

system after the 1684 campaign had exposed serious shortcomings. Although Leopold did little to address the structural defects in the system, he did replace the incompetent head of the War Commissar, Sigfried Breuner, by promoting him to a higher position.

Leopold's decision to promote Breuner rather than dismiss him outright lends credence to the conventional view that he was simply too mild, desultory, and indecisive to assert effective leadership. Throughout his reign he remained faithful to numerous loyal, but incompetent and often aged ministers who usually left their positions only when they died. Although Leopold acceded to some of his advisers' demands for change, he stopped short of the thorough house-cleaning that the monarchy's administrative apparatus needed. He was especially derelict in pursuing reform at the local level, where hordes of agencies run by the central government or the provincial estates either failed to collect or siphoned off a third or more of government revenue before it could reach the *Hofkammer*. Foreign governments were so suspicious of the *Hofkammer* that they were usually reluctant to supply Leopold with subsidies without having some oversight of the processing of the monies they provided.

The retention of this supremely irrational system limited the size and effectiveness of the Habsburg military. Montecuccoli had come right to the point when he stated that warfare required three things: "Money, money, and more money." Yet, thanks to chronic shortages of funds and the supplies they provided, the officers of his and Charles of Lorraine's generation often had to rely on their own resources to equip, provision, and pay their men, just as Wallenstein had done at the beginning of the century. As a result the Habsburg military often felt compelled to make "war pay for war" by living off conquered countryside. Although this system might work in time of war, it was counterproductive in peacetime, when much of the army was obliged to make sometimes excessive demands on the monarchy's own subjects, especially in Hungary. Moreover, even with the proceeds of foreign subsidies and the military occupation of Hungary, the army was not as well-equipped and only a quarter the size of the 400,000-strong French army. Thus, although the monarchy was virtually whole for the first time since 1529, it remained dependent on the support of foreign allies. Fortunately, Louis XIV's aggression had inspired an anti-French coalition not unlike the Anglo-Dutch-Spanish-German dynastic combination that had helped to create the first Habsburg great power at the turn of the sixteenth century. Now, two hundred years later, events in Madrid would put that coalition to the test.

4 Facing west: the second Habsburg empire (1700–1740)

The European powers had been preparing for Charles II's death for his entire thirty-five-year reign. Finally, at the end of the century unmistakable signs of his imminent demise encouraged a rash of diplomatic activity. Although the Austrian Habsburgs and French Bourbons were the main antagonists, all of the major, and several smaller, countries had a stake in the succession struggle. There were, in fact, initially three claims to Charles's inheritance, all based on the rights of Charles's two sisters. As the husband of the elder Maria Theresa, Louis XIV could put forward a claim on behalf of the Grand Dauphin and his three sons, especially since the Spanish government had never paid France the 500,000 crowns in compensation for renouncing its rights to the inheritance. Although Emperor Leopold had married the younger Margaret Theresa, their only surviving child was a daughter, Maria Antonia. Before her death in 1692, the archduchess had married Max Emanuel and borne a son, Joseph Ferdinand, whose rights the Bavarian elector now advanced. Leopold asserted his own rights as Margaret Theresa's widower, but his position as the head of the younger male Habsburg line gave him his strongest claim, especially in those parts of the Spanish empire where the laws of succession discounted the rights of female heirs. Moreover, as the father of two healthy sons, Leopold enjoyed the luxury of promoting the candidacy of the younger Archduke Charles, while the elder Archduke Joseph would rule the Austrian Habsburg monarchy after his death.

Bavaria's claim attracted immediate support from the Maritime Powers, who saw a Wittelsbach succession as an ideal counterweight in the balance of power. Joseph Ferdinand's candidacy was also popular in Spain, where the Austrian claim was undermined by the country's decline during two centuries of Habsburg rule and by Leopold's recent failure to send troops to prevent the fall of Barcelona. In a desire to forestall yet another war even Louis XIV was willing to recognize Joseph Ferdinand's claim, providing his dynasty received at least nominal territorial compensation. In October 1698 he concluded the so-called First Partition Treaty with William III that confirmed the Bavarian succession, while compensating Austria with Milan

and France with the rest of Spain's Italian territories and parts of the Basque provinces. Leopold was willing to accept the agreement, which had the virtue of recognizing his rights through his grandson, placing Spain in the hands of his closest German ally, and protecting the monarchy's southern flank with the strategic duchy of Milan. Yet Joseph Ferdinand died suddenly just four months later, his demise attended by rumors that Leopold had had him poisoned. Although the stories were unfounded, Leopold was the immediate beneficiary of his grandson's death, if only because an Austrian succession seemed much less threatening to the balance of power than the prospects of a Spain dominated by Louis XIV. Indeed, William III and Louis XIV immediately concluded a Second Partition Treaty in June 1699 that awarded the bulk of the Spanish empire to the Archduke Charles, while compensating France with Spanish Italy.¹ Notwithstanding these favorable terms, Leopold and his ministers were less pleased with the second partition than they had been with the first. Although he felt entitled to the entire inheritance, Leopold was willing to settle for a partition, but only if it served the monarchy's strategic needs. In this sense Spain and its colonial empire were much less important than Italy, which they regarded as absolutely essential for defending the monarchy's southwestern flank. Similarly, they valued the acquisition of the Spanish Netherlands, but mainly because they hoped to use it to acquire neighboring Bavaria through an exchange with Max Emanuel.

All of these maneuvers ignored the wishes of Charles II, who shared his country's unwillingness to countenance the partition of its empire. He had, in fact, responded to the First Partition Treaty by willing all of his empire to Joseph Ferdinand. With the Bavarian prince's death, the king resolved to leave the entire Spanish empire to his Habsburg relations, rather than his French enemy. On 29 September 1700, he signed a will presented to him by his pro-Habsburg wife and the Austrian ambassador, Count Harrach, that designated the Archduke Charles as his only heir. But many of his ministers and grandees had other ideas. Led by the archbishop-primate of Toledo, Cardinal Portocarrero, they hoped to end a century of decline under the Habsburgs by turning toward France, the one country with the military resources to protect Spain against partition. Although Charles was never noted for his intelligence, he ultimately saw the wisdom of having Louis XIV as an ally rather than an enemy. Though barely conscious, he assented to a Bourbon succession on 30 October by scribbling the words "Yo el Rey" on a new will laid before him by Portocarrero.

Two days later the last Spanish Habsburg was dead. A startled Harrach learned of Charles's deathbed conversion only the next day, when he was

¹ It was understood that France would exchange Milan with the duke of Lorraine, thereby rounding off France's recent German acquisitions while at the same time reducing any strategic threat to the Austrian lands.

passionately embraced by a Spanish grandee who gleefully expressed his delight at "bidding farewell to the House of Austria." Nor did the humiliation end there. Leopold never received word from Harrach of Charles's death and testament because the ambassador's courier was thrown by his horse and killed while crossing the Alps. When he finally received the news it came from Versailles, where Louis XIV had already proclaimed his grandson, the duke of Anjou, King Philip V of Spain. To his credit Louis offered to set aside Charles II's will and abide by the terms of the Second Partition Treaty, if Leopold agreed to accept France's acquisition of Spanish Italy. Yet the emperor rejected this offer. With uncharacteristic decisiveness he ordered Prince Eugene and the monarchy's small field army over the Alps to begin offensive operations against Milan. Given Leopold's decision to fight, Louis XIV decided to accept the undivided inheritance instead of the Second Partition Treaty, since he would be better off fighting Leopold with a united Spain on his side.

Leopold's faith in the justness of his claim to the Spanish Habsburg inheritance was unshakable. Yet his seemingly reckless decision to fight both France and Spain hinged principally on his refusal to permit Italy to fall under Bourbon control after two centuries of Habsburg hegemony. His was a judgment that was shared not only by his ministers, but by successive Habsburg monarchs and statesmen for the next half century. Thus, just as Habsburg foreign policy had concentrated first on Germany and then on Hungary during the seventeenth century, it now refocused its attention westward on the Spanish inheritance, and especially the Italian peninsula.

