

# War and Society

## International Context & the State, 1600–1871

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Before we delve into the nitty-gritty of warfare and institutional development, we need to know a bit more about the landscape where all these events are going to unfold. Early modern Europe might seem familiar with names like England, France, Spain, and a look at a map might confer a false impression of familiarity at least when it comes to its Western parts. But this Europe and the entities that populated it — which I will call *states* although they did not have much in common with what we recognize as states today — were quite different from their modern successors, as another look at Central and Eastern Europe would immediately make apparent.

## 1 Territories and Overlapping Sovereignty

Consider the map of Europe at the conclusion of the Thirty Years War in 1648 (Map A). Farthest to the West, Portugal looked basically identical to what it does today. The Spanish monarchy, on the other hand, was quite different. In addition to territories that are now in modern Spain, the Habsburg Crown controlled lands that are now in Italy (Sardinia, Sicily, Kingdom of Naples, the Duchy of Milan), Belgium and Luxembourg (the Spanish Netherlands), France (Franche-Comté), and an extensive (the largest) overseas empire that included most of central and south America and the Philippines. Even the heartland was actually a mosaic of different entities — the Crowns of Castile and Aragon (united in 1469 but still with different administrative and legal systems), with Castile still a union with the Kingdom of León and the Kingdom of Navarre (actually, its southern part — the northern part was in France, which led the French kings to style themselves kings of Navarre like the Spanish), and Aragon itself being a composite of the Kingdom of Aragon, the Kingdom of Valencia, and the country Catalonia. Many of those retained their own distinct fiscal and political systems until the War of the Spanish Succession ended in 1714 when the Spanish Crown suppressed some of these regional institutions and reorganized them in a more centralized fashion.

Although not as fragmented as Spain, France was also very much a mosaic state, with its eastern borders further west than today, and with its territory still composed of the royal domain but also provinces like Languedoc, Brittany, Dauphiné, Provence, and Burgundy (the so-called *pays d'état*) that still had their own estates (representative institutions) that negotiated their taxes and administered the lands.

The Kingdom of England was essentially a unitary state, with Wales having been conquered between the 11th and 13th centuries, and brought under English law in the middle of the 16th. It ceased to exist in 1707 when it was united with the Kingdom of Scotland in the Kingdom of Great Britain, with the British Parliament replacing those of England and Scotland. Even though Britain was relatively unified by contemporary standards and had one Parliament, Scotland retained its own legal system. The Kingdom of Ireland was ruled separately, had its own Parliament (subordinate to first the English and then the British), and would not be incorporated into the state until 1801, when the country was renamed as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (which itself would be renamed yet again after the secession of the Irish Free State in 1922 as the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).

Central Europe is perhaps the most confusing. It had an empire (the Holy Roman Empire), two federal states (the Swiss Federation and the Dutch Republic), aristocratic re-

publics (Genoa and Venice), kingdoms (Bohemia, Hungary), good-sized duchies (Austria, Silesia), electorates (Brandenburg, Bavaria), ecclesiastical states (bishoprics and archbishoprics like those of Würzburg and Mainz), a multitude of smaller counties and margraviates, and free imperial cities, in all over 300 different political entities!

Further East the map becomes quite strange, with the vast kingdom of Poland-Lithuania that controlled not only territories now in the modern countries of these names, but also parts of Germany, Ukraine, and Russia. The south-eastern part of Hungary and the Balkans were part of the Ottoman Empire, which also ruled Turkey, Egypt, and the territories surrounding the Black Sea, while Russia itself was a large, but very distant (and until the 18th century unimportant) presence.

Things had started to change after the end of the War of the Spanish Succession (see the 1714 map in Map B), but the 1815 map should be somewhat familiar to us (Map E). Portugal was (again) independent after having been inherited by the Spanish king and then rebelling against his impositions in the 18th century. Spain had been well on its way to terminal decline as a great power, and France had reached the limits of its expanded eastern frontier. England had united with Scotland to form Great Britain, and had established itself not only as the supreme naval power in the world, but also as the only one that managed to hold its own against Napoleon's conquest of the continent. The United Provinces were still independent, but they had ceased to be the formidable military power they had been just a half century earlier. Not only that, but they had ceased to be a Republic, and had become the Kingdom of the Netherlands that (briefly) included the Austrian Netherlands, which would soon gain independence as Belgium. The Holy Roman Empire was no more: it had been abolished by Napoleon in 1806, and reorganized as the Confederation of the Rhine with drastically reduced numbers of principalities, which were independent but having to deal with the emerging Austro-Prussian rivalry for influence in Germany. Prussia had become a great power: it had not merely retained its acquisitions of Pomerania and West Prussia (that, along with other formerly Polish lands had finally connected Brandenburg to East Prussia to form a contiguous country), but also its conquest of Silesia from Austria.<sup>1</sup> It had also acquired the soon-to-be-valuable lands of the Rhineland. Denmark had to part with Norway, its union dissolved and Norway instead going to Sweden, and with the duchy of Schleswig-Holstein, conquered from it by Prussia and Austria. Sweden had to part with lands on the continent as well, pushed out by Prussia and by Russia. Austria, still an empire, had lost most of its possessions in Italy, but had managed to expand into Poland, reconquer Hungary, and gain territory on the Balkans. Russia had come West, where it now functioned as one of the guarantors of the peace settlement (along with Great Britain), and had pushed the Turks away from the northern Black Sea.

