solution to the crisis of the German monarchy. It was perhaps the most artful idea of his political career. The plan was for Max to convince Wilhelm II that a voluntary abdication would earn him a dignified exit and would rank as a historic decision. Wilhelm would then, with the Reichstag's formal endorsement, name Max as imperial regent (*Reichsverweser*) on behalf of Wilhelm's oldest grandson who was still a minor but would be raised to be heir to the throne. In the kingdom of Prussia a similar solution would be put in place, although in this case the regent would be a member of the Hohenzollern family. With Max von Baden having thus been promoted to the regency of the Reich, an experienced politician with democratic credentials and who enjoyed the trust of the German people – Friedrich Ebert, for example – could occupy the office of chancellor and would now be responsible to the Reichstag. In his imaginings, Max the prince and labour leader Ebert would nobly reach across societal divides to join forces, come what may, and together they would save the fatherland from the sort of national catastrophe that had befallen Russia. This plan cannot be dismissed out of hand.⁹ It aimed to transform the highly complex German monarchical system into a form of government more fit for its time and capable of further development by cleverly removing the most contentious figures of the monarchy from the public stage. With Max as regent it placed a south German (that is, non-Prussian) face at the highest levels of political performance and at the same time installed a democratically legitimated chancellor at the centre

of governance. Had such a plan been carried out, it may well have saved the monarchical system in Germany at the very last minute and provided a quasi-presidential symbol of integration.

Without Max the idea of continuing the monarchy after the departure of Wilhelm II was unfeasible. No other appropriate candidates were even partially competent for the role and willing to assume the regency. Unlike Crown Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, who at least could be considered for the role, Max was closely related to the imperial family. The notoriously anti-Prussian attitude of the Wittelsbachs made a candidate from that family a poor choice for an imperial regent.¹⁰ Thus it fell to Max von Baden. The simplest way to set the plan in motion would have been a formal abdication from Wilhelm II. This was intended to create the conditions for the legitimate establishment of a regency as well as provide Max with the occasion to present himself ceremoniously as the regent. The alternative to this path would have essentially been a minor, hopefully bloodless, *coup d'état*. In the political situation of the time that option was not without a chance of success, but especially in Max's eyes it was undesirable. One of his highest priorities was to be legitimated by the abdicating monarch and elevated to the regency in the spirit of monarchical continuity. His stubborn attachment to legitimist prejudices, however, was the great weakness of his plan. If he had freed himself from the biases and emotional attachments of his dynastic world and princely socialization then he would have made the proper distinction between himself as a ruling prince and the necessities of the moment: the creation of a modern monarchical form of government.

Towards the end of October the government began to leak the idea amongst political circles in Berlin. When the envoy Friedrich Rosen met with Max on 22 October at the chancellery he noticed that the chancellor now 'seemed to have little interest in the maintenance of the Kaiser on the throne'. The prevailing opinion in government circles was 'the establishment of a regency under Prince Max'.¹¹ Ludendorff's successor General Groener heard whisperings of 'the regency of the Badener Max' as far away as Kiev.¹² The government eventually agreed with public opinion that removing Wilhelm II from the scene was a priority. Only the entourage surrounding the Emperor lived in denial of the fact that their time had come. In their eyes it was rather the government's fatal course 'which undoubtedly will lead Germany into ruin just as it will cost the Hohenzollerns the crown'.¹³ Around 28 October it briefly seemed as if the emperor would take control of his own fate, abdicate in favour of his grandson, and in doing so would at least save his dynasty. There are sources suggesting the existence of such a moment of insight – or sheer resignation – on Wilhelm's part.¹⁴ But it remained a momentary feeling which his entourage quickly quashed. In a moment of panic the camarilla surrounding the empress – the former head of the civil cabinet Berg, the Adjutant General Plessen, the head of the military cabinet Marschall, and the Minister of the Royal House Eulenberg – decided

on 29 October to remove the weakened Kaiser from the supposedly harmful influence of government and politics in Berlin and spirited him away to the imperial army headquarters in Spa. Before his departure, Wilhelm secured promises from his sons that they would never make themselves available for any potential regency.

