

Family Power

Since the seventeenth century, scholars have argued that kinship as an organizing principle and political order are antithetical. This book shows that this was simply not the case. Kinship, as a principle of legitimacy and in the shape of dynasties, was fundamental to political order. Throughout the last one and a half millennia of European and Middle Eastern history, elite families and polities evolved in symbiosis. By demonstrating this symbiosis as a basis for successful polities, Peter Haldén unravels long-standing theories of the state and of modernity. Most social scientists focus on coercion as a central facet of the state, and indeed of power. Instead, Haldén argues that much more attention must be given to collaboration, consent and common identity and institutions as elements of political order. He also demonstrates that democracy and individualism are not necessary features of modernity.

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Kinship, War and Political Orders
in Eurasia, 500–2018

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CONTENTS

- Preface and Acknowledgements* page vii
Chronology x
- 1 Introduction 1
 - 2 How Social Science Separated Families from Political Order 22
 - 3 Formless Kinship in Formless Polities: Europe c.400–c.1000 42
 - 4 Consolidating Dynasties and Realms: Europe c.1000–c.1500 81
 - 5 Strong Aristocracies in Strong States: Europe c.1500–c.1800 132
 - 6 The Revival and Sudden Death of Political Kinship: Europe c.1800–c.1918 175
 - 7 The Arab Empires c.632–c.900 204
 - 8 Sacred Yet Supple: Kinship and Politics in Turkic-Mongol Empires c.900–c.1300 233
 - 9 The Ubiquitous and Opaque Elites of the Ottoman Empire c.1300–c.1830 252
 - 10 Clans and Dynasties in the Modern Middle East: Somalia and Saudi Arabia 283
 - 11 Conclusions: Implications for State Theory, Power and Modernity 310
- Bibliography* 327
Index 370

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[More Information](#)

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Like so many other books, this one began in bewilderment and ended in emancipation. In my studies of Somalia, I had noticed how much of the blame for the country's woes is heaped upon its clans. From the beginning, this struck me as odd and a bit misplaced. Casting my gaze wider, I noticed that blaming clans, families and tribes – in other words different kinds of kinship structures – was not restricted to observers of Somali politics but a refrain that was often repeated by Western/Northern observers of politics and societies in countries that were radically different and often, at the time, poorer and more violent than their own. As the years went by, it struck me as increasingly strange, until I realized why. Looking back into European history, my original field of research, I saw families and clans everywhere, not on the outskirts of society, prowling the edges of civilization as bands of marauders but deeply enmeshed in the sinews of power and indeed in the very fabric of society. Aristocratic and royal families not only dominated society but ruled societies, and in some cases even constituted them, for centuries. Initially, I thought that a familiar double standard was at work in the denigration of kinship outside of Europe. Looking into the matter for a paper originally presented at the Department of Peace and Conflict Research at the University of Uppsala in 2012, I found out that kinship-based groups were generally either criticized or made invisible in comparative studies of the development of political order in Europe. Jan Willem Honig's appreciative but critical comments made me realize

viii / Preface and Acknowledgements

that I was onto something. Gradually, I found out that much of what social scientists (and to some extent many citizens) think about European history was characterized by a kind of amnesia about our own past. Some narratives wanted to write aristocrats and monarchs out of the history of political order altogether, others wanted to portray them as villains of the story, certainly dominating political order but not contributing to it. I set out to correct these two narratives that have largely dominated, perhaps not all histories but many of them and certainly the most widely read ones.

In providing what I think is a more comprehensive view of past societies, not only of Europe but of other parts of the world, I also wanted to provide something of a rehabilitation. Not a moral rehabilitation in the usual sense of the word. I doubt that I would feel sympathy towards most of the people dealt with in this book on a personal level, but they were no fools and their societies were not faulty, flawed or incomplete versions of our own. I believe that one important task of historical studies is to resist the chauvinism that comes to us in the shape of various ‘-centrism’. The two -centrism that I have in mind are ‘tempocentrism’, Stephen Hobden’s valuable term for presentism and the belief in the superiority of our own time, and ‘Eurocentrism’, the implicit or explicit belief in the superiority of European (and by extension North American) culture. It is not rare to see them hand in hand. It is possible to object to tempo- and Eurocentrism on many grounds but I think one of the most important is that they, alone or in combination, wreak havoc on our self-image by providing fuel for hubris. One of the many emancipatory effects of historical and sociological research is that it may produce deliverance from hubris.

