

## Dynasties

For thousands of years, societies have fallen under the reign of a single leader, ruling as chief, king, or emperor. In this fascinating global history of medieval and early modern dynastic power, Jeroen Duindam charts the rise and fall of dynasties, the rituals of rulership, and the contested presence of women on the throne. From European, African, Mughal, Ming–Qing, and Safavid dynasties to the Ottoman empire, Tokugawa Japan, and Chosŏn Korea, he reveals the tension between the ideals of kingship and the lives of actual rulers, the rich variety of arrangements for succession, the households or courts which catered to rulers' daily needs, and the relationship between the court and the territories under its control. The book integrates numerous African examples, sets dynasties within longer-term developments such as the rise of the state, and examines whether the tensions inherent in dynastic power led inexorably to cycles of ascent and decline.

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# Dynasties

*A Global History of Power, 1300–1800*

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Jeroen Duindam

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CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-107-06068-5 — Dynasties  
Jeroen Duindam  
Frontmatter  
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## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India  
103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

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[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781107060685](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107060685)

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First published 2016

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

ISBN 978-1-107-06068-5 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-63758-0 Paperback

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## Preface

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The global scope and thematic layout of this book do not allow digressions: most academic debates are left aside or relegated to the footnotes. My previous publications offer extended discussions of models and concepts commonly used in the history of courts and elites. The rationale for my comparative approach, explained briefly in the Introduction, has been defended at some length in earlier publications.

Bringing together results of specialised literature in many areas, I chose to use the relevant local terms at least once in the text. The glossary lists these terms with short explanations. Comparison relies on general concepts, but cannot be precise and verifiable if it fails to specify the local variants. At the same time, the use of these regional terms introduces the problem of transliteration conventions. While I have consistently tried to adopt accepted systems of transliteration, I lack the language expertise of the specialist and hence cannot myself control the results. Precision in this respect, surely, is not the key ambition of this book.

Chronology throughout the book is given in CE dates: CE and BCE are added only in unclear cases. Other calendars are never used, nor is the connection between dynastic rule and the calendar, common in many areas, considered here. Three years are given in parentheses the first time any ruler is mentioned in the text: birth, start of rule, end of rule. The year for the end of rule is marked with an asterisk (\*) in cases where it did not coincide with death, usually with an endnote explaining the circumstances (abdication, dethronement).

Paramount dynastic rulers were mostly men. This book discusses women in power and close to power at length, but it uses ‘ruler’, ‘prince’, or ‘king’ in general statements where princesses and queens are implicitly included.

## Acknowledgements

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Writing a book is a solitary activity. This comparative global book, however, could never have been written without the advice and assistance of many people.

Hamish Scott supported me from the book proposal to the final draft, helping this project through its various stages with detailed but invariably encouraging comments and corrections. Jérôme Kerlouégan's typically nuanced, precise, and thought-provoking answers to my unending queries added as much to my grasp of Chinese history as my perusal of the relevant literature. Anne Walthall, who stepped in to help me with Japanese history, not only gave essential advice, but also commented on the entire text during the writing process.

Others likewise showed remarkable learning, forbearance, and generosity, by reading and commenting on the typescript in one of its multiple stages: Maaïke van Berkel, Wim Blockmans, Marie Favereau-Doumenjou, Liesbeth Geevers, Jos Gommans, Metin Kunt, Elsbeth Locher-Scholten, Maarten Prak, Kim Ragetli, David Robinson, Robert Ross, Geoffrey Symcox, Bonno Thoden van Velzen, and Harriet Zurndorfer. During the writing process, I directly approached colleagues around the world after reading their specialised works; they gave expert advice, liberally shared their publications with me, and helped me with illustrations: Jan Abbink, Elif Akcetin, Tülay Artan, Sussan Babaie, Kathryn Babayan, Edna Bay, Cumhur Bekar, Suzanne Preston Blier, Wim Boot, Günhan Börekci, Remco Breuker, Craig Clunas, David Durand-Guédy, Patricia Ebrey, Emine Fetvacı, Anne Gerritsen, R. Kent Guy, Georgios Halkias, Leonhard Horowski, Rieko Kamei-Dyche, Hani Khafipour, Paulina Lewicka, Elizabeth Lillehoj, Keith McMahon, Rhoads Murphey, Marinos Sariyannis, Miri Shefer, Richard Wang, Constanze Weise, Christopher Wheeler, Zhongnan Zhao.

The Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies (NIAS) in Wassenaar offered an ideal site for writing. Distant from urban distractions and located close to the beach, it fosters writing as well as outdoor relaxation. The invariably gracious and effective staff, catering for daily as well as for

academic needs, multiplied the number of hours I could spend on concentrated writing. Erwin Nolet and Dindy van Maanen, operating the NIAS library, swiftly satisfied my voracious appetite for books and articles. The fellows at the NIAS, following the same beneficial routines, were great company, for evening gatherings, walks, and conversations. My Leiden colleagues gracefully respected my sabbatical leave at the NIAS, even during a semester with particularly heavy demands on all leading staff members. At the NIAS, three research MA students, Quinten Somsen, Veronika Poier, and Michiel Lemmers, helped me by reading and commenting on the first versions of my chapters.

During the writing process several colleagues took the risk of inviting me to talk about my work in the early stages of its progress. Graeme Murdock and his group of students at Trinity College Dublin were hospitable as well as intellectually helpful. The same can be said about Christian Windler's Berne University seminar meeting at Gerschnialp, where colleagues and students engaged in discussions as well as in Alpine excursions.

Over the last decade, various projects and co-operations have helped expand my comparative horizon. A European project on 'Tributary Empires' (COST/ESF action A 36) brought me into contact with a wide pool of scholars studying different regions and ages. The co-operation with Metin Kunt and Tülay Artan, in particular, has been lasting and fruitful. A Dutch-German-Chinese (CO-Reach) project on the 'Structures and legacies of dynastic power', organised with Sabine Dabringhaus, strengthened my connection to specialists in Chinese history. The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) at various stages generously supported my initiatives, for the projects cited as well as in the cadre of my more extensive 'Horizon' project on 'Eurasian Empires', co-organised with Jos Gommans, Maaïke van Berkel, and Peter Rietbergen. The conversation with these colleagues, and the eight researchers in our team, Liesbeth Geevers, Marie Favereau-Doumenjou, Cumhur Bekar, Lennart Bes, Willem Flinterman, Barend Noordam, Kim Ragetli, and Hans Voeten, has proved a lasting source of inspiration. The efficacy and friendliness of our project manager Rebecca Wensma has been a precondition for the success of our project. Recently Josephine van der Bent, a researcher herself, stepped in to support our project's daily machinery.

Lectures and discussions with colleagues across the globe proved essential for the emergence of my comparative work. Thomas Maissen and Subrata Mitra invited me to Heidelberg several times; Eugenio Menegon and his colleagues to Boston, Mark Elliott to Harvard, Craig Clunas to Oxford, David Robinson to Colgate, and Kent Guy to Seattle.

xvi      Acknowledgements

In general the easy connection to numerous regional specialists, generously sharing their insights, proved indispensable for this book, which could not have been written on the basis of printed knowledge alone.

Reports by anonymous readers of several presses, and the positive response of editors, confirmed my initial plans for this book while suggesting some important improvements. At Cambridge University Press, Michael Watson proved a constant support, while Amanda George effectively organised the final stages of the publication process. From the writing of my dissertation in the early 1990s onwards, Kate Delaney's comments and corrections have allowed me to develop my writing in English – her friendship and support have been a continuing presence during my entire career. David Claszen provided invaluable assistance in proofreading, and in compiling the index and glossary.

My wife Mariella not only made possible my protracted absences, but also read and corrected the entire manuscript with painstaking accuracy. My eldest son Guus, studying in the US, read and commented on the first drafts of all chapters. My younger son Nol accepted my absence in person and mind with typical generosity and patiently listened to my digressions. More fundamentally, they all contributed to my ease and comfort.

*Jeroen Duindam*