The Kingdom of Sardinia, whose lands were annexed by Napoleon, was restored under the House of Savoy, and was only fifty years away from becoming the Kingdom of Italy after unifying most of the peninsula for the first time since the days of the Roman Empire. The map of Europe between 1871 and 1914 reflects this (Map F). Small territorial adjustments to the 1815 settlement were made to accommodate Belgian independence from the Netherlands, as well as Romanian, Serbian, Bulgarian, and Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire (there were some revisions to borders on the Balkans after the two Balkan

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<sup>1</sup> See Map D for the three partitions of Poland between Russia, Prussia, and Austria in the late 18th century.

Wars). The Austrians had lost nearly all of their Italian possessions, and had been forced to recognize the growing importance of Hungary by changing the constitution of the state to a “dual monarchy” and formally renaming their empire to Austria-Hungary. Aside from Italy, however, the most important revisions were in Germany, where the Kingdom of Prussia had ceased to exist after defeating France in 1871, and had reconstituted itself as the German Empire, absorbing the Confederation of the Rhine in the process. The Russians had not only gained Finland, but had come even further west, carving ever more land around the Black Sea from the Turks and gaining tremendous influence in Serbia and Bulgaria after liberating them from the Ottomans in 1878. This is the world with which our course will end and the one that would fight World War I.

## **2 The “State”**

### **2.1 The Holy Roman Empire**

With the notable exception of the few republics, most of Europe was monarchical; that is, it was ruled by secular or ecclesiastical monarchs, most of them hereditary but several important ones also elective. At the pinnacle of this hierarchy stood the Holy Roman Empire, a decentralized entity that lasted for nearly 1,000 years and included territories of modern Germany, France, northern Italy, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Slovakia, Croatia, and Poland (see Map C). It was an elective monarchy that comprised hundreds of territorial units — principalities, duchies, counties, margravates, bishoprics, archbishoprics, free imperial cities, and even free imperial knights (who often ruled just a few square miles but, like the great hereditary princes, recognized no authority above them save the emperor).

The Emperor was selected by the electoral college, which consisted of seven Prince-Electors (the dignity of elector was second only to that of Emperor), three of whom were ecclesiastical — the Archbishops of Mainz, Cologne, and Trier — and four of whom were secular — the King of Bohemia, the Count Palatinate of the Rhine, the Duke of Saxony, and the Margrave of Brandenburg. Of these, the King of Bohemia could only participate in the elections but not in other meetings of the college because his kingdom, while formally part of the Empire, was actually exempt from any obligations to it except participation in imperial councils. The number increased in 1648 when the Duke of Bavaria was permanently invested with the dignity (to balance the Catholic and Protestant factions), and again in 1690 with the investiture of the Duke of Brunswick-Lüneburg (the title Elector of Hanover ended up being held by three British kings when the House of Hanover ascended on the British throne).

Although in principle the electors could pick anyone to be Emperor, in practice the Habsburg dynasty monopolized the title, which they held from 1438 until the dissolution of the Empire in 1806 with just one exception between 1742 and 1745, when a Wittelsbach (the family ruling Bavaria) was emperor because the ruling Habsburg was a woman (Maria Theresa), and imperial law limited the title to men. The main reason for the title turning dynastic is that for all its prestige, the imperial title carried very little actual power: the emperor would have to bring his own financial and military resources to make the Empire work. As the preeminent and richest of the European dynasties, the Habsburgs were really the only ones who could hold the Empire together.

The Habsburgs were thus Holy Roman Emperors, but ruled territories both within the empire and outside it, and this was true for other great princes. For instance, the Elector of Brandenburg also ruled the Duchy of Prussia, which was not part of the empire, where he was actually a vassal to the King of Poland. To add to the confusion, some of the imperial fiefs were ruled by independent monarchs: for instance, the Duchy of Holstein was ruled by the Kings of Denmark (who also ruled the neighboring Duchy of Schleswig, which was not part of the empire), and others were practically independent of imperial authority long before their formal independence (the Swiss Federation and the Netherlands). Although the princes ruled their own domains mostly independently of the Emperor, many had to accommodate Free Imperial Cities and Free Imperial Knights who were subordinate only to the emperor even if their lands lay wholly in those of the territorial prince.

Although the free cities were not very numerous (throughout our period there was about fifty of them), they counted some of the most important ones in Europe. Among those was Cologne, which lay within the Archbishopric of Cologne, whose prince, a member of the House of Wittelsbach, was one of the Electors but was usually not even allowed to enter the city and who spent an inordinate amount of time plotting, unsuccessfully, to deprive the city of its privileged status. Three others were Hamburg, Bremen, and Lüneburg, which once formed the core of the powerful Hanseatic League that provided for the defense of its members and facilitated their coordination to ensure the commercial domination in the Baltic and North Sea region for four centuries (they had just been eclipsed at the start of the 17th century). Hamburg and Bremen have kept their unique status to this day: each is a separate state in the Federal Republic of Germany!<sup>2</sup> These cities pursued their own policies, handled their own taxation, provided for their own defense, and were only obliged to participate in the defense of the empire when called upon to do so by the Emperor.