When writing a book over several years, one naturally becomes indebted to a number of people. Jan Angstrom supported the project wholeheartedly for many long years, always offering friendly critique, suggestions and encouragement. Mattias Albert was kind to host me as a visiting researcher at the University of Bielefeld during the final phases of completing this book. The environment at the Institute for World Society and the excellent library of the University of Bielefeld gave me excellent stimulus, peace of mind and help in this task. I would also like to thank the following for their inspiration, support, comments and friendship: Jens Bartelson, Kjell Engelbrekt, Mats Hallenberg, Ilmari Käihkö, Lars Bo Kaspersen, Richard Ned Lebow, Sofia Ledberg, Kristin Ljungqvist, Dan Öberg, Alex Pritchard, Tobias Werron, Biörn Tjallen,

ix / Preface and Acknowledgements

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I am also indebted to the staff at the Anna Lindh Library and The Library of the National Heritage Board in Stockholm and the Dag Hammarsköld Library in Uppsala for their helpfulness in supplying me with material for this book and for arranging countless (literally) interlibrary loans. As always, any mistakes or errors are entirely my fault and responsibility. I would also like to thank Taylor & Francis Group for the right to use parts of an article that was originally published as Peter Haldén (2014) ‘Reconceptualizing State Formation as Collective Power: Representation in Electoral Monarchies’, *Journal of Political Power*, 7(1), 127–47, www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/2158379X.2014.889404. Selections from this article appear in Chapters 4 and 11.

Last but certainly not least I would like to thank my family for everything, particularly for enduring monologues about Franks, Mongols and all the other people featured in this book – and of course for showing on a daily basis the power of kinship.

CHRONOLOGY

- 476 The last Roman Emperor of the West, Romulus Augustus, is deposed.
- 496 Clovis, King of the Franks converts to Christianity.
- 568 The Lombards invade Italy.
- 588 The Lombard Kingdom is established in Italy.
- 622 The Prophet Muhammad flees to Medina.
- 632 The Prophet Muhammad dies. Muslim conquests begin beyond Arabia.
- 661 The Umayyad Caliphate is established in Damascus.
- 732 Muslim conquests in the West end with defeat at the Battle of Tours.
- 750 The end of the Umayyad Caliphate as the Abbasid caliphate is established in Bagdad.
- 751 Peppin, Mayor of the Palace, deposes the last king of the Merovingian dynasty, founds the Pippinid, later called Carolingian, dynasty.
- 773–4 The Carolingian Franks conquer Lombard Italy.
- 793 Viking attacks on Western Europe begin.
- 800 Charlemagne is crowned Emperor by the Pope, revival of the Empire in the West.
- 814 Charlemagne dies.
- 843 Tripartite division of the Carolingian Empire in the Treaty of Verdun.
- 911 Hrolfr (Rollo) of the Northmen is baptized and dubbed Count of Normandy.
- 955 Otto I defeats the Hungarians at Lechfeld, establishes the Ottonian dynasty in East Francia and assumes the title of Emperor.
- 987 Hugh Capet becomes King of France, founds the Capetian Dynasty.
- 1037 The Great Seljuk Empire is established in Central Asia and so is the Sultanate of Rhûm in Anatolia.
- 1066 Battle of Hastings, Norman Conquest of England.