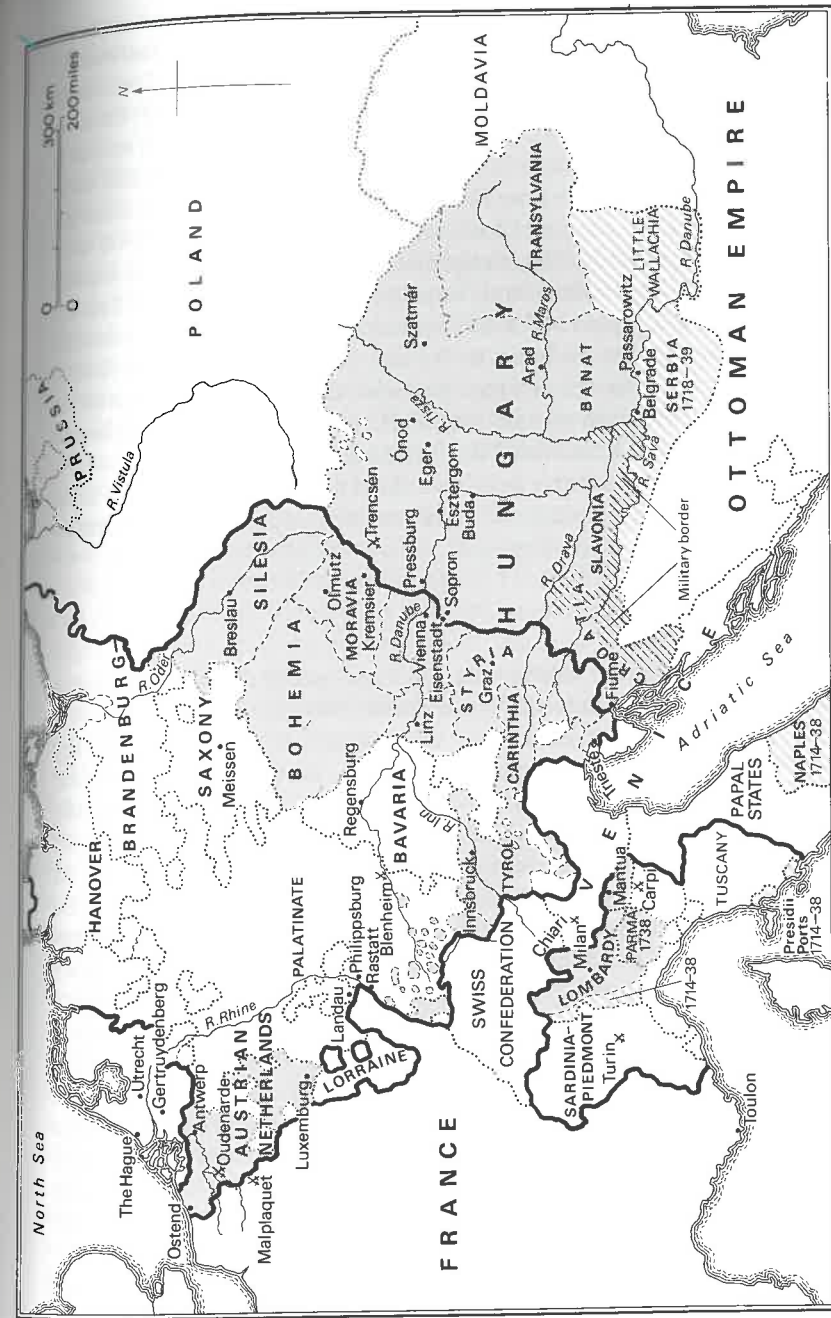
The War of the Spanish Succession

As before, however, the emperor's prospects for success depended largely on his ability to attract domestic and foreign support. The *Erblande's* estates expressed their support by voting a 50 percent increase in the Contribution. They even assumed nearly half of the monarchy's 40 million fl. state debt, thereby enabling the *Hofkammer* to take on extensive new obligations. A generation of French aggression against Germany also helped guarantee the loyalty of the imperial princes. Even before he had learned of Charles II's death, Leopold had secured a large military contingent from Brandenburg-Prussia by promising to recognize its elector as king of Prussia. Yet, if his quest for the Spanish succession was to succeed, he needed to reassemble the Grand Alliance that had fought Louis XIV in the Nine Years' War. At first, the Maritime Powers reluctantly accepted the legitimacy of a Bourbon succession in Spain, especially since it had been Leopold, rather than Louis XIV, who had refused to abide by the compromise proposed in the Second Partition Treaty. It was not long, however, before Louis XIV's arrogance

rekindled the fear of French hegemony. At the beginning of 1701 he sent French troops into northern Italy and the Spanish Netherlands. In the process they unceremoniously expelled the Dutch from several "barrier fortresses" that the treaty of Ryswick had permitted them to garrison along the Franco-Belgian frontier. In August he concluded a commercial treaty with Philip V which threatened to exclude Anglo-Dutch shipping from Spanish America. When the deposed Stuart King James II died one month later at his Versailles exile, Louis XIV formally declared his 13-year-old son King James III. In addition to these provocations, the English and Dutch were also encouraged to take action by two quick victories that Prince Eugene won over the French at Chiari and Carpi in the spring and summer of 1701. Although neither battle loosened Louis XIV's grip on Italy, they reaffirmed the monarchy's traditional role as a useful instrument in maintaining the balance of power against more powerful and aggressive states like Ludovician France. On 12 September 1701 William III's diplomats at The Hague renewed the Anglo-Dutch alliance with the Emperor.

The Maritime Powers' financial resources quickly added bulk to the allied coalition. Subsidy treaties with several imperial princes committed large numbers of German troops to the 100,000-man Anglo-Dutch army then forming in the Netherlands. By 1703 a combination of territorial and financial incentives also enabled English diplomats to woo Portugal and Savoy from alliances that they had recently concluded with Louis XIV. Yet even more pervasive than money was the universal fear of French hegemony that prompted individual members of the Grand Alliance to champion one or more of the Habsburgs' claims to the entire Spanish inheritance. The Dutch insisted on Habsburg control of Belgium, lest it serve as a conduit for future French aggression. Both they and the English also visualized Habsburg control of Spain's colonial empire as the best guarantee of their continued access to American markets. Duke Victor Amadeus of Savoy and King Peter of Portugal switched sides in the war largely because they felt threatened by the prospects of Bourbon hegemony in their respective peninsulas; whereas Savoy sought to partition Milan with the Habsburgs, Portugal made the Archduke Charles's succession to the Spanish throne a precondition for its accession to the Grand Alliance. Even the German princes' desire for a stronger western frontier suggested that the monarchy might reacquire those Habsburg territories along the Rhine that France had seized over the past half century.

For the next decade this formidable constellation was able to invade Bourbon-held territory on as many as a half-dozen fronts at the same time (see Map 3). Nevertheless, a series of unexpected developments closer to home nearly resulted in the monarchy's defeat at the outset of the war. The first major setback occurred during the summer of 1702, when Elector Max



3 The empire of Charles VI

Emanuel deserted to the enemy. Over the past century no major imperial vassal had been as closely tied to the Habsburgs as the Bavarian Wittelsbachs. Their close association had rested on a consistent coincidence of interests, including their parallel rivalries with the Palatinate and fear of Sweden during the 'Thirty Years' War, their perilous position as the empire's only two Catholic lay electors during the election crises of 1619 and 1654–8, and their close proximity to the danger posed by the Turks in 1683. Yet those interests had diverged since the death of Charles II. Having devoted over 40,000 men and 20 million fl. to the Turkish wars, Max Emanuel wanted to be rewarded with a royal crown like those recently acquired by the rival electors of Saxony and Brandenburg. Leopold had actively considered meeting Max Emanuel's expectations through an exchange of Bavaria for the Spanish Netherlands, where Max would succeed as king. But with the unwelcome surprise of Charles II's will, Belgium was no longer the emperor's to offer. Although Leopold continued to treat with Max Emanuel, the elector soon turned to Louis XIV, who was in a better position to hold forth the prospect of a royal crown, together with considerable territorial acquisitions in the Austrian lands and other parts of Germany.

The crises of 1703

Max Emanuel's desertion helped turn 1703 into one of the most disastrous years in Austrian history. It began with a Franco-Bavarian invasion of several neighboring German territories, as well as Upper Austria. With the monarchy's only field army already tied down in northern Italy, provincial militia units were the sole, insufficient obstacle to an invasion of the *Erblände*. During the summer Max Emanuel seized much of the Tyrol; only an uprising by the county's peasants and burghers compelled the elector to withdraw and prevented his junction with the French army in Italy. The emperor desperately needed to raise another army to meet the Bavarian threat. Yet, given the deficiencies in the monarchy's fiscal system, the money was nowhere to be found. Despite the recent increases in the *Erblände's* Contributions and the heavy taxes being collected in Hungary, total government revenue still covered well under half of all expenses. The government was already borrowing heavily from its allies, wealthy aristocrats, and all ranks of state officials. Its biggest creditors were Jewish purveyors such as Samuel Oppenheimer, who delivered 11 million fl. worth of military supplies on credit during the first two years of the war. But Oppenheimer died in May 1703 and an audit of his bankrupt estate exposed the *Hofkammer's* inability to repay even half of what they owed.

By autumn, the dual threat posed by Bavaria and the government's bankruptcy was compounded by a major anti-Habsburg rebellion in Hungary. Its

causes constitute an all too familiar litany in the history of Austro-Hungarian relations. The most important provocations were the doubling of taxes and the military draft introduced by Kollonics. Tension remained, however, over intermittent attempts by some churchmen and magnates to convert the kingdom's non-Catholic majority, which now included nearly a million Transylvanians. Although the country's magnates were themselves Roman Catholic, they cleaved into two factions: *labanc* insiders, many of whom sought and benefited from court patronage to the point of losing touch with their Hungarian countrymen, and a majority who remained on their estates, where they harbored deep resentment over the effective suspension of their rights by a government that had not called a diet since 1687, excluded them from policy-making, and favored Germans and other foreigners through its *Commissio Neo Acquistica* and resettlement programs. Their natural leader was 24-year-old Prince Ferenc II Rákóczi. As the son of the Transylvanian Prince George II, maternal grandson of Peter Zrinyi, and godson of Imre Thököly, Rákóczi had the pedigree of a *kuruc* chieftain. He had only recently escaped to Poland after being arrested for plotting against Habsburg rule when a revolt broke out among the largely Ruthene peasants of his own massive estates in northeastern Hungary. He immediately assumed leadership of the rebellion, which quickly spread southward from the mountains of Upper Hungary into the central plain, where it steadily gained support among virtually all segments of the population. Within a year the *kuruc* controlled most of the central kingdom and Transylvania, where a rump diet actually elected Rákóczi as its prince.

Having entered the war in quest of Italy and the rest of the Spanish inheritance, Leopold now confronted the prospect of a crushing military defeat, followed by significant losses in territory and authority in both Germany and Hungary. The magnitude of the crisis finally convinced him to take remedial action. Yet much of what was now achieved was wrought not by the emperor and his inner circle, but by a growing reform party that was pressing for an immediate purge. Led by Leopold's elder son, Joseph, it included a number of junior officials, supported by many of the emperor's own generals, diplomats, German vassals, and foreign allies. By June 1703, the so-called Young Court had prevailed upon the emperor to replace the incompetent *Hofkriegsrat* and *Hofkammer* presidents with two of Joseph's protégés, Prince Eugene of Savoy and the *Hofkammer* vice president Gundaker Starhemberg.