The emperor's inner circle considered the calls for his abdication a wholly unreasonable demand, and they believed that by compelling the cooperation of potential successors in the imperial family they had demonstrated that Wilhelm was politically irreplaceable. Why did they resort to such a dramatic action? A member of the imperial entourage in Potsdam who witnessed the relevant scenes, Lieutenant-Colonel Alfred Niemann, wrote that 'the Kaiser felt the growing pressure from the prince-chancellor to persevere in one way or another in bringing about the monarch's abdication'.¹⁵ Upon their arrival at the imperial army headquarters the Emperor explained the reason for their flight from the capital to State Secretary Hintze: 'the government of Prince Max von Baden was working towards his removal, and it would be more difficult to oppose them in Berlin rather than in the midst of his army'. This forthright admission of his situation was immediately followed by 'sharp personal attacks against Prince Max' which included 'spiteful remarks'.¹⁶

Behind closed doors the chancellor had indeed finally openly admitted that Wilhelm's abdication 'preferably as quickly as possible' was a political necessity.¹⁷ He commissioned his most trusted assistant in the chancellery, Walter Simons, with the composition of a draft law regulating a regency of the Reich. The draft was hurriedly forwarded to Undersecretary Theodor Lewald of the interior ministry to be revised before its submission to the Reichstag.¹⁸ Simons's aim was to implement an imperial regency independently of a regency in Prussia, although the two crowns were constitutionally united. If need be, Simons was ready to circumvent the emperor and appeal only to the Reichstag. All those involved at this stage judged Simons's efforts to be 'obviously custom-tailored for Prince Max von Baden himself'.¹⁹ By contrast, the interior ministry favoured a legitimist regulation of the succession wherein the sitting head of state, that is, the German Emperor, would on his own authority appoint a replacement, namely the next agnate of the dynasty who was fit to reign. Furthermore, the chancellery had already drawn up deeds of abdication for Wilhelm II in addition to two drafts of patriotic appeals to the people and the army to be delivered by the outgoing monarch.²⁰

It was not coincidence that precisely at this point Friedrich Ebert, the enormously influential leader of the Social Democrats, took it upon himself to share his views on the crisis. He advocated the preservation of the monarchy not only as a personal view but as a quasi-official position. Until 9 November he argued that the German Empire could, at least for the time being, survive only if it retained the monarchy. 'But if we are to be able to

maintain the monarchy and avoid a republic', he argued, 'then the current monarch must abdicate' as well as the extremely unpopular crown prince. Ebert thought 'about a regency of a figure like Prince Max'.²¹ Similar attitudes were to be found in progressive-liberal circles.²² The Catholic Centre Party eventually came out in favour of maintaining the empire as well.²³ Both the government in Berlin and the majority parties in the Reichstag that supported it began to make preparations for the coming transition, the resultant shift in the political landscape and for the jockeying for positions in the reformed German Empire that seemed to be taking shape.

Yet Max von Baden refused to act. As at the beginning of his political career when he waited expectantly for others to call for him to take on a role he himself desired to play, Max set himself the surreal caveat that he should also receive the call from amongst the understudies to play this greatest of roles. That is, Max indeed wanted to take on the regency and occupy the place of the politically discredited emperor, but only if this occurred by means of Wilhelm's voluntary renunciation of the throne. However, Wilhelm's flight from Berlin into the protective arms of the Supreme Army Command confirmed that no such declaration would be forthcoming. Yet even as he grasped this Max could not simply renounce the positions he had taken during this crisis period. The only political strategy left to him was the attempt to advise Wilhelm II to abdicate. In this most serious of questions, the Kaiser was supposed to convince himself to take the right step. Seen within the context of the turbulent conditions on the eve of the already brewing German revolution this approach may seem particularly strange, but it was Max von Baden's own genuine political stance.

For Prince Max there could be no convergence of political prudence and dynastic morality. He had promised his cousin Wilhelm that he would preserve his throne under any and all circumstances. It was this promise alone that ultimately enabled him to become chancellor and for that reason it was impossible for him to break this promise without finding himself revealed as a traitor. In this respect the two cousins could not discuss the abdication question on a rational level as a political issue. Max's political attitudes further complicated his position. Without the ability or the will to advise his sovereign on an issue of truly vital importance, Max had ceased to fulfil the functions of chancellor. However, the role of a 'chancellor of the people', democratically legitimated, responsible to the legislature and dedicated to the public good was still rather remote from his understanding of political behaviour. It was a paradox from which there was no clean escape. Max desired Wilhelm's renunciation of the throne, but it would have been in his own eyes an unforgivable sin to achieve that very result *ex officio* and arrogate power to himself.