Even more challenging to the princes was the fact that large numbers of the nobility that lived in their territories had secured the status of Free Imperial Knights (it is estimated that there were about 500 families with this status), which exempted them from taxation and, since their immediate overlord was the Emperor, made them theoretically equal to the princes themselves. They were also exempt from imperial taxes since they paid their obligations to the Emperor by serving in their military capacity. Even though (unlike the Free Cities), the Free Knights never gained representation as an estate at the Imperial Diet, they had significant influence through their service in military and administrative imperial posts.

Many of the principalities had their own representative institutions (some, like the Estates of Württemberg, were older than the English Parliament, and survived until the Napoleonic era), and the Estates were not too shy about calling on the Emperor in their disputes with their own princes. Sometimes the Estates would eject their ruler and the Emperor would transfer the fief to another, and sometimes they were able to mobilize imperial forces to defend them against the military power of the prince. Over time, however, the princes

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<sup>2</sup>The legal status of an Imperial Free City was sometimes an occasion for confusion. At the end of the Thirty Years War, the Peace of Westphalia granted Sweden possession of the prince bishoprics of Verden and Bremen. Since Bremen was a free city, it was legally distinct from the bishopric of Bremen, and as a result claimed that it was not included in the cession to the Swedes. The Swedes disagreed and launched a war in 1653 to force the city to submit. Even though the Swedes won and extracted an oath of allegiance from Bremen, they did not gain control of the city, and eventually lost it in the Great Northern War (1700–21).

became more successful in curtailing these external influences and gaining sovereignty in dealing with matters internal to their realms.

Confusingly, the Empire did not have a standing army but the Habsburg emperors did. An Army of the Empire could be assembled on an *ad hoc* basis to defend the realm or enforce an imperial edict, but it could only be raised and deployed with the consent of the Imperial Diet. The Empire was divided in Imperial Circles, which coordinated regional defense, imperial taxation, and security. These circles and the imperial cities were responsible for furnishing the troops and supplies when authorized by the Imperial Diet. This Army of the Empire (whose notional strength varied between 20,000 and 40,000) had an essentially peace-keeping role, dealing with recalcitrant princes, and proved highly ineffective in dealing with serious external threats. It did not even fight in the Thirty Years War that ravaged the Empire between 1618 and 1648: the Imperial Army that did fight in it, and whose numbers reached 150,000 during that period, was recruited throughout the empire (except from the electorates) in the name of the Emperor, and were paid for from his personal funds, not imperial taxes. As such, the Imperials were Habsburg at their core, and answered the Emperor alone. This army fought in all wars that involved the Empire, many of them between the Habsburg and the Ottoman Turks.

## 2.2 Other Elective Monarchies

Aside from the Holy Roman Empire, another important elective monarchy was the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, one of the largest and most populous European states and a composite of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In it, the numerous nobility formed a parliament (Sejm) that elected the new king only after the latter pledged to uphold all its rights and privileges. The Sejm, which met regularly every two years, could veto royal legislation, foreign policy, and any taxation, and reserved the right to an armed insurrection against any king who violated its rights. The most unusually extreme form of personal liberty was the so-called *liberum veto*, according to which any individual deputy could unilaterally and single-handedly derail a majority decision by announcing his opposition to it! The increasingly exercise of this power effectively paralyzed the Sejm (and so the state) in the 17th century, and led to its rapid decline until it was partitioned out of existence by Austria, Prussia, and Russia in a series of agreements in 1772, 1790, and 1795.<sup>3</sup> Hungary and the Papal States were also elective monarchies, but without an overwhelmingly powerful nobility. The Hungarian nobles, however, did give up its right to elect the king or to rebel in 1687 in return for a confirmation of all their other privileges.

## 2.3 Hereditary Monarchies

The more “standard” monarchies of the period were the hereditary ones that ruled France, Spain, and England. Of these, the most important dynasty were the Habsburgs who had two branches — the Austrian one that also held the imperial title, and the Spanish one

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<sup>3</sup>The Poles did recognize the source of their weakness, and attempted a reform after the second partition. They promulgated a new constitution in 1791 that abolished elections — which tended to make kings of those who would promise the most concessions or those who had Russian support — and endowed the Crown with real executive authority. Unfortunately, this attempt triggered a confederation (legal rebellion) and the issue was settled in the final partition when the country disappeared completely from the map.

that controlled the vast holdings of that monarchy. In the person of Charles V, the same branch ruled all Habsburg possessions: a territory spanning all of Europe, and extending to the far east and the Americas. The second very important dynasty were the Bourbons, who had become the senior Capets with the extinction of the House of Valois in 1589 (the Capetian dynasty ruled France from 987 to 1830), and ruled the Kingdoms of Navarre, France, and after supplanting the Habsburgs, Spain, Naples, and Sicily. Spain, in fact, still has a Bourbon monarch. With the exception of the Interregnum (1649–1660), the Stuart dynasty ruled England, Scotland, and Ireland until 1707 when the house went extinct and the throne passed to the House of Hanover, where it remained until 1901 (this is how the British kings ended up as electors in the Holy Roman Empire). The House of Hohenzollern, which ruled Brandenburg-Prussia, as Margraves and later Dukes, also rose to prominence when it acquired the title of Kings in Prussia in 1701 (because of their possession of the Duchy of Prussia, which was not part of the Empire), got elevated to Kings of Prussia in 1772, and finally became German Emperors in 1871.