The ministerial changes had little immediate effect on the monarchy's finances, which were further devastated by the loss of virtually all revenue from Hungary. With the government unable to fund more than a quarter of its needs, Starhemberg continued to depend heavily on borrowing. The purge did, however, encourage creditors to come forward in extraordinary

numbers. While the new *Hofkammer* president set an example with an advance of 75,000 fl., his generosity was dwarfed by other aristocrats and public officials such as the Counts Sternberg (300,000), Przehorsowsky (400,000), and Czernin, whose 1.2 million fl. constituted the largest private loan in the monarchy's history. Meanwhile, the Maritime Powers lent over 3.6 millions, including a 500,000 fl. Dutch loan secured with collateral provided by the Elector Palatine John William and Margrave Louis William of Baden.

The war turns

The Young Court did have an immediate impact on the conduct of the war in the west. At the beginning of 1704 it devised and won Leopold's approval for a bold plan to concentrate allied forces against Bavaria. The duke of Marlborough immediately embraced the strategy, having already determined on his own that Germany's deliverance from the Bavarian threat be given top priority. His famous march into southern Germany and junction with an imperial army commanded by Prince Eugene led to the defeat of the Franco-Bavarian forces at the battle of Blenheim (August 1704) and their immediate expulsion from Germany.

Blenheim was a great victory indeed. More important, it was the first in a remarkable string of triumphs that make the next fifteen years the most illustrious in Austrian military history. As it had in the past, the monarchy benefited from the support of its allies in the anti-Bourbon coalition, especially from the English, whose support was personified by the increasingly close collaboration and rapport between Marlborough and Eugene. No less important was the leadership of Joseph I, who became emperor upon Leopold's death in May 1705. The 32-year-old Joseph was probably the least typical of the early modern Habsburgs. Unlike virtually all of his Austrian and Spanish relatives, he was a handsome man whose face showed no trace of the protruding Habsburg jaw and lower lip that were so prominent among his father's features. Significantly, the differences between Joseph and his line went more than skin deep. He was also unlike most of his forebears in his secularism. Every Habsburg emperor since the sixteenth century had received Jesuit tutors during childhood and grown up to become avid champions of the Counter-Reformation. By contrast, Joseph's childhood tutors and friends included several enemies of the Jesuits, as well as men of Protestant origin. Most notable among them was his grand chamberlain, Prince Salm, who was himself a former Protestant, and the cleric whom Salm entrusted with his religious instruction, Ferdinand von Rummel. Although Joseph was a devout Catholic, he exhibited his own hostility toward the Jesuits on a number of occasions, including one instance when he had a

Jesuit priest defenestrated after he appeared at his bedside disguised as a ghost to urge Rummel's dismissal. He and several of his ministers were also much more willing to tolerate religious minorities and were equally sensitive to the secular, rational, and scientific ideas that were just beginning to emerge with the Enlightenment.

Joseph also lacked the moral austerity and diligence that characterized so many of the Habsburgs. Unlike his father, who had been scrupulously faithful during forty years of marriage, Joseph was notorious for his drinking parties and casual trysts with noblewomen and servant girls alike. Although he was determined to discharge his obligations as emperor, Joseph often delegated affairs of state to his ministers, while devoting much of his spare time to various divertissements. His yearning for military glory led him to participate in the imperial army's successful sieges against the French fortress of Landau in 1702 and 1704. In an age when monarchs felled wild game in the company of numerous attendants while standing behind the safety of a barricade, Joseph reveled in exhausting hunting expeditions in which he pursued wild game in small boats, in wild horseback charges, and on foot without the protection of his bodyguards. Even when he attended meetings with his ministers, he often amused himself by drawing hunting and military scenes, as well as some remarkable vignettes of men hanging from gallows and heads stuck on pikes. Indeed, Joseph I was a typical Habsburg only in his love and talent for languages and the performing arts, which extended to his composition of music and mastery of the flute and violin.

If Joseph's diverse pursuits never interfered with the prosecution of the war it was because he provided decisive leadership to the talented and energetic ministers who now replaced the aging mediocrities of Leopold's regime. Moreover, they knew exactly what was expected of them. From the June 1703 purge to the end of his own reign, Joseph and his advisors identified their war aims and pursued them with dogged persistence. If they initially focused on Germany, it was because they realized that the Franco-Bavarian army posed an even more immediate threat to the monarchy's security than the Hungarian revolt or the French army in Italy.

The victory at Blenheim strengthened further the bonds between *Kaiser* and *Reich*. No one was more proud of his German identity than Joseph himself. As a youth he had forged close friendships with many of the imperial princes. After his succession he reinvigorated the imperial office through the energetic use of his prerogatives, often in collaboration with the other members of the Electoral College. In 1706 he placed Max Emanuel under the imperial ban. As punishment Joseph returned the Upper Palatinate to the elector palatine and placed Bavaria proper under imperial administration. He also immediately reorganized the Aulic Council, which he aggressively utilized to implement his policies within the *Reich*. Joseph's public

expressions of German patriotism and his resurrection of imperial power have led some German historians to exaggerate the young emperor's commitment to the empire. However genuine these feelings toward Germany and his imperial office may have been, Joseph invariably subjugated them to the pursuit of distinctly Austrian interests. Much to the distress of his imperial vice chancellor, Friedrich Karl von Schönborn, he also emasculated both the Imperial Chancery and Chamber Court by shifting their responsibilities to his own Austrian Chancery and Aulic Council. The lesson of Joseph's German policies is, in fact, of the Habsburgs' continued use of imperial institutions to serve Austrian interests, albeit under a more powerful and energetic sovereign.

Once Germany had been cleared of foreign forces, Joseph shifted the focus of the war effort to other theatres. The conquest of Italy again became the primary objective, as it had been at the death of Charles the Sufferer. Joseph committed not only his own limited resources to this end, but even diverted imperial revenue and troops. The heavy taxation and forced recruitment that he authorized in occupied Bavaria even led to a brief peasant uprising at the end of the year. Thanks largely to the personal intervention of the duke of Marlborough, Joseph also secured major contributions from the Maritime Powers, who virtually doubled the size of Prince Eugene's army by providing 28,000 German auxiliaries. They also advanced nearly 3 million fl. in loans, including 400,000 fl. from Queen Anne's own personal fortune. These herculean efforts finally enabled Prince Eugene to take the offensive in the summer of 1706. His brilliantly executed march to the aid of Victor Amadeus of Savoy is reminiscent of Marlborough's thrust into southern Germany two years earlier. The resulting Austro-Savoyard victory at Turin was also the strategic equivalent of Blenheim, since it left the enemy without a field army to protect the isolated garrisons that remained in the peninsula. To hasten the achievement of his immediate objective, Joseph authorized Prince Eugene to sign a truce in March 1707 that allowed the French to withdraw their remaining 23,000 troops from northern Italy. The evacuation permitted him to complete the conquest of the peninsula with the dispatch of a 10,000-man army into Naples two months later.

Joseph's successes did not come without a cost. By permitting the French to extricate their garrisons and by committing many of his own forces to the conquest of Naples, Joseph effected a 30,000-man swing in the balance of forces available for service elsewhere in southern Europe. As a result, an allied attempt to seize the naval base of Toulon fell short of its goal and the main Anglo-Dutch-Portuguese army in Spain was overwhelmed and destroyed at the battle of Almansa (April 1707). Moreover, the emperor's withdrawal of so many Austrian and imperial troops from the empire also permitted the French temporarily to reoccupy and plunder much of southern

Germany during the summer of 1707. More frightening yet was a concurrent occupation of Saxony by a large Swedish army under its King, Charles XII. Fortunately, the invasion was directed not against the Grand Alliance, but rather Augustus II, who had joined Russia in attacking Sweden in the so-called Great Northern War (1700–20). Nevertheless, the reappearance of the emperor's old Swedish enemy along the Bohemian frontier further underscored his impotence outside the Italian peninsula. Having contributed so decisively to the victorious Blenheim and Turin campaigns, the Maritime Powers were understandably furious at the emperor's selfish pursuit of his Italian prize. Their pique could not, however, obscure the fact that two lightning campaigns had subjected Bavaria to Austrian occupation and the entire Italian peninsula to a century and a half of Habsburg hegemony. Nor did Joseph waste any time in exploiting his advantage. Using the Aulic Council as his principal tool, he immediately put the empire's old claims to sovereignty in northern Italy to good use. For the rest of the war, the Austrian army collected an average of nearly 5 million fl. annually in imperial taxes and quartering rights. Moreover, in 1708 an Aulic Council judgment placed the pro-French duke of Mantua under the imperial ban, thereby enabling Joseph to merge the strategic duchy with Milan.

The victory in Italy also permitted the emperor to devote more attention to ending the Rákóczi rebellion. He and his ministers initially hoped to achieve peace through negotiation. Even before his succession Joseph had attempted to placate the *kuruc* by announcing his father's offer to invest him with control of the kingdom and by promising to rule in strict accordance with the constitution. Yet even though Rákóczi and his lieutenants had no quarrel with Joseph, they were determined to secure structural guarantees that would not make Hungary's liberties dependent on the goodwill of individual sovereigns. Hence, the rebel leadership initially demanded the restoration of the elective crown, the *jus resistendi*, and an independent Transylvania ruled by Rákóczi himself. In reality Rákóczi was willing to settle for Transylvania, which would have resumed its historic mission as guarantor of the kingdom's liberties. But when the two sides met under Anglo-Dutch mediation during 1706, the talks foundered on Joseph's refusal to relinquish control of the principality.

With the failure of negotiations, Joseph was compelled to devote the rest of his reign to recovering Hungary by force. This was a formidable task, especially in the early stages of the revolt, when most of the Austrian army was fighting elsewhere and the *kuruc* forces comprised as many as 100,000 men. His father's recent victory against the Turks did, however, afford the emperor a number of advantages. The reconquest and resettlement of Hungary's southern frontier with non-Magyar settlers enabled him to follow a strategy of divide and rule that was to become so popular with later

Habsburgs. The Croatian estates and Military Border provided a steady flow of troops, as did the German and autonomous Serb immigrant communities that had recently settled along the southern edge of the Hungarian plain. Meanwhile, the bulk of Transylvania's non-Magyar populations remained loyal, or at least diffident to Rákóczi's appeals. The *kuruc* were also frustrated by Hungary's isolation now that the destruction of the Turks and conquest of Transylvania had deprived the *kuruc* of their traditional allies. Although Rákóczi approached Poland, Sweden, Russia, and even the Sultan, only far off France was willing to send any help at all. Even here the modest subsidies and 2,000 soldiers Louis sent were hardly enough. The *kuruc* force of peasants and *hayducks* may have been adept at guerrilla tactics, but their inability to besiege well-defended strongpoints enabled the Austrians to retain control of the central kingdom's western counties, Transylvania's urban centers, and a number of key fortresses in between. Eventually the arrival of regular Austrian army forces exposed its impotence in conventional warfare, as well as Rákóczi's own incompetence as a battlefield commander.