Nevertheless, Max frantically devoted himself to the business of governing at a time when the socio-political tensions were reaching a breaking point.²⁴ One aspect in particular serves to demonstrate the dilemma into which Max

had manoeuvred himself: the vast repertoire of ostensible reasons he offered for not himself wresting from the emperor the only appropriate decision. The emperor's fourth son, August Wilhelm, questioned him regarding this and received the response that Max 'could not do this, as "a relative and a friend", and he felt far too sick to be able to bear such worries'.²⁵ Max offered another explanation to the Prussian Minister of State Bill Drews, referring to his strained personal relationship with Wilhelm which made such a direct confrontation seem unwise.²⁶ The diplomat Johann Heinrich von Bernstorff recalled a conversation with the chancellor during which Max 'categorically' rejected a trip to Spa 'with the words: as the heir apparent to Baden and a German prince that is something I [Max] cannot do, to which I quickly replied that you [Max] should not have been allowed to become chancellor'.²⁷ Max was unable to persuade any of his colleagues or other influential political actors of the rationale behind his passivity.²⁸ Only the royal couple presumed to have identified Max's motives. As Wilhelm II stated on 1 November 1918: 'Prince Max is a traitor; he wants first to be regent, such that he may then himself become Kaiser'.²⁹

On 31 October 1918 Max sent Drews to the emperor to give him a detailed report of the current situation with regards to 'this terribly grave matter'. As Drews recounted, the chancellor's instructions to him 'made it explicitly clear that I was not bringing the Kaiser a recommendation to abdicate, but rather that I was merely to make him aware of the objective state of affairs relative to his abdication'.³⁰ After the meeting the emperor told everyone who would listen that Drews came to him 'in the name of the government in Berlin, this so-called government, to do nothing less than urge my abdication'. Such unbelievable presumption! And who then was to take his place? 'Perhaps the ever so splendid Prince Max von Baden, who aspires to the regency or presidency?' Max, whom the Kaiser envisioned sitting with the members of his 'oh so clever government' in Berlin as they 'deliberate and confer, go on racking their brains and no one knows what it is that they in fact want'.³¹ In this aspect of his tirade the emperor was not entirely incorrect. Ludendorff's successor Groener also reported that Drews was obliged to listen to such denunciations and diatribes against the government as well as biting invectives aimed personally against Max von Baden.³² What Prince Max had intended as a touch of subtlety had the exact opposite effect. In the eyes of the Hohenzollern family the 'accused' chancellor had finally revealed himself as the 'scoundrel' that he was.³³ From then on he was effectively ostracized from the world of the imperial court.

A lost chance of survival

In the autumn of 1918 the establishment of a so-called imperial regency (*Reichsverweserschaft*) to be assumed by the incumbent Prince-Chancellor Max von Baden was an entirely credible model for salvaging the monarchical

system of government from the disaster of the war. Furthermore, it was also a model for the long-overdue establishment of a government representative of and responsible to both parliament and the people.³⁴ This plan could not be realized, however, because the only candidate for such a role was not a proper politician. Max could not take upon himself the vast responsibility for the German Empire because he could not lead, because he could not fight, and because he limited his options with hindrances of his own making.

Wilhelm II's behaviour was rapidly turning the personal crisis of his reign into a general crisis of the state. He appointed Max to the chancellorship almost solely in order to use him as a means to an end, namely, to retain his own position. If the chancellor wanted to prevent the inevitable damage that would be caused by the emperor's narrow ambitions, then he would have had to think in terms of Germany's national interest and the needs of the people as a whole. But such an attitude was simply not in his nature. The majority of the major political actors envisioned Germany becoming a constitutional monarchy with a fully empowered parliamentary system, and not a republic. The legal foundations for this had already been laid by the constitutional reform of 28 October 1918. The main concern now was to put forward a trustworthy figure as the face of this change. Yet for that transformation to be recognizable as a political new beginning of sorts, to say nothing of the perceived credibility of the reforms being proclaimed, the removal of Kaiser Wilhelm II was an absolute necessity. More precisely: his replacement by an appropriately commanding figure with a royal nimbus who could stand for both tradition and innovation – for continuity and change.

At that point the empire was on the precipice – time proved to be the critical factor, as the situation would brook no further delay. When social-revolutionary unrest began to spread at the end of October and the Kaiser, hated more by the people with each passing day, continued in his obstinacy, there was only one option left to the government: if Max still desired to save monarchism, then he would have to oppose directly the monarch who was on the verge of discrediting the institution as a whole. Yet Max lacked both the necessary sense for power and the moral courage of a leader, of one who does not shrink back from rebellious ideas at a time when the political fate of a nation is at stake. Besides, he had also been severely intimidated by his imperial relatives.