These monarchies are often portrayed as entities where the kings forever strove to centralize power in their own hands and to impose uniform order on the rest of society. Since there was resistance from the traditional nobility, and especially the aristocrats, they either had to be coerced or coopted into the new state. As the armies expanded, the monarch obtained more coercive powers and was able to centralize more successfully, which enabled him to become even more powerful. Representative assemblies atrophied and disappeared, and the modern state — a large bureaucracy staffed by salaried officials — began to emerge. In more extreme version of the argument, France is said to have achieved the pinnacle of “absolutism” under Louis XIV whereas Prussia is frequently cited as the embodiment of the bureaucratic state, in both the monarchs are said to have succeeded through a mixture of cooptation and coercion.

The problem with this view is that it not only represents monarchs as modernizers who consciously tried to centralize power at the expense of traditional nobility but that it seriously overstates their reach and capabilities. Monarchs were, in fact, quite restricted in what they could accomplish — as we shall see, one of the main reasons for the frequent wars in the 17th century had to do precisely with their inability to overcome domestic opposition, which caused them to call on external agents for help, which broadened the wars and complicated peace negotiations. There was no notion of the “state” as a set of institutions separate of society and overlaid on top of it. Instead, the “state” was a commonwealth that relied on patronage and complex clientelistic networks to function. The monarch was supposed to uphold traditional law and provide for security but was otherwise distant and disengaged. He was supposed to live off his own revenue (from his private holdings and customary dues, often fees or customs duties). Taxation was reserved for emergencies and required at least notional consent from those being taxed. The idea that the monarch could govern without the support of elites who ran these networks and possessed most of the wealth in the realm is far-fetched, as is the idea that he could coerce them all with impunity.

Even when monarchs threatened to coerce, they usually had to bargain with elites because securing even their grudging cooperation was better than provoking their outright hostility. This, however, does not mean that the Crown coopted the nobility and that together they exploited the peasants (and urban classes where these existed), as the Marxist-style accounts would have it. It was precisely of the influence of nobility that the Crown often sought to

undermine their base, so it would not infrequently side with the peasants or townsmen in their disputes. Moreover, as the state administrative apparatus developed, it became staffed by many people of non-noble blood, and the Crown had to be careful about their interests as well since it depended on their cooperation for its well-being. Still, monarchs had to be careful and could not go too far because the nobility possessed vast wealth, enjoyed tremendous prestige, and maintained networks that allowed them to assemble serious opposition if baited too far.

In short, the interaction between the Crown and the rest of society was a very complicated game in which alliances often shifted, and where everyone was jockeying for advantage. Despite the occasional threat or actual violence, most of these relations tended to be highly legalistic, depended mostly on negotiations, and involved frequent compromises. As an 18th century French chancellor remarked, even for the King of France, for whom everything was possible, not everything was permitted.<sup>4</sup> Even in the extreme case of Russia — which the rest of Europe tended to regard with abhorrence on account of its barbaric and despotic regime — where no nobility existed in the corporate Western sense, where any representation was suppressed after 1649, where succession to the throne was determined by the support of the army, and where the ruler could issue any decree he or she wanted, the implementation of these decrees was limited without the existence and cooperation of an administrative bureaucratic machinery, and once this was in place, it acted as effective constraint on the arbitrary wishes of the ruler.

## 2.4 Estates and Representation

Societies were roughly divided into social orders — estates — whose composition varied by region. The traditional (i.e., French) division was tripartite: the clergy (who prayed) comprised the First Estate, the nobles (who fought) comprised the Second, and everyone else (who worked) comprised the Third. The estates were hierarchical and carried different degrees of honor, privileges, and obligations. Membership was not immutable: it was quite possible, for instance, to move from the Third to the Second estate by purchasing a title, holding an ennobling office, or obtaining a title from the Crown for services. In fact, even at the pinnacle of the nobility — the aristocracy — there was significant turnover over time as some families disappeared (in wars or without issue) and others rose to take their place.<sup>5</sup>

The importance of estates is that they served as the basis of representative assemblies, which were invariably organized along those divisions, and were consequently often called *Estates* (in this course I will often refer to them as *parliaments*). Since these were the places where the common interest met the demands of the Crown, it is crucial to realize that the French tripartite division was not universal. For example, in the estates of Württemberg (whose first recorded meeting took place in 1457, and which would last until 1819), the clergy played a minor role, the nobility was actually excluded (since most of them were Free Imperial Knights), and the towns had the dominant presence. In Hesse, the nobility was dominant while the towns had some representation, and the clergy was fully excluded after the Reformation. The peasants were almost universally excluded but in Saxony, where the nobility and towns also dominated the Estates, they were allowed to complain in ducal

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<sup>4</sup>Cited in Doyle (1992, 228).

<sup>5</sup>Dewald (1996, esp. p. 13).

courts.<sup>6</sup> In Sweden, the peasants actually formed their own estate, and had representation along with the nobility, the clergy, and the towns. In the Netherlands, the urbanized maritime provinces like Holland had virtually no nobility, and since the clergy was almost universally excluded, it was the towns that made up the Estates, while in the more rural provinces the nobility did retain a voice. In Poland, on the other hand, it was only the nobility and the clergy that made up the Estates, with the nobility clearly dominant.