The rebellion's collapse was hastened by internal conflicts among Rákóczi's own supporters. From the outset, the prince had attracted such large numbers of fighters by exempting them from all tax and manorial obligations. He had also won over much of the country's non-Catholic majority by promising to restore religious freedom, together with those places of worship that had been seized under Leopold. Yet Rákóczi was never able to enforce these commitments. Most landlords ignored the exemptions, while Catholic communities and magnates often blocked the restoration of Protestant churches. Finally, the heavy taxes that he was obliged to levy to pay for the insurrection undermined support among those who had been incited to revolt by Leopold's own war levies. Here too the nobility undermined Rákóczi's popular appeal by refusing to assume their fair share of the tax burden. Indeed, many were less committed to achieving victory over the Habsburgs than to preserving their own estates in areas that were under *kuruc* control.

In the end it was the prince's determination to obtain greater foreign financial and military support that proved his undoing. In April 1707 Rákóczi formally assumed the Transylvanian throne in the expectation that foreign princes would be more willing to deal with a fellow sovereign. Two months later he induced a Hungarian diet at Ónod to depose Joseph and the Habsburgs, with the intention of using its crown to attract a foreign ally. Whereas Rákóczi's hopes for securing outside assistance went unfulfilled, his break with the Habsburgs weighed heavily on his war-weary countrymen, many of whom preferred peace and reconciliation to the prolongation of the rebellion. After the Ónod diet many of them were willing to accept Joseph, who sustained their hopes by pledging to abide by all of the promises that had been broken by Leopold.

Following the destruction of the *kuruc* forces at Trencsén (August 1708), the Austrian army began the long process of besieging and retaking those strongpoints that remained in rebel hands. When peace was finally restored in April 1711, it came on Joseph's terms. Although he offered a general amnesty and pledged once again to abide by the constitutional and religious settlement of 1687, the peace of Szatmár that his generals concluded with the *kuruc* general Sándor Károlyi offered none of the guarantees that the rebels had demanded. Rather than accede to the treaty or accept the offer of amnesty, Rákóczi opted to spend the rest of his life in exile. The rebellion that bears his name had lasted eight years, making it the longest civil insurrection in the monarchy's history. The Habsburg regime had poured tremendous sums and roughly half of its 100,000-man army into the "Hungarian labyrinth." This commitment constituted a considerable drain on the monarchy's military efforts elsewhere – as well as on the goodwill of the Maritime Powers, who sympathized with the revolt as a struggle for constitutional government and Protestant religious freedom. The reestablishment of royal authority over all of Hungary was, however, at least as crucial to the monarchy's future as the preservation of its German and Italian frontiers.

What was clearly less crucial was the rest of the Spanish inheritance. Yet, by 1708 Joseph was in the position to focus on the balance of the monarchy's war aims. His decision to transfer Prince Eugene to the Low Countries immediately yielded another decisive victory at Oudenarde (July 1708) and the allied conquest of virtually the entire Spanish Netherlands. One month later an Anglo-Dutch fleet seized Sardinia in the archduke's name. The emperor also committed the first Austrian troops to the Iberian peninsula, although only after the Maritime Powers agreed to defray all their expenses. Joseph even sent troops into the Papal States during 1708 in a successful attempt to force Pope Clement XI to recognize his brother as king of Spain. These efforts notwithstanding, the conquest of Spain proved beyond the allies' resources. Except in Catalonia, the Spanish people steadfastly supported Philip V against a Habsburg succession forced on them by the Portuguese and the Protestant Maritime Powers.

The peace settlements

What they could not win on the battlefield the allies nearly acquired at the negotiation table. At the first formal peace talks held at The Hague in April–May 1709, Louis XIV tentatively accepted their demand for the entire Spanish Succession, as well as much of Alsace, only to change his mind at the last second. The bloody victory won by Marlborough and Eugene at Malplaquet (11 September) persuaded the allies to moderate their demands. When talks resumed at Gertruydenberg the following March, they no longer

insisted on the cession of Alsace. The United Provinces were even willing to let Philip V retain Sicily, which was still in Bourbon hands; it was only when their negotiators insisted that Louis XIV use his own army to eject his grandson from Spain that the talks collapsed.

Dutch wavering at Gertruydenberg was an unwelcome reminder that each member of the allied coalition was motivated by different war aims. The British were determined to place the Archduke Charles on the Spanish throne, from where he could guarantee their access to Spanish America. The emperor and his ministers were at least as interested in fortifying their hold on Italy with the acquisition of Sicily as they were in obtaining Spain and its overseas empire. By contrast the United Provinces had already achieved their primary war aim with the conquest of the Spanish Netherlands, where they intended to extend and strengthen their line of barrier fortresses against future French aggression. It made little sense for them to continue the war for their allies' sake, especially since the succession of French defeats now suggested that Louis XIV was no longer a threat to the balance of power.

The Dutch were eventually bought off with the promise of a greatly enlarged barrier in Belgium. Instead it was the British who proved the weak link that eventually broke the Grand Alliance. The end came suddenly with the landslide victory of the opposition Tories in the 1710 parliamentary elections. The Tories had exploited the public's dissatisfaction with the war in the wake of the bloody battle of Malplaquet and also capitalized on the widespread perception that the Austrians and Dutch were using Britain for their own selfish ends. The new Tory government immediately began secret discussions with Louis XIV with the intention of leaving Philip V in possession of Spain and its overseas empire. On learning of the Anglo-French talks, one of Joseph's ministers predicted woefully that "if the war lasts much longer, our allies will do us more harm than our enemies." Nine days later, the emperor's sudden death from smallpox guaranteed the fulfillment of this premonition. Although Joseph's ministers were able to keep his death secret from the Hungarian rebels until after the peace of Szatmár, they could not prevent it from hastening the breakup of the Grand Alliance. Since Joseph had no son he was succeeded by the Archduke Charles, who promptly returned from Spain. Were Charles to acquire the Spanish empire as well, he would rule an empire even larger than that of Charles V. Although the Tory government had decided on a separate peace several months earlier, Charles's succession and the threat it posed to the balance of power now gave them a compelling argument with which to persuade the rest of the allies to follow suit.

Although Charles's allies readily supported his election as Emperor Charles VI (1711–40), they now joined in separate peace talks with France. In April 1713 every member of the Grand Alliance except the Habsburg

monarchy and the Holy Roman empire concluded peace with Louis XIV at Utrecht. Although the treaty recognized the monarchy's conquests on the Italian peninsula plus Sardinia, it confirmed Philip V's hold on Spain and its overseas empire, as well as the complete restoration of Max Emanuel. Even Charles's acquisition of the Spanish Netherlands was made contingent on his willingness to grant commercial concessions and a larger fortress barrier to the Dutch. In a final act of spite against their erstwhile ally, the British secured Sicily (together with its royal title) for its new Italian client, Victor Amadeus of Savoy. The new emperor initially refused to accede to the peace treaty, but soon realized the hopelessness of continuing the struggle without the Maritime Powers. With an invading French army once again on German soil, he directed Prince Eugene to conclude peace with Louis XIV on the basis of the peace of Utrecht. The monarchy received no additional gains in the treaty of Rastatt (March 1714); similarly the Holy Roman empire, in whose name a second treaty was concluded at Baden (September 1714), acquired nothing beyond the frontiers established by the peace of Ryswick. One year later Charles finally acquired the Spanish Netherlands by concluding a Barrier Treaty with the Dutch at Antwerp (15 November 1715).

By then Louis XIV had died and been succeeded by his 5-year-old great-grandson, Louis XV (1715–74). Yet neither the peace settlements with France nor the Sun King's death brought peace. Both Charles VI and his archrival Philip V were still unwilling to tolerate the Spanish partition that had been recognized by every other European power. After a decade in the peninsula, Charles could not accept the loss of Spain, especially Catalonia, whose people had championed his cause but whom the British had forced him to abandon after his brother's death. For his part Philip V had not reconciled himself to the loss of Spain's European empire. His resolve was bolstered by his second wife, the strong-willed Elizabeth Farnese of Parma, who was determined to secure an Italian inheritance for their newborn son, Don Carlos.

For the moment Charles and Philip were hardly a threat to each other since they were unable to launch an attack across the western Mediterranean without their former allies. This was not, however, the case in the Balkans. At the end of 1714 the Turks invaded Venice's possessions in the Peloponnese and Dalmatia. Although they made no immediate move toward Hungary, past experience suggested that they would attack there next once Venice had been crushed. Rather than wait, the emperor and his advisors decided to enter the war while Venice was still available as an ally. In the resulting Turkish War (1716–18), Charles experienced for the first time the military glory that his father and brother had enjoyed. Prince Eugene promptly destroyed a vastly superior Turkish army at Peterwardein (5 August 1716),

leaving the unburied bodies of the grand vizier and 30,000 of his men to rot in the midsummer sun. Shortly thereafter, Austrian forces entered Hungary's Banat of Temesvár for the first time in 165 years. The following summer Eugene besieged the key fortress of Belgrade, which surrendered a week after he had annihilated a Turkish relief army in front of the city's walls (16 August 1717). With the peace of Passarowitz (21 July 1718) the monarchy acquired the last pieces of Ottoman Hungary in the Banat and eastern Slavonia, the northern half of Serbia and western, or "Little" Wallachia.