xi / Chronology

- 1152 Marriage of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Henry I of England establishes the so-called Angevin empire.
- 1206 Temüjin (Genghis Khan) unites the Mongols, begins conquest of Eurasia.
- 1215 The Magna Carta is signed.
- 1258 The Mongols conquer Bagdad, depose and kill the last Abbasid caliph.
- 1259 Division of the Mongol Empire.
- 1264–7 Death of Simon de Montfort in England.
- 1299 Osman I founds the Ottoman Empire.
- 1310–25 Great Magnate revolt of Hungary.
- 1337–1453 The ‘Hundred Years’ War’ between the Kings of England and France.
- 1348 The Black Plague ravages Europe.
- 1358 The Jacquerie, a peasant revolt in France.
- 1381 The ‘Great English Rising’.
- 1385 Union of Krewo joins Poland and Lithuania in a personal union.
- 1452 The House of Habsburg acquires the title of Holy Roman Emperor for the first time.
- 1453 The Ottoman Empire conquers Constantinople. The Byzantine Empire falls.
- 1455–85 The ‘War of the Roses’ between the two branches of the House of Plantagenet.
- 1474–7 The Burgundian Wars. The State of Burgundy is dissolved.
- 1492 America is discovered by the Europeans.
- 1519 Charles V of Habsburg unites the possessions of the two branches of the Habsburg dynasty.
- 1523 The Vasa dynasty is founded in Sweden.
- 1526 The Ottoman Empire conquers Hungary after the Battle of Mohács.
- 1529 The Ottomans lay siege to Vienna.
- 1544 Sweden becomes a hereditary monarchy.
- 1562 French Wars of Religion and Wars of the Valois Succession begin.
- 1569 Poland-Lithuania enters into a personal union through the Union of Lublin.
- 1584 The ‘Times of Troubles’ in Russia begin.

xii / Chronology

- 1589 The House of Bourbon is established as the royal dynasty of France.
- 1598 French Wars of Religion and Wars of the Valois Succession end.
- 1613 The ‘Times of Troubles’ in Russia end. The House of Romanov becomes the royal dynasty of Russia.
- 1618–48 The Thirty Years’ War in the Holy Roman Empire.
- 1642–51 The Civil Wars in England during which King James II is executed and a republic (Commonwealth) is established.
- 1660 The Commonwealth of England is overthrown.
- 1688 The Glorious Revolution in England.
- 1700–13 War of the Spanish Succession.
- 1740–8 War of the Austrian Succession.
- 1776 Revolution in America.
- 1783 The American republic is proclaimed.
- 1789 Revolution in France.
- 1793 Execution of King Louis XVI and Queen Marie Antoinette of France.
- 1799 Napoleon Bonaparte becomes First Consul.
- 1804 Napoleon Bonaparte proclaims himself Emperor of the French.
- 1806 Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation is dissolved. Empire of Austria proclaimed.
- 1812 Napoleonic France invades Russia.
- 1815 Napoleon Bonaparte is ultimately defeated. The Congress of Vienna restores the House of Bourbon, creates German Confederation and establishes the ‘Monarchical Principle’ as a cornerstone of the Vienna system in Europe.
- 1830 Revolutions in Belgium and France.
- 1832 The Great Reform Act extends suffrage in Britain.
- 1848 Revolutions in France, German Confederation, Hungary and Prussia.
- 1866 Estate-based Diet dissolved in Sweden. Creation of a two-chamber parliament.
- 1870–1 Franco-Prussian War. Proclamation of the unified German Empire.
- 1911 The Parliament Act reforms the House of Lords in Britain.

xiii / Chronology

- 1914 Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria. World War One begins.
- 1917 Revolution in Russia. Czar Nicholas II of Russia abdicates. End of the aristocracy and monarchy in Russia.
- 1918 End of World War One. Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany abdicates. The Romanov family is executed. End of the monarchy in Austria, Germany, Hungary. Democracy established in Austria and Germany.
- 1920 The Treaty of Sèvres dissolves the Ottoman Empire.
- 1922 The last Ottoman caliph, Mehmet VI, is deposed and the Ottoman Caliphate ends.
- 1922 Proclamation of the Soviet Union.
- 1932 Proclamation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
- 1952–3 Revolution in Egypt, end of the monarchy.
- 1960 Proclamation of the Republic of Somalia.
- 1969 Revolution in Libya, end of the monarchy.
Siad Barre seizes power in Somalia.
- 1973 Revolution in Afghanistan, end of the monarchy.
- 1977–8 Ogaden War in Somalia, start of the civil war.
- 1979 Revolution in Iran, the Islamic Republic is proclaimed.
- 1991 Fall of the Soviet Union. End of the rule of Siad Barre in Somalia. The state of Somaliland is proclaimed.
- 2017 Prince Muhammad Bin Salman proclaimed Crown Prince in Saudi Arabia.

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