Max suffered a nervous breakdown on 31 October 1918 and his doctor treated him with an opium preparation so as to bring him near a state of an artificial coma for three days. When Max returned to his official duties the revolution had already reached Berlin. In the end he did take it upon himself to abandon Wilhelm II's reign. On 9 November, without the Kaiser's knowledge or consent, he announced the abdication of Wilhelm II and Crown Prince Wilhelm's renunciation of the throne. In an unconstitutional move

that was a sort of *coup d'état* Max appointed Friedrich Ebert as chancellor. But he no longer had the strength to follow through with the rest of his plan and put himself forward as regent. He now lacked the confidence to take up the burdens of executive authority and become a provisional head of state. The desperate pleas of his colleagues and advisors were for naught. On the very same day he hurriedly disappeared from the German political stage, never to return.

Hence my central thesis that first the miniature *coup d'état* of 9 November 1918 was not founded on the elemental creativity of a true revolution from above as it stalled before delivering the decisive step of transferring executive power from the Kaiser to a politically determined, purposeful substitute. Secondly, on that day Max von Baden removed the purple from the Kaiser's shoulders after the Prussian-German monarchy had already seen to its own ruin. The historical chance was squandered. From that point onwards, German politics lacked an authority figure that at least partially stood above party politics and could provide a degree of balance. For it was not monarchy itself as a form of government which was irredeemably discredited by the time the war ended, but rather the men who had been the faces of the system: above all Kaiser Wilhelm and his eldest son, Crown Prince Wilhelm. A visibly reformed monarchical system would have enjoyed the notable benefit of being able to attract and guide adherents of the traditional order on the path to democracy which had been presaged with the mass mobilization of the people since 1914. While providing reassurance to these traditionalists, such a solution would at the same time herald a departure from the political culture and morals of the Bismarckian state, characterized as it was by the dynastic, the militaristic and the bureaucratic. Precisely this could only have worked to the German Reich's benefit vis-à-vis the other European powers. Above all in the domestic realm such a moderated process of change would have dampened the appeal of the political extremism which in January 1919 burst forth into a nigh-on civil war in Germany. A regent of the Reich could have played the role of both arbitrator and admonisher in order to maintain a sense of national unity in the shaken Reich and thus have contributed to a peaceful transition towards a halfway stable liberal democratic order in Germany.

This interpretation has been inspired by Reinhart Koselleck's 'theory of possible histories', which explicitly calls for an investigation of the 'preconditions for potential events'.³⁵ The relative openness of the historical-political situation even in October 1918 cannot be overlooked. Another discovery was the nature of the reasons as to why the historically possible nevertheless founders on the contingency of historical processes. In this case mere human failings are a primary reason to be cited when one asks why the leading statesman in a politically deadlocked situation did not do what was best for Germany. Max von Baden's stalled political mindset, his traditional attitudes and his fear of the consequences of unorthodox conduct prevented

it. All of this can very much be traced back to the persistence of his socialization as a prince. Closed off as he had been in an exclusive dynastic world, the political education that he managed to accrue proved to be unsuitable and inadequate to the challenges he faced. Yet his politically catastrophic failure as chancellor was in no sense inevitable, for it stemmed from all-too-human subjective biases and predilections; from the emotionally instinctive blurring of his powers of judgement and initiative. This can rightly be called a tragedy.

Max von Baden's vision was to protect the German Reich from its impending doom – but as chancellor he effected precisely the opposite. History glanced upon his rescue attempts and marched on, indeed it went on to make him a revolutionary against his own will. The collateral damage of November 1918 was followed by a nearly ten-year-long historical-political war of letters by the ex-chancellor to justify, even absolve, himself.³⁶ In the midst of this gruelling struggle of words Max von Baden died at the age of 62. By then the real world of politics was long since lost to him as he sheltered in his refuge, Salem Palace on Lake Constance – an island to which he had fled as if a castaway in 1919 and which he was never to leave again.

Notes

The author would like to thank Dr Andrew Dodd for his helpful support with the English version of the text. For a detailed description of the following scenario and references, see Lothar Machtan (2008), *Die Abdankung. Wie Deutschlands gekrönte Häupter aus der Geschichte fielen*, 2nd edn, Berlin, 149–54.