The Turkish War of 1716–18 was the last conflict for nearly a century in which the monarchy would emerge as the clear winner. Indeed, although Charles VI had a nominal ally in Venice and was assisted by a few thousand German auxiliaries and Papal subsidies, it was the only war fought between 1526 and 1849 in which the monarchy achieved any kind of victory without significant outside help. Events then unfolding in the western Mediterranean proved more true to form. By 1717 Philip V and Elizabeth Farnese had managed to build a fleet capable of supporting a counterthrust against Italy. In August it transported Spanish forces to Sardinia, which fell within two months. One year later a second descent seized much of Sicily from its new Savoyard king. With Prince Eugene tied down in the Balkans and without a fleet of his own, Charles was once again dependent on the Maritime Powers. Fortunately, they and the new French regime were eager to establish a stable European peace. He now bowed to their will by quickly concluding peace in the Balkans and joining them in the so-called Quadruple Alliance against Spain. By the treaty of London (2 August 1718) Charles reluctantly recognized Philip V as king of Spain, as well as Elizabeth Farnese's son's right to succeed the childless rulers of Parma and Tuscany. In return, the allies helped him compel Victor Amadeus to cede Sicily to him in exchange for the much less valuable island kingdom of Sardinia. Meanwhile, the Quadruple Alliance made short work of the Spanish threat. The British Admiral Byng sank the Spanish fleet just eight days after the alliance was concluded, then transported Austrian and Savoyard forces to Sicily and Sardinia. Although the Austrians made poor progress in retaking Sicily, a French army crossed the Pyrenees and quickly compelled Philip V and his queen to come to terms.

Manifestations of greatness: the high baroque

Although Charles VI had refused to sign the peace of Utrecht, the six treaties to which he did affix his name during the first seven years of his reign afforded the monarchy unprecedented security. Whereas Szatmár and Passarowitz confirmed the monarchy's hegemony in the northern Balkans, the compromises at Rastatt, Baden, Antwerp, and London attained all of its

strategic needs in the West. The Italian acquisitions of Milan, Mantua, and Tuscany's strategic Presidii Ports in the north, as well as Naples and Sicily in the south, rendered the monarchy's southeast flank every bit as secure as it had been prior to the death of Charles the Sufferer. Although a somewhat chastened Max Emanuel had been restored in Bavaria, his survival was more than compensated by the continued solidarity of the other German princes against their common enemies. Meanwhile, Sweden's total defeat in the Northern War removed it as a threat to the monarchy's interests in either Germany or Poland. Admittedly, the emperor had not won any part of Spain, a failure that he never completely accepted. Nevertheless, the priorities set by Joseph had determined both the extent and the limits of the monarchy's expansion, in keeping with its true strategic needs. With the recent Balkan conquests, a continuous natural barrier of mountains and rivers enclosed all of the monarchy's core lands, except Silesia and the Swabian enclaves. Moreover, for the first time in its history none of the *Erblande's* four frontiers with Hungary, Italy, Germany, and Poland harbored a significant threat. Although a new, powerful enemy was destined to appear on the monarchy's borders after Charles's death, the thrust of Habsburg foreign policy during the rest of the century focused more on maintaining these buffer zones than on actually defending the monarchy's core from foreign enemies. Indeed, the historic nightmare of simultaneous invasion from both east and west would not materialize again until 1914.

At the same time, the monarchy's new conquests afforded it more than security. With the acquisition of the Southern Netherlands, Italy, and the Balkans, Charles VI essentially ruled a second Habsburg empire that was nearly as extensive as the European patrimony of Charles V and larger than any state in the history of the Austrian monarchy. Among Charles's contemporaries, only the tsar of Russia ruled more territory. Thanks to the addition of nearly 2 million subjects in the Low Countries and another 5 million in Italy, the monarchy embraced a population of over 17 million people; only the king of France could claim more subjects – and then only by discounting the millions of Germans governed by Charles' imperial vassals.² Furthermore, although southern Italy and the new Balkan marches added little to the monarchy's economy, Lombardy and the Low Countries considerably strengthened its commercial and industrial base.

Even before the advent of peace, the Habsburg court, clergy, and nobility had begun celebrating these triumphs with what was perhaps the greatest

² It is difficult to get an exact count of the monarchy's population or land area. Roughly speaking, the population broke down as follows: greater Bohemia and Hungary, 4 million each; Austria, 2.5 million; Lombardy (Milan and Mantua), 1 million; Sicily, 1.2 million; Naples, 3 million; the Netherlands, 1.7 million; northern Serbia and Little Wallachia, perhaps 150,000 total. The monarchy's land area was somewhat over 750,000 sq km, or about 90 percent the size of Charles V's European inheritance.

building boom in the monarchy's history. The first of the magnificent palaces, churches, monasteries, and assorted monuments of the Austrian high baroque date from the last decade of the seventeenth century, when the country was rebuilding from the Turkish wars. Leopold's appointment of the young architect Johann Bernard Fischer von Erlach (1656–1723) to serve his son Joseph represents something of a milestone. Fischer made some effort to emulate Leopold's French rival by employing the Ludovician sun motif in the triumphal arches that he prepared for Joseph in 1691, following his coronation as Roman king, and again in 1699, after his wedding to Wilhelmine Amalia of Brunswick-Lüneburg. The same conceit is evident in a huge fresco in Klosterneuburg, in which the painter Daniel Gran portrayed Joseph as a Habsburg sun god. Moreover, his grandiose plans for Joseph's palace at Schönbrunn represented a direct response to Versailles.

Yet, while competition with Louis XIV motivated Joseph and his artists, it was their celebration of the dynasty's triumphant leadership of a reunited Germany that dominated their thinking. All types of public and private edifices were adorned in the distinctive bright yellow of the German coat of arms. They were also built on a much larger scale that befitted the dynasty's imperial rank. The onset of construction on Schönbrunn in 1694 also inspired the aristocracy to construct their own massive palaces with extravagant artificial gardens and numerous outbuildings. At the same time the dynasty's military and religious triumphs were dramatized by the flamboyant motifs of its painters and sculptors, whose work routinely featured uncounted legions of trumpeting cherubs, trampled infidels, helmeted skulls, and assorted battle flags, swords, and cannon.

If anything, Joseph was even less hesitant than his father to divert scarce wartime funds to court festivities and the arts. In his six year reign he built a new opera house, two theaters, a fine arts academy, and the Viennese suburb that still bears his name. He tripled his staff of musicians to 300, and, at one point, even spent 30,000 fl. on a wintry sled cavalcade. Joseph's wartime patronage speaks volumes for the emphasis the baroque dynasty placed on display. Yet the emperor could not spend what he did not have. Most of his artisans, as well as Fischer himself, went unpaid until the decade after his death. Although wealthy private patrons could afford to begin various undertakings during the war, he was obliged to suspend work on what had already become a drastically scaled-down Schönbrunn palace. It was only with peace that the greater availability of funds enabled Charles VI to join the church and aristocracy in outdoing all their predecessors in the number, scale, and pretentiousness of their projects.

Although it is possible to find traces of Charles's nostalgia for Spain, the imperial style, or *Kaiserstil*, developed further the presumption already evident under Joseph I. But, unlike his more secular brother, Charles's

patronage reestablished his father's focus on the dualism of crown and church. He spent very little on palace construction. Admittedly he renovated the *Stallburg*, which housed the Lippizaner horses of the famed Spanish riding school, and he built a massive imperial stable across from the Hofburg. His city residence remained, however, pitifully small and plain compared to those of other monarchs. Although Charles often spent the summer in his country residence at Laxenburg and the autumn months just outside the city walls at the Favorita, both were comparable in size and grandeur to an aristocrat's residence. Meanwhile he gave Schönbrunn to Joseph's widow rather than resume the construction that had been interrupted by the war. The emperor's most famous projects were religious in nature. He resurrected his seventeenth-century predecessors' devotion to the Virgin Mary. As early as 1706 he had credited her with delivering Barcelona from a Franco-Spanish siege and had planned to erect an obelisk in her name. He visited and renovated Mariazell shortly after his return from the peninsula. Moreover, the numerous religious columns that he commissioned around the monarchy included a great many *Mariensäule*, as well as a large number of monuments giving thanks for the end of a nationwide epidemic in 1713. Charles commemorated Vienna's deliverance with the construction of the great *Karlskirche* (1716–39). Named after his patron saint, St. Charles Borromeus, the church was framed by two enormous, free-standing columns that have been variously interpreted as representing Spain's pillars of Hercules, Roman triumphal columns, or even Turkish minarets. They are, however, inscribed from top to bottom with religious symbols and graced by the imperial crown. The religious and dynastic dualism of the emperor's patronage was also evident in the huge sums he spent on turning the great monastery at Klosterneuburg into an Austrian Escorial.

The emperor's patronage was motivated by the customary combination of religious devotion, dynastic propaganda, and unabashed self-acclaim. He was, however, also influenced somewhat by the emphasis that contemporary cameralist teaching placed on the public welfare. If churches and religious monuments attended to his subjects' spiritual needs, Charles also ministered to their health care by constructing hospitals and veterans' homes, and to their education by funding *Ritterakademien* and Fischer's lovely court library, whose façade bore an inscription dedicating it to the "publico comodo." Even less directly utilitarian expenditures on the court and the emperor's private quarters received the endorsement of men like Schröder because it recirculated funds that helped stimulate the economy.

The motivations of the clergy and aristocracy were more straightforward. During Charles's reign they celebrated the triumph of the Counter-Reformation by constructing or renovating hundreds of churches throughout the monarchy. In Hungary, the bishop of Eger and Vác alone built exactly

ninety-nine. While the emperor was spending lavishly on Klosterneuburg, the Austrian abbots of Admont, Göttweig, Kremsmünster, Melk, and St. Florian renovated and expanded their own monasteries. As always the Society of Jesus was most active among the monarchy's Protestant populations. It sprinkled the countryside in post-Szatmár Hungary with Marian shrines, at one point declaring the kingdom's constitution to be under her personal protection. In Silesia, it continued to multiply the number of Jesuit colleges and churches, as well as the size of its new university at Breslau.