How effective the Estates were in their dealings with the monarchs depended not merely on their composition but also on the manner in which they met and the way they organized their proceedings. Diets that met together (unicameral), as the Estates of Württemberg, were better able to coordinate, communicate, and avoid the estates being played one against the other by prince than parliaments where estates met separately, either partially (like the Estates of Hesse where the clergy ended up being excluded after the Reformation so it met separately, or like the Estates of Saxony where the nobility started to meet on its own with relative frequency after 1537) or entirely (like the Estates-General of France). In the English Parliament, the higher nobility and the clergy met separately in the House of Lords while the representatives of rural counties and self-governing towns met in the House of Commons. In Poland, the higher nobility and the clergy also met in an upper house, the Senate, but those that met in the lower house, the House of Deputies, were representatives of the rest of the nobility only.<sup>7</sup>

We shall have a lot more to say about the functions of representative assemblies when we discuss fiscal issues and policy control.

### **3 The Issues that Generated Wars**

The most common contentious issue in this period was territory, whether it was sought after in dynastic terms or for reasons of state (defensible borders, making possessions contiguous, securing commercial lines).<sup>8</sup>

Dynasticism — the concern for the interests of the royal family, often quite separate and sometimes in direct opposition to the interests of the “state” — was a defining feature of interactions among princes. It was not merely to possess lands for economic purposes that mattered, it was also matter of prestige (since lands came with titles attached to those who ruled them), glory, and honor. Still, the possession of such lands (the monarch’s private inheritance) was a source of wealth and therefore power. It was the wide-ranging domains of the Habsburgs that made them more than figureheads as Holy Roman Emperors. Most transfers occurred peacefully as a result of marriage, death, exchange, or voluntary accession. Most rulers were also mostly concerned with preserving what they already possessed instead of risking it all for the dubious prospects of expansion. This was especially true for minor princes, like those that populated the Holy Roman Empire. If there was anything that the imperial institutions were useful for, it was to settle these land disputes amicably and protect the smaller powers from the rapaciousness of their larger neighbors. Still, the

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<sup>6</sup>See Carsten (1959).

<sup>7</sup>Doyle (1992, 222-31).

<sup>8</sup>For a detailed study of the issues over which states have fought for the last 300 years, see Holsti (1990). Some of this discussion also follows Black (2002, 5–27).

German princes had their persecutors in the Dutch, the French, and the Swedes, just like the Italian ones suffered from the Austrians, the French, and the Spanish.

As a result of these territorial concerns, the principle of equivalent compensation and exchange developed whereby more or less desirable pieces of territory could be exchanged for their “equivalents” elsewhere. Equivalence was roughly calculated in terms of population and economic value but of course nobody ever thought of asking the actual inhabitants whether they cared to live under their existing ruler or be exchanged to another. The idea of exchange drove military strategy as well. For example, during the Seven Years War, France was outmatched in North America, and knew that it will probably suffer colonial losses to the British. As a result, France focused on conquering the electorate of Hanover (which belonged to the British king but was useless in itself for France) in the hopes of bartering it later for the colonies that it expected Britain to win. Still, monarchs were loath to surrender claims to territories, and as a result most such exchanges could only occur in the wake of military conquest, which had already dispossessed the current owners, and could thus make them more likely to concede to obtaining something else instead of merely making their military losses permanent.

Religion had already begun its steady decline as a motivating force for armed conflict in Europe. The religious enemy *par excellence*, the Islamic Ottoman Turks, had been pushed out of Spain and, after a final invasion in 1683, they had been stopped in the East as well. Even in this last war the religious divide was blurred when Louis XIV of France actually indirectly helped the Turks against the Christian Holy League that had formed to help the Habsburgs defend Vienna and reconquer Hungary when he not only refused to join the League but in fact tried to grab Habsburg lands in the western part of the empire, a move that started the War of the Reunions in 1683. At any rate, the conflict between Christianity and Islam subsided, and ceased to be an important cause of friction.

Conflicts between Christians, on the other hand, were quite important in the 16th century. After some vicious fighting between Protestants (Lutherans) and Catholics, the Peace of Augsburg (1555) froze the question of one Christian faith in Germany by recognizing the legal right of Lutherans to practice their confession, and to retain the possession of lands they had seized from Catholics prior to the settlement. It did, however, forbid further land seizures (which was ignored), and it did not mention anything about the other important Protestant confession — Calvinism. Calvinism turned out to be quite expansive and dynamic, owing to its appeal to urban elites and the organizational structures developed by its founders. It spread rapidly from Switzerland (it was based in Geneva) through France (where the Calvinists were called Huguenots), Scotland and the Netherlands (where it became the majority faith), to parts of Germany close to the Dutch, and into Hungary. This spread, which was sometimes accompanied by violent iconoclasm, coincided with the renewed determination of some Catholic rulers to reimpose Catholicism in their lands. Part of the problem from the royal perspective was that Protestantism in general but Calvinism in particular was quite disruptive as it indirectly delegitimized princely rule by separating the practitioners from Rome, and with its emphasis on freedom, elections, and self-rule. It was for this reason that even Lutherans, who as Protestants had no love lost for Catholics, detested the Calvinists.