1. Bernd Söseemann (1991), 'Der Zerfall des Kaisergedankens im Ersten Weltkrieg', in: John C.G. Röhl (ed.), *Der Ort Wilhelms II. in der Geschichte*, Munich, 145–70; John C.G. Röhl (2011), *Wilhelm II*, vol. 3, Munich, 1203ff.
2. See the detailed description in Lothar Machtan (2013), *Der letzte Kanzler des Kaisers. Prinz Max von Baden. Eine Biographie*, Berlin, 367ff.
3. Lothar Machtan (2014), 'Star-Monarch oder Muster-Monarchie? Zum politischen Herrschaftssystem des Großherzogtums Baden im langen 19. Jahrhundert', in: Detlef Lehnert (ed.), *Konstitutionalismus in Europa. Entwicklung und Interpretation*, Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 257–86.
4. See Martina Fetting (2013), *Zum Selbstverständnis der letzten deutschen Monarchen. Normverletzungen und Legitimationsstrategien der Bundesfürsten zwischen Gottesgnadentum und Medienrevolution*, Frankfurt/M., 68ff.
5. See Jörn Leonhard (2014), *Die Büchse der Pandora. Geschichte des Ersten Weltkriegs*, Munich, 872ff.
6. For references see Machtan (2013), 361–62.
7. See Lothar Machtan (2010), 'Deutschlands gekrönter Herrscherstand am Vorabend des Ersten Weltkriegs – Ein Inspektionsbericht zur Funktionstüchtigkeit des deutschen Monarchie-Modells', *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft* 58, 222–42; Dorothee Gottwald (2009), *Fürstenrecht und Staatsrecht im 19. Jahrhundert*, Frankfurt/M.; Dieter Langewiesche (2013), *Die Monarchie im Jahrhundert Europas. Selbstbehauptung durch Wandel im 19. Jahrhundert*, Heidelberg.

8. See Max Warburg's notes on his consultations with Max von Baden at the latter's sickbed (25 October 1918): 'Considered Abdication H[is] M[ajesty], Regent Max von Baden. 11–12 [o'clock] called again. Note, Kaiser' (Foundation Warburg-Archiv Hamburg-Blankenese, NL Max Warburg). Also involved in the plans were the head of the chancellery of the Reich Walter Simons and the then Privy Councillor Arnold Brecht. See Brecht's memoirs: (1966) *Aus nächster Nähe. Lebenserinnerungen 1884–1927*, Stuttgart, 162ff.
9. Cf. Wolfram Pyta's sketch 'Die Kunst des rechtzeitigen Thronverzichts', in: Patrick Merziger, Rudolf Stöber, Esther-Beate Körber, Jürgen Michael Schulz (eds) (2010), *Geschichte, Öffentlichkeit, Kommunikation. Festschrift für Bernd Sösemann zum 65. Geburtstag*, Stuttgart, 362–81.
10. See Ulrike Leutheusser and Hermann Rumschöttel (eds) (2014), *König Ludwig III. und das Ende der Monarchie in Bayern*, Munich.
11. Friedrich Rosen (1931), *Aus einem diplomatischen Wanderleben*, Berlin, 210, 214.
12. This remark in a letter to his wife of 25 October 1918, quoted in Dorothea Groener-Geyer (1955), *General Groener. Soldat und Staatsmann*, Frankfurt/M., 86.
13. Diary of the imperial adjutant-general Hans-Georg von Plessen, 26 October 1918, quoted in: Holger Afflerbach (ed.) (2005), *Kaiser Wilhelm II. als Oberster Kriegsherr, Quellen aus der militärischen Umgebung des Kaisers 1914–1918*, Munich, 932; likewise the head of the war cabinet Ulrich Freiherr von Marschall to the head of the navy cabinet Admiral Georg Alexander Müller, 28 October 1918, in: Görlitz (ed.) (1959), *Regierte der Kaiser? Kriegstagebücher, Aufzeichnungen und Briefe des Chefs des Marinekabinetts Admiral Georg Alexander Müller*, Göttingen, 440. For the historical context see Machtan (2013), 195ff.; and Isabel V. Hull (1982), *The Entourage of Kaiser Wilhelm II 1888–1918*, Cambridge, 288ff.
14. According to Johannes Müller's memoirs ((1938) *Vom Geheimnis des Lebens*, vol. 2, Stuttgart, 458–59), Wilhelm II had assured the prince in person that he would abdicate in favour of his grandson.
15. Friedrich Niemann (1927), *Revolution von oben – Umsturz von unten*, Berlin, 212.
16. Hintze's notes quoted in: Niemann (1927), 366.
17. Lerchenfeld to Dandl, 30 October 1918, in: Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Munich (BayHStA), MA, Gesandtschaft Berlin 1918 no. 1095; see also Müller's diary, 30 October 1918, quoted in: Görlitz (ed.) (1959), 442; Philipp Scheidemann (1928), *Memoiren eines Sozialdemokraten*, vol. 2, Dresden, 255f.; Wolfgang Prinz von Hessen (1986), *Aufzeichnungen*, ed. Rainer von Hessen, Kronberg, 116.
18. Cf. the drafts in: Bundesarchiv Berlin (BAB), N 2176 Lewald no. 28. On Lewald's political significance see Rolf Pfeiffer and Arnd Krüger (1995), 'Theodor Lewald', *Menora* 6, 233–65.
19. Lerchenfeld to Dandl, 29 October 1918, in: BayHStA, MA, Gesandtschaft Berlin 1918 no. 1095; see also diary Haußmann, 29 October 1918, quoted in: Ulrich Zeller (ed.) (1924), *Conrad Haußmann. Schlaglichter. Reichstagsbriefe und Aufzeichnungen*, Frankfurt/M., 261; and Privy Councillor Gottfried von Dryander (from the Geheimes Zivilkabinet) to Clemens von Delbrück, 31 October 1918, in: Universitätsbibliothek Jena, NL Delbrück no. 74.
20. Brecht (1966), 163; see non-verifiable versions of these documents in Max von Baden (1968), *Erinnerungen Dokumente*, newly edited by Golo Mann and Andreas Burckhardt, Stuttgart, 525ff.
21. Quoted from Ernst Jäckh (1954), *Der Goldene Pflug. Lebensernte eines Weltbürgers*, Stuttgart, 448ff.; see also Holtzendorff to Albert Ballin, 31 Oktober 1918, Staatsarchiv Hamburg, 621–1/95, 1580 no. 20.