Art historian Hans Sedlmayr refers to the "inflated self-importance" of the many aristocrats who spent lavishly on palace construction under Joseph and Charles. Of course, some were more important than others. The Habsburg brothers readily shared their spoils with their key ministers, generals, and court favorites. In the closing years of his reign Joseph parceled out Max Emanuel's Bavarian domains and a number of confiscated Hungarian estates. Prince Eugene's Hungarian bequest was evaluated at 300,000 fl., the brilliant Bohemian Chancellor Count Wratislaw's at 400,000. The family of his favorite, Prince Lamberg, received 250,000 fl. even though his services amounted to little more than tending to the imperial stable and procuring women for his merriment. At his death Joseph bequeathed a legacy of 500,000 fl. to his last lover, Marianne Pálffy – exactly ten times the annual pension that he left his own mother. As in everything else, his younger brother was less spectacular, but no less generous as he routinely compensated his ministers and favorites with 40–120,000 fl. annually.

The emperors' favor guaranteed that these same men commissioned some of the greatest private palaces of the Austrian high baroque. Fischer's mammoth Palais Trautson was a suitable urban residence for the emperors' sometime chief minister. Both Imperial Vice Chancellor Schönborn and Prince Eugene employed another great master, Johann Lukas von Hildebrandt (1663–1745), for their palaces. Actually, the *Hofkriegsrat* president built two: a winter residence within the city walls and the famous Belvedere, which overlooked Vienna from the southeast. With its wonderful sense of proportion and scenic garden esplanade, the Belvedere easily outshone the palaces within the old city, which was already far too cramped to allow either architects to develop their plans or observers to enjoy the visual effect of their creations. In fact, the limited space led to several distinctly Viennese architectural traits, including the placement of shops on the ground level of many palaces, and the construction of four-storey houses with tightly curved stairways. With as many as 80,000 people crammed into the thousand residential buildings that lay within Vienna's walls, it even became necessary for aristocrats to admit rent-paying gentlemen as boarders within their city palaces.

As a rule, the smaller city palaces were less expensive than their generally

larger suburban counterparts. Yet none of the 240 aristocratic residences that had sprung up in and around Vienna by 1730 came cheaply. Even a small luxury townhouse with a modest stairway and no ceremonial hall could cost 70–80,000 fl. Such expenses posed no problem for the wealthiest aristocrats. The Hungarian Palatine Pál Esterházy earned as much as 700,000 fl. each year from his estates. Although Prince Hans Adam "the Rich" Liechtenstein collected only half that amount, it was still sufficient not just to construct palaces but to purchase the tiny principality that still bears the family name.³ Even Prince Eugene could supplement his relatively finite domain income of 100,000 fl. with an additional 300,000 in various state salaries. Nevertheless, the high cost of prestige ultimately overwhelmed many less well-endowed nobles and obliged them to sell their half-finished palaces. Nor was such extravagance limited to Vienna or to the nobility. In Upper Austria alone no fewer than five monasteries spent themselves into bankruptcy and were forced to close down.

Of course, profligate spending did have its compensations. Although they all employed *robot* labor when possible, crown, noble, and church patrons also retained – and ultimately paid – thousands of skilled artisans. Hildebrandt's Belvedere employed 1,300 full-time workers. For forty-seven years the great abbey at Melk engaged roughly a hundred artisans, some spending their entire life on the project. By 1730 Vienna itself supported hundreds of master artists, including a remarkable 243 master goldsmiths, and ranked with Rome, Paris, and Venice as a major center of the arts. The influence of the north Italian baroque was evident in much of their work. It was no coincidence that Hildebrandt was Italian-born, while Fischer had studied under Bernini for sixteen years before coming to Vienna. Nevertheless, the monarchy's central position had always given it a facility for adopting, and then coopting, the ideas and culture of neighboring lands. Just as Italian missionaries had spearheaded the first wave of the Counter-Reformation, only to be replaced in later years by native priests, home-grown artists dominated a new generation of baroque masters that began after 1700. Although large numbers of German artists continued to find employment within the *Erblande*, native Austrians now replaced Italians as the dominant presence throughout the monarchy. A large contingent of Tyroleans also led native artists in bringing the Austrian baroque style to Catholic Germany, as well as to Saxony and Poland.

The Austrian baroque was less self-sufficient in the performing arts and letters. Italian composers and performers still dominated music and theater, both at court and on the estates of aristocratic patrons. The one notable

³ In 1719, after Hans Adam had died, Charles VI formally created for his chief minister, Florian Anton Liechtenstein, what remains today the only surviving principality from the Holy Roman empire.

exception was the vernacular performances before popular audiences, whether at Vienna's new Theater am Kärntnertor (1712) or in the countryside, where Jesuit evangelists competed with traveling troupes by staging their own didactic presentations. Italian dominance in poetry was most evident in Vienna, where Charles VI employed first Apostolo Zeno and then Metastasio as his court poets. Even far-off Transylvania experienced a Latin cultural renaissance with the end of Ottoman rule. Except for the providential histories and apologies penned by the Jesuits, literature had few native sons writing in the vernacular. In 1716 the wife of the British plenipotentiary, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, even claimed that the only writer she met during her prolonged stay in Vienna was a Frenchman employed by Prince Eugene. Two decades later, the prominent Italian historian Pietro Giannone claimed that he never bothered to learn German during his eleven years in the Habsburg capital because all of its educated elite spoke French or Italian.

Just as the court exercised a decisive influence over arts and letters, it also helped mold other aspects of elite culture, especially in Vienna. Unlike Prague or Linz, the capital had never made any pretense of being an industrial, commercial, or financial center. Moreover, the purges of the Counter-Reformation and the losses inflicted by the siege of 1683 had further stunted the growth of a moneyed bourgeoisie. Though the city's population and economy had recovered from these setbacks, it owed its prosperity solely to the patronage of the emperor and his court. As a result government service – or serving the government's needs – coopted the energies of enterprising commoners. Connections at court and a suitable noble or official title became more important than occupation or wealth, if only because they ultimately determined both. Small wonder that wealthy burgher families emulated the court nobility by constructing palatial townhouses. The attractiveness of aristocratic values may have made for greater social homogeneity and self-acceptance, but it did little to assist the evolution of a more productive urban bourgeoisie.

Behind the façade: government and economy

During the reign of Charles VI, aristocratic, clerical, and court patrons acclaimed the monarchy's triumph and emergence as a great power of the first rank. Yet, lurking behind the glamorous baroque façade was a reality largely unchanged since the days of Leopold I. The monarchy was more than ever a corporate society that was much better at displaying wealth than creating it. It was also still governed by an inadequate administrative system and a correspondingly weak military that was incapable of defeating any major western power without the intercession of powerful allies.

The monarchy had made a good start under the energetic and innovative Joseph I. He not only removed most of his father's ministers, but streamlined the size of key policy-making bodies such as the Privy Conference and Privy Council. The new emperor and his ministers were also much more deeply committed to the reform agenda of the cameralists. Working in tandem with Starhemberg, Joseph quickly streamlined regional administration by paring down excess personnel and subordinating Graz's and Innsbruck's independent administrative offices to the central government. In 1706 he founded the Vienna City Bank. Ostensibly run by the capital's municipal government, the City Bank was secretly directed by a Ministerial Bank Deputation headed by Starhemberg, under whose tutelage it assumed a fifth of the 60 million fl. debt that the *Hofkammer* accumulated over the next five years. Joseph was also willing to implement some of the projects proposed by the new *Hofkammer* secretary, the Austrian cameralist Schierendorff. True to cameralist dogma, Schierendorff advocated not only mercantile development and administrative efficiency, but also greater agricultural productivity by improving the living standards of those peasants who "sweat under the slavish yoke of serfdom." In order to reduce their taxes and increase overall state revenue, Joseph attempted to replace the inequitable and irregular Contributions voted by the estates with a "universal excise" that could be levied uniformly throughout the *Erblande*. He also directed the estates to investigate ways in which peasants could be freed from *robot* service. Near the end of the reign he actually commuted *robot* service on his own domains in the former Piast duchies of Liegnitz, Brieg, and Wohlau.

Ordinary "cameral" revenue more than doubled under Joseph to 8.5 million fl.⁴ Nevertheless, the estates prevented him from carrying out some of Schierendorff's more revolutionary proposals. The Inner and Outer Austrian regimes retarded the subordination of their administrative offices in Graz and Innsbruck, and delayed the introduction of a universal excise by refusing to enact the new cadasters that it required. Opposition from the various Bohemian *Länder* also dissuaded the government from extending the *robot* pilot project to private land, even though it had dramatically increased crop yields in Liegnitz, Brieg, and Wohlau. Despite Joseph's energy and determination, he was no different from his predecessors in his desire to work with the monarchy's estates, especially in wartime. Such deference had proven advantages. The aristocracy had helped the government to finance the war with substantial loans, especially during the critical period before Blenheim. Vienna's town fathers had assumed equally imposing burdens through the City Bank. By increasing the Contribution by another 60 percent

⁴ Whereas the Contribution was considered "extraordinary" income expressly intended for the military, "ordinary" income came from indirect taxes, crown estates, tolls, and other non-military sources.

shortly after Joseph's succession, the *Erblande's* estates had effectively tripled their military taxes in a single generation to over 8 million fl. In Bohemia proper the nobility had even agreed to pay the bulk of the resulting 1.3 million fl. "Extraordinary" Contribution themselves. Yet the level of the Contribution actually declined somewhat after 1706, partly because the estates saw less urgency in making such sacrifices, but also because Joseph himself deeply appreciated the toll that taxes were taking on his subjects, particularly in the Bohemian crownlands.⁵

The succession crisis

At the very least, permanent structural changes in the monarchy's finances would have to wait until the end of the war. By 1720 that time had come. For the first time in its history the monarchy was free from immediate outside threats to its security that might impede the prosecution of internal reforms. The next thirteen years were, in fact, Europe's longest period of uninterrupted peace between the fifteenth and twentieth centuries. Hence Charles VI had ample opportunity to reform its government and build its economy without fear of upsetting the corporate pillars that supported the monarchy. But Joseph's premature death severely compromised these prospects in two ways. First, it created a new succession crisis. Although Joseph and his wife, Wilhelmine Amalia of Brunswick-Lüneburg, had had three children within their first four years of marriage, their only son did not live to see his first birthday. Shortly thereafter, the philandering emperor gave his wife a recurring venereal infection with symptoms that strongly suggest gonorrhea or herpes simplex. Henceforth, responsibility for prolonging the dynasty rested with Joseph's brother. Charles and his wife, Elizabeth Christine of Brunswick-Lüneburg, did have one son in 1716, but he too died within a few months. Over the next eight years Charles's supplications to the Virgin were answered – with the birth of Maria Theresa (1717), Maria Anna (1718), and Maria Amalia (1724). By the 1720s Charles's intensifying preference for his Spanish mistress and assorted young males further compromised his chances of providing a male heir. The empress herself did little to enhance the odds by becoming so obese that she could barely stand without assistance. Sadly, the last years of the reign were attended by rumors of Charles's hope that she would precede him in death, thereby permitting him to father a son by a second wife.