As Calvinism spread, it triggered civil wars in France, and provoked a rebellion in the Netherlands when their Spanish ruler attempted to impose Catholicism (and higher taxes).

As the Dutch started what would turn out to be their Eighty Years' War of Independence in 1568, Calvinism also began to upset the delicate balance in Germany. Some important princes converted to the new faith, and when the Protestant Estates of Bohemia rebelled against their king, the Catholic Habsburg Ferdinand, they offered the crown to the Calvinist Elector Palatinate Frederick V, triggering the Thirty Years War in 1618. One cannot really blame religion for the conflagrations that engulfed parts of Europe in these conflicts. For one, it was not Protestants against Catholics since Lutheran Saxony, for instance, pursued a very moderate policy, and the invasion of Lutheran Sweden in support of the Protestant cause was also easily justifiable in economic and strategic terms. Catholic France also subsidized the Swedes against the Catholics in Germany, and when this was not enough, entered the war openly against both Spain and Austria. The Protestant German princes would have been happy to end hostilities and make peace with the emperor had it not been for the Swedes and then the French rampaging through their lands.

In the end, the war ended with everyone so exhausted that the only outcome was the recognition that neither side was strong enough to prevail. Catholics could not purge the Calvinists, let alone the Protestants, from Germany but neither could the Protestants get rid of the Catholics. The Peace of Westphalia added Calvinism to the list of recognized religions and gave it equal legal standing. Thus, it affirmed and extended the Peace of Augsburg principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* — the right of every prince to determine the religion within his own territories. It also guaranteed the right to practice their faith to those whose denomination was not the established one of the land.

Spain could not regain the rebellious provinces in the North, but the Dutch Republic could not acquire the ones in the south either. Thus, Spain formally recognized the Dutch Republic, but the Spanish Netherlands (modern Belgium and Luxembourg) went firmly back to the Habsburgs. The Empire also finally recognized the independence of Switzerland, which had been *de facto* outside its control since 1499 when it had defeated Emperor Maximilian I.

Even though the Swedes secured an indemnity to pay off its mercenaries (who otherwise refused to disband) and gained lands in Northern Germany that gave it representation at the imperial Diet, it was France that was most favored by the peace treaties. The Habsburg bid for supremacy in Europe had been decisively ended (even though it would take Spain until 1659 to concede that; how little religion meant in this conflict is seen in the fact that Catholic France allied with Protestant England against Catholic Spain), and France obtained several important slivers of land on its eastern borders.

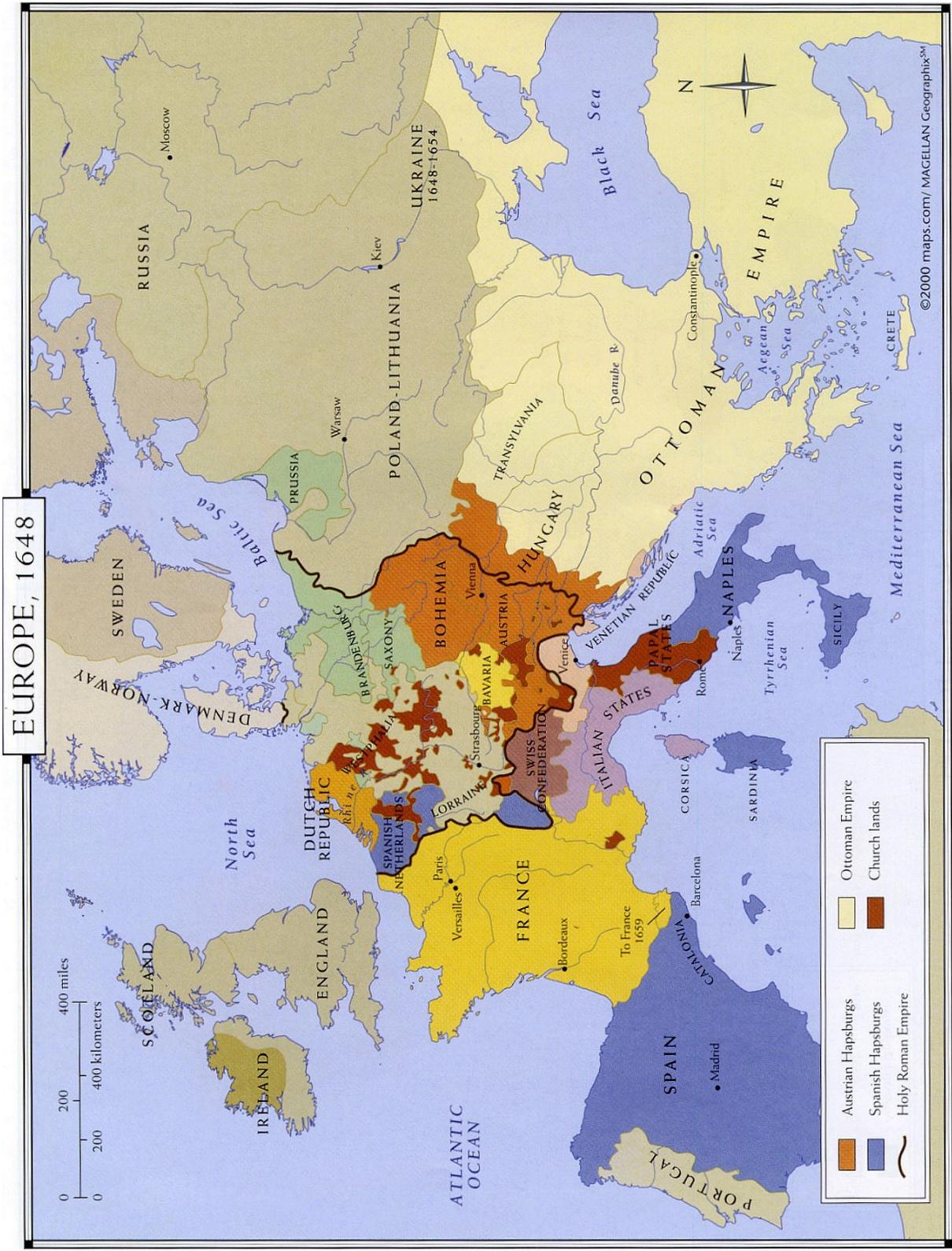
This does not mean that religion was unimportant — in fact, it could be the only unifying factor for populations in composite states that shared little with their prince, and it will turn out to be the only such issue capable of inspiring resistance to the onslaught of Revolutionary France. It does, however, mean that religion could be trumped by other geo-political strategic considerations. Thus, it functioned more as an enabler than a cause.