22. Theodor Wolff (1989), *Die Wilhelminische Epoche*, ed. and introduced by Bernd Sösemann, Frankfurt/M., 161ff.
23. Ludwig Curtius (1950), *Deutsche und antike Welt. Lebenserinnerungen*, Stuttgart, 444ff.
24. For details see Machtan (2013), 431ff.
25. See Alfred Niemann (1928), *Kaiser und Revolution*, Berlin, 121, who mentions excerpts of the diary of Prince August Wilhelm of Prussia.
26. Drews to Max von Baden, 20 June 1922, in: BAB, R 43/2403f (duplicate).
27. Count Johann Heinrich Bernstorff (1936), *Erinnerungen und Briefe*, Zurich, 177ff.
28. Even half a century later Simons's then colleague Arnold Brecht found it 'incomprehensible... that Prince Max did not go personally to see the Kaiser in order to try to see to it that he abdicated in the interest of the Fatherland and the preservation of the monarchy' (Brecht (1966), 169).
29. According to Drews's 'Supplements from the conversation on 1 November 1918' he had with the German Emperor in Spa and recorded in 1922; see Geheimes Staatsarchiv PK Berlin-Dahlem, Abt. VI, NL Drews no. 159.
30. Drews to Max von Baden, 20 June 1922, in: BAB, R 43/2403f (duplicate).
31. For a reconstruction of Drew's mission in Spa including references see Machtan (2008), 214ff.
32. Emperor Wilhelm II (1922), *Ereignisse und Gestalten aus den Jahren 1878–1918*, Leipzig, 239ff.
33. Wilhelm II in a private letter to his wife Auguste Viktoria, 7 November 1918, quoted in: Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes Berlin, Nachlass Johannes Kriege no. 5.
34. On the problems of this consolidation see Marcus Llanque (2000), *Demokratisches Denken im Krieg. Die deutsche Debatte im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Berlin, 304ff.
35. Reinhart Koselleck (1989), *Vergangene Zukunft. Zur Semantik geschichtlicher Zeiten*, Frankfurt/M., 165, 175.
36. Lothar Machtan (2013a), 'Autobiographie als geschichtspolitische Waffe. Die Memoiren des letzten kaiserlichen Kanzlers Max von Baden', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 4, 481–512.

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