Emperor Leopold had already made allowances for a female succession in

⁵ The *Erblande's* tax burden was generally apportioned as follows: Greater Bohemia, 66 percent (Bohemia 33 percent, Silesia 22 percent, Moravia 11 percent); Austrian lands, 34 percent (Inner Austria 17 percent, Lower Austria 11 percent, Upper Austria 6 percent). The Tyrol made only intermittent contributions.

September 1703, when he concluded the *pactum mutuae successionis* with his two sons on the eve of Charles's departure for Spain. The three men agreed that Charles and his male heirs would rule Spain and its empire, while Joseph would inherit the Austrian dominions from his father. Should either Joseph or Charles fail to provide a son, the surviving male line would succeed to both Habsburg realms. Female offspring would also be permitted to succeed following the extinction of both male lines. Finally, the *pactum* also decreed the unity and indivisibility of the Austro-Bohemian-Hungarian lands.

The settlement of the Habsburg inheritance was hardly attended by expressions of brotherly love. Joseph compelled Charles to cede the strategic duchy of Milan as a precondition for adhering to the succession pact. Although he then waived his claim to the rest of the Spanish empire in favor of Charles and his male heirs, Joseph appears to have insisted that his two daughters, Maria Josepha and Maria Amalia, would "everywhere and always take precedence" over any female issue that Charles might have. Whatever Joseph's intentions may have been, they lost all force with his death. Although the Pragmatic Sanction that Charles issued at court in April 1713 confirmed the *pactum's* provision for a female succession and its insistence on the monarchy's indivisibility, it also placed his brother's two daughters behind any children that he might have, regardless of their sex.

The Pragmatic Sanction was a truly revolutionary document. Previous testaments, such as the *pactum mutuae successionis*, had also forbidden the monarchy's partition and allowed for a female succession. They had, however, remained largely hypothetical until now. By publicly enunciating these principles for the first time, the Pragmatic Sanction now necessitated their formal acceptance by the estates of the realm. This was particularly important in Hungary, whose diet still had the right to elect its king in the event that the dynasty failed to provide a legitimate male heir. From a practical standpoint Charles also wanted foreign recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction, lest it be treated with the same disregard as the will of Charles the Sufferer.

His exhaustive efforts to secure its acceptance at home and abroad have been criticized by many scholars, who often cite Prince Eugene's advice that a full treasury and well-equipped army would have served him better than the signatures of his fellow monarchs. Although the Pragmatic Sanction publicly laid the foundation of an indivisible, if constitutionally diverse, Habsburg *Gesamtstaat*, it was no substitute for administrative and fiscal changes that might have better enabled Charles's successor to defend her inheritance. Historians assert with some justification that the emperor's obsession with the Pragmatic Sanction diverted him from pursuing such badly needed domestic reforms. The fact is that the last male Habsburg had three decades to prepare the monarchy for his death – plenty of time to attend to state-

building. Indeed, Joseph's reckless sex life and premature death compromised its future not only because it led to the succession crisis, but also because it placed Charles VI on the throne.

Administration and finance under Charles VI

Given Charles VI's prominence and the baroque pretensions that it inspired, it is not surprising that many historians have contemplated becoming his first modern biographer. Alas, further investigation persuaded every one of them to turn to other subjects. Surely contemporaries had no such illusions. He was a hopeless mediocrity – a rather reticent, stolid man who had inherited his father's phlegmatism and indecisiveness, but not his intelligence and conscientiousness. When he spoke he mumbled so fast that “the most skillful magician would not be able to understand him.” His handwriting was so illegible that it took two centuries before anyone could decipher his diary. When the historian Oswald Redlich finally succeeded in doing so, what he found was a shallow and trivial mind that was hardly up to the challenges that the monarchy faced.

The task was needlessly complicated by Charles's nostalgia for Spain, an obsession that went far beyond his patronage of the arts. Instead of seeing himself as the sovereign of a greatly enlarged monarchy, he nurtured the illusion that he was the ruler of discrete Austrian and Spanish Habsburg states. He insisted on keeping the Spanish royal title long after he had departed the peninsula. Its escutcheon remained on the imperial coat of arms until the end of his reign. Even in death his ornate sarcophagus reminds us of his Spanish quest with a representation of a rare victory over Philip V at Saragossa. However fantastic Charles's conceit may have been, it had a real effect on the monarchy's organization. Upon his return from the peninsula, he established a parallel Spanish ministry and filled it with those Iberian and Italian exiles who had served him in Spain. Rather than take orders from the Privy Conference, this Spanish *camarilla* enjoyed direct access to the emperor through a wholly independent Council of Spain (*Consejo de España*). Charles even negated his brother's earlier transfer of Milan to Austrian rule by placing it under the jurisdiction of a new Italian Chancery that he subordinated to the *Consejo*. Among his Latin advisors, the Catalan Marquis de Rialp and the Neapolitan Count Rocco Stella enjoyed immediate access to the emperor. To his credit Rialp made an effort to work with his Austrian colleagues. Yet they could not hide their jealousy and mistrust for men like Stella, whom they nicknamed the “nighthawk” for his secretive, nocturnal visits to Charles's apartments.

Unfortunately, the Austrian ministers were unable to compensate for Charles's own lack of interest and vision. Unlike his brother, he refused to delegate authority, with the result that they waited around for instructions

and support that never materialized. Nor were they wholly without responsibility for the resulting ministerial muddle. Virtually all of Joseph's best ministers had died or resigned within a few years of Charles's succession. Those who remained were deeply divided by conflicts within their own ranks. Most notable among the holdovers were Gundaker Starhemberg and Prince Eugene, whose martial exploits helped make him the most influential court figure during the opening years of the reign. Yet the greatest military genius in Austrian history proved an indifferent *Hofkriegsrat* president. Like the rest of the ministry, he worked only a few hours a day, while devoting most of his time to playing cards and various other social pursuits. Even when his mind turned to business, he expended far more energy in defending his reputation in court intrigues than in improving the monarchy's military system or training a competent field commander to succeed him.

By contrast, Gundaker Starhemberg was a much less political and more diligent minister, who needed only the confidence of his sovereign to continue the reform projects begun under Joseph I. He had, in fact, alerted Charles to the monarchy's serious fiscal difficulties immediately after his succession and had elicited from him a mandate for drafting a comprehensive plan for restructuring state finances. In the end, however, the emperor merely followed in the footsteps of many of the monarchy's rulers by making minor adjustments in its byzantine administrative system at the beginning of the reign, but doing very little afterward. He did, for example, create a commission to discharge the mountainous state debt, and supported Starhemberg's introduction of improved book-keeping methods at all levels of the fiscal administration. Yet, far from encouraging Starhemberg's more ambitious projects, Charles allowed the Spanish *camarilla* to make him a scapegoat for the monarchy's chronic fiscal problems. Starhemberg eventually resigned as *Hofkammer* president in 1715, following the creation of the so-called *Universal Bankalität*, a joint state-private investment vehicle that challenged his control over the *Hofkammer* and the Vienna City Bank. He stayed on as head of the Ministerial Bank Deputation and had the satisfaction of witnessing the *Bankalität*'s collapse one year later under the weight of the Turkish war. But any chance of restructuring the monarchy's fiscal apparatus ended with his departure from the *Hofkammer*.

Whereas the emperor showed little interest in changing the monarchy's administrative system, he was firmly committed to retaining its constitutional structure. As had past Habsburgs, he attempted to govern by consensus with the monarchy's privileged elites, rather than through coercion enforced by bureaucratic fiat. Even before his return from Spain he expressed his determination to adhere closely to the traditional constitutions of all his dominions. His establishment of the *Consejo de España* demonstrated his distaste for continuing his predecessors' modest efforts to integrate and centralize the government. Nor did he show any interest in Schierendorff's

suggestion that he assemble a diet of all the Habsburg lands for the dual purposes of adopting the universal excise and ratifying the Pragmatic Sanction. His decision spelled the deathknell of the universal excise and the uniform tax structure that it represented. Moreover, when he sought recognition for the Pragmatic Sanction, he negotiated separately with each of the crownlands, thereby entrenching further the notion of a constitutionally diverse Habsburg *Gesamtstaat*.

In Charles's defense, several of his Spanish dominions would have strongly resisted any move toward royal absolutism. Nevertheless, by failing to integrate any of them, Charles let slip an opportunity to add considerably to the state revenue. The administration and economy of Naples were so hopelessly mismanaged that the kingdom was actually a net drain on the treasury. Nor did the Austrian Netherlands contribute to the monarchy's coffers. Fully a third of its annual revenue was needed to reimburse the Dutch for the operating expenses of the eight barrier fortresses that they maintained along the French frontier; what was left was barely sufficient to defray the costs of its own administration and defense. Thus, despite the tremendous increase in the monarchy's size and population, it was the *Erblande* that still provided the bulk of its taxes. Given the paltry annual Contribution paid by the Austrian lands – 1 million fl. each from the archduchies and Inner Austria, and often nothing from the Tyrol or Outer Austria – the burden fell principally on Bohemia.