Some governments, especially those more attuned to the desires of their elites, like the republics with effective representative assemblies, also pursued mercantilist policies: putting the power of the state in service of commercial and trading interests. The Dutch and the British were particularly famous for this, but even the French Crown, which traditionally disdained to mar its hands with such crass monetary concerns, occasionally bowed to necessity as well.

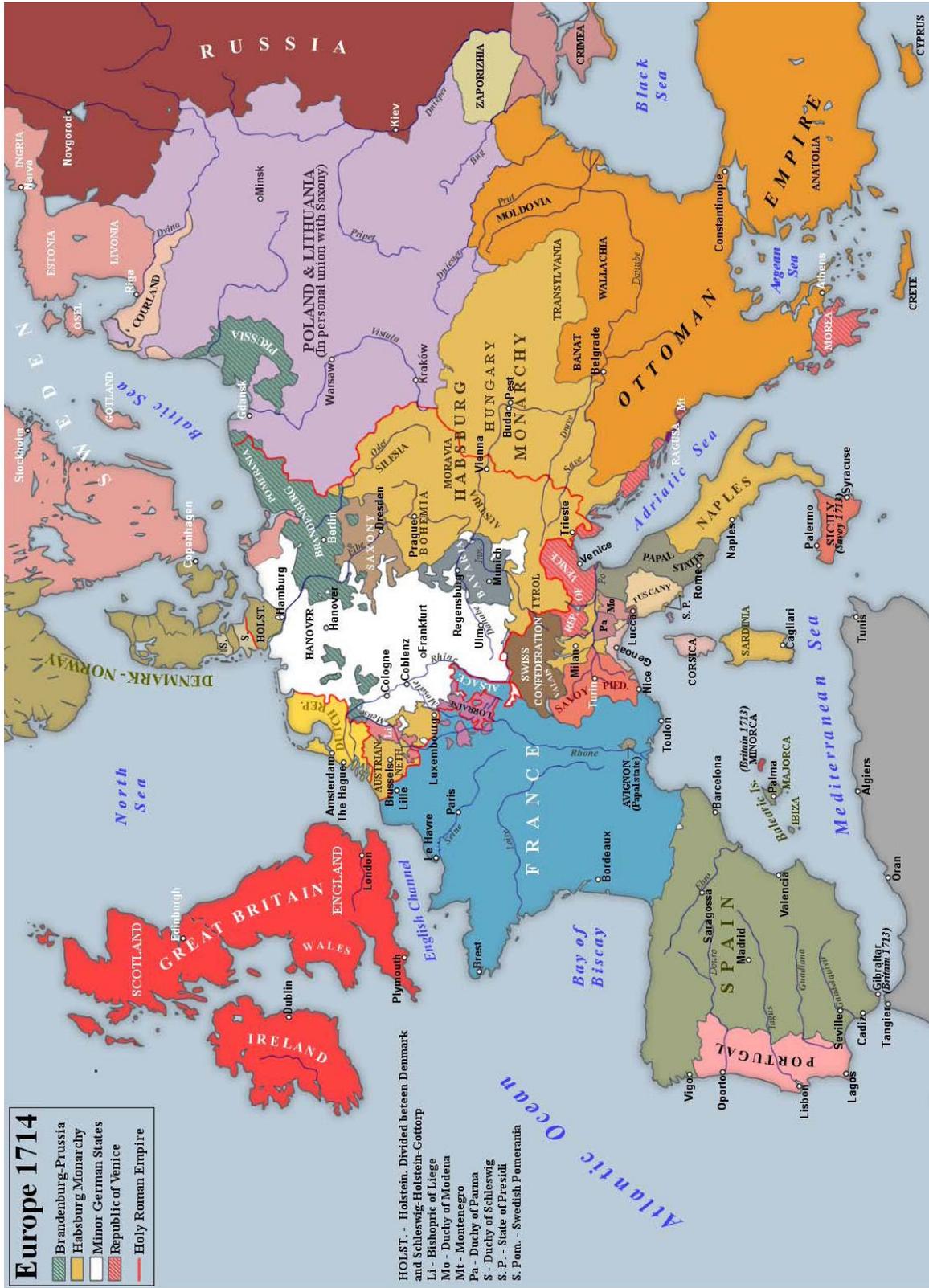
Nationalism would not become truly important until the 19th century. In fact, for most of the period that we are concerned with, nationalism could not even exist as a concept. As we have seen, princes often ruled very disparate territories whose populations owed no particular allegiance to any prince. The subjects of the Spanish King in Sicily had no trouble voting money to pay for ships to fight off the Turks that threatened them but refused to the point of rebellion to pay for the King's fight with his rebellious provinces in the Netherlands. The Portuguese subjects supported the securing of the Americas since they profited directly from that but absolutely refused to send money for the King's army in Germany. The attempts of the French king to impose higher taxes for the Thirty Years War triggered wholesale rebellion in the western provinces of France that could not even see this as a form of defense like the eastern ones could. More generally, the monarchs could only rely on income from territories that they controlled directly, on grudging assistance from those where they had some traditional influence, and scant support from everywhere else.

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Map A: Europe in 1648.

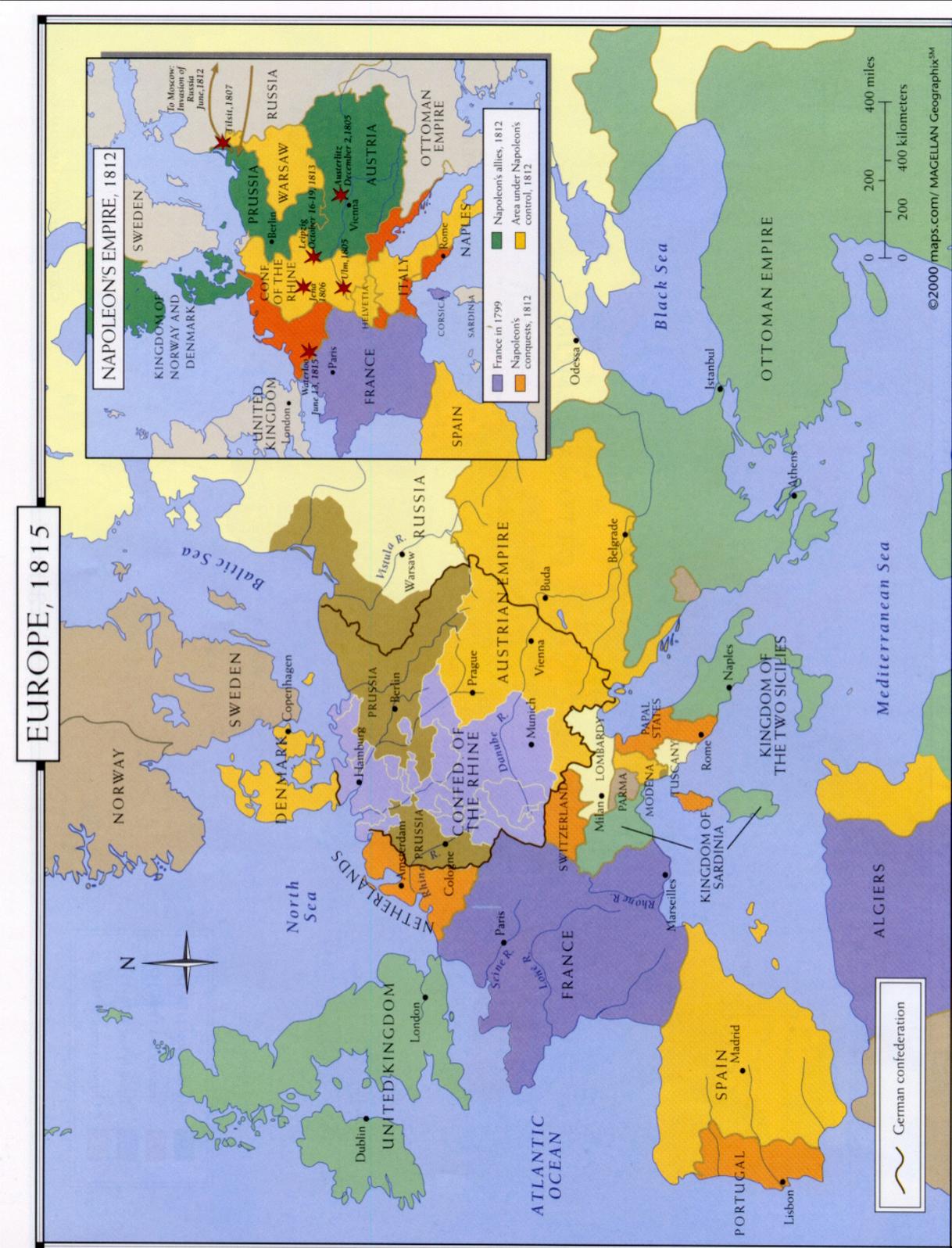


Map B: Europe in 1714.





Map D: The Partitions of Poland, 1772, 1792, and 1795.



Map E: Europe in 1815 (with Napoleon's Empire in 1812).



Map F: Europe between 1871 and 1914.