Nowhere, however, did the crown's reliance on mutual cooperation bear more positive results. Charles continued his predecessors' practice of rewarding the kingdom's loyalty by gradually extending its privileges. As had Joseph before him, Charles permitted the Bohemian and Moravian estates to revise parts of the *Verneuerte Landesordnung*. Their diets' activities also expanded to the point where they were in almost continuous session by the end of the reign. In return the Bohemia and Moravian estates did not disappoint Charles. Although they did expunge the *Verneuerte Landesordnung*'s references to the Bohemian revolt, their only substantive innovation was to expand the king's power over church lands, courts, and taxes. The Bohemian diet also readily adopted Charles's request for a "Decennial Recess" (1715) that bound it to provide a fixed Contribution without the need for annual negotiations, even though the grant compromised one of its most crucial remaining rights. Most important, they usually provided the same 6 million fl. Contribution that they had voted at the height of the War of the Spanish Succession.

The spirit of compromise was also very much in evidence in Hungary. Both sides had learned from the Rákóczi Revolt. Although the court continued to see the Hungarians as inveterate rebels, Charles kept the peace by generally observing the constitutional settlements of Pressburg (1687)

and Szatmár (1711). The Magyar nation was no less willing to avoid confrontation with a dynasty that had fought and won three major wars in Hungary in little more than a generation. Nowhere was the spirit of compromise and cooperation more readily apparent than in the kingdom's diet. In 1715 it forsook two centuries of opposition to the presence of "foreign" troops on Hungarian soil by recognizing the need for a strong standing army, two-thirds of which was to be composed of non-native soldiers. To maintain the military it now accepted the need to vote a regular Contribution, which reached 2.5 million fl. by 1728. The diet also accepted the appointment of foreign-born officials when it affirmed the king's right to naturalize non-Magyar subjects. By the end of Charles' reign nearly 30 percent of the kingdom's magnates were foreign-born aristocrats with names like Auer-sperg, Liechtenstein, Lobkovic, Schönborn, Schwarzenberg, and Trautson. Few of these men actually became involved in the kingdom's affairs. Among those who did, the German Cardinal-Primate Sachsen-Zeitz, represented the Magyar nobility so forcefully in his capacity as president of the diet's lower table that one delegate boasted that "he could not have done better even if he had been the offspring of Attila himself." The kingdom's highest offices were, in any event, already subordinate to the government in Vienna. The Hungarian Chancery did little more than expedite policy determined by non-Magyar ministers in the Privy Conference. Although the kingdom continued to maintain a separate treasury in Pressburg, financial and military affairs were now run exclusively by the *Hofkammer* and *Hofkriegsrat*. Even the county assemblies, which remained active in the countryside, were increasingly dominated by *labanc* magnates.

The aristocracy's acceptance of Habsburg rule was also evident in its wholesale adoption of the Austrian baroque style. A half century had passed since the *labanc* magnate and later palatine Pál Esterházy built the kingdom's first baroque palace at Eisenstadt. Yet, although many church-built structures employed the baroque style, his countrymen had expressed their defiance and independence of Vienna by continuing to construct their own palaces in the Renaissance style. Now they competed with one another in hiring Austrian masters like Hildebrandt, the fresco painter Maulbertsch, and the prominent sculptor Georg Raphael Donner.

The crown's inroads extended well beyond the loyalty of the Magyar aristocracy. Whereas the nobility was densely concentrated in Upper Hungary, it was virtually non-existent elsewhere. Indeed, by 1720 the demographic losses of the past two centuries and the steady immigration of German and Balkan immigrants had reduced ethnic Magyars to less than half of the population of Hungary proper. They were even lower in those areas most recently wrested from Turkish control. Charles took advantage of these demographic peculiarities by keeping the southern half of both

Hungary and Croatia outside the jurisdiction of their respective diets. Despite the promises that he and his predecessors had made to the estates of both kingdoms, Charles kept the existing Military Border zones, even though some of them no longer adjoined the Ottoman empire. The Banat was also placed under direct military rule, as were the extra-Hungarian conquests in northern Serbia and Little Wallachia. Transylvania also remained a separate crownland. In deference to popular sensibilities, Charles refrained from assuming the princely title until the death of Michael II Apafi in 1713. Thereafter he ignored its diet and chancery, governing it instead through the Austrian Chancery and *Hofkriegsrat*. By detaching and ruling these areas directly, the government in Vienna was able to squeeze more revenue from Hungary.

Of course, in Charles's eyes the ultimate reward for his close cooperation with the estates was their rapid and unanimous ratification of the Pragmatic Sanction. In other countries, such a revision in the succession would have posed formidable problems and risks. The Hanoverian succession in Great Britain had only recently been challenged by Jacobite conspiracies and revolts. The late Louis XIV's testament had been invalidated by the Paris *Parlement* only days after his death. The will of Charles the Sufferer had been rejected by his Aragonese subjects. And in Russia, several monarchs had to contend with a seemingly endless parade of false tsars and very real revolts of their own palace guard. In the Habsburg monarchy, however, the deliberations over the Pragmatic Sanction were characterized above all else by loyalty and deference to the wishes of the last male Habsburg. The various estates of the *Erblande* quickly and unanimously accepted the Pragmatic Sanction, even though the Bohemian diet had serious reservations about the precedence afforded Charles's daughters and the Tyrol had heretofore refused to admit to a permanent union with the other Habsburg dominions. Croatia actually declared its willingness to accept a female Habsburg succession in March 1712, a full year before Charles had even issued the Pragmatic Sanction. A decade later the lower table of the Hungarian diet went so far as to prevent Cardinal Sachsen-Zeitz from presiding over its deliberations, because it feared that his previous close association with the late Joseph I would incline him to oppose the precedence that the Pragmatic Sanction gave to Charles's own daughters.

The monarchy's elites rewarded Charles's deference with a loyalty exemplified by the Austrian Prince Adam Franz Schwarzenberg who, when Charles accidentally shot him in a hunting accident near Prague, uttered the appropriate last words: "It was always my duty to give my life for my sovereign." As a rule, however, it was others who made the sacrifices and the privileged elites who benefited the most. In post-Szatmár Hungary the loyalist nobility actually persuaded Charles not to enforce his amnesty of

the rebels too thoroughly so that it could keep the land it had seized from *kuruc* nobles. It also convinced him to replace the unpopular *Commissio Neo Acquistica* (which his brother had abolished in 1709) with a new body run by native officials whose decisions further benefited the growth of aristocratic latifundia. Even the diet's first-time grant of a regular Contribution in 1715 represented a victory for the nobility, which obliged the crown to recognize its own long-standing exemption from taxation. The *Erblande's* nobility was only slightly more forthcoming. Although the Bohemian estates had agreed to pay substantial taxes during the recent war against Louis XIV, they had shifted most of the increases in the Contribution onto the shoulders of the peasantry, which saw its share quintuple under the last three male Habsburgs to 40 fl. per head. The Inner Austrian nobility was even more thorough, managing to shift all of its small share of the Contribution to the peasantry by 1728.

The peasantry also paid for the symbiosis between crown and aristocracy through the continuation of manorial obligations. In Hungary the crown permitted the diet to enact comprehensive legislation to stop peasant flight. It also acquiesced in the enserfment of large numbers of previously free *hayducks*, perhaps because so many had fought for Rákóczi and were no longer needed to fight the Turks. To his credit Charles responded to agrarian unrest in Bohemia by issuing *Robot* patents in 1717 and 1738 that forbade certain abuses and facilitated the peasantry's access to royal justice. Yet neither patent proved any more effective than those issued by his father.

Charles was only slightly less accommodating to the monarchy's largest landowner, the Roman Catholic church. For over a century the Habsburg clergy had demonstrated its loyalty by making large, voluntary contributions during wartime, including 1.2 million fl. during the most recent Turkish conflict. Yet Schierendorff and other cameralists had long argued that the monarchy's economic productivity and tax revenue had suffered from religious persecution, as well as from the enormous amount of tax-free land held in mortmain by the Catholic church. In fact, various monastic orders owned half of Carniola and nearly as much of Moravia. The emperor did make some perfunctory attempts within the *Erblande* to discourage the accumulation of church wealth. Yet he did nothing at all in Naples, Sicily or the Austrian Netherlands, where half of all arable land was held by a multitude of ecclesiastical foundations.

His position toward the church's cultural hegemony was more problematical. Though not as secular as his brother, Charles never exhibited his father's religious fanaticism. He also inherited from Joseph a group of advisors who subscribed to the secular, anticlerical views of the early Enlightenment. Although he did not share their interest in reforming the monarchy's educational system, he did make some effort to relieve the

government's dependence on the church. He transferred primary responsibility for poor relief from the clergy to the police. He also embraced the cameralists' proscription against expelling productive workers, whatever their faith. Thus, in the years immediately after the archbishop of Salzburg's infamous expulsion of 20,000 Protestants in 1732, the emperor expressed his concern over the persistence of pockets of Protestantism within the Austrian lands by forcibly resettling a thousand Carinthians and Upper Austrians in Transylvania.

If he sanctioned the persecution of non-Catholics, it came partly at the behest of the estates. Having done so much over the past century to Catholicize the monarchy's privileged classes, the dynasty now felt constrained to heed their appeals against toleration. Even Joseph I had repeatedly refused to restore to Lower Silesia's Protestants all of the freedoms promised them by the Peace of Westphalia because he did not want to alienate the duchy's predominantly Catholic estates. Only Charles XII's occupation of neighboring Saxony and subsequent threat to intervene on their behalf ultimately persuaded him to relent. Even then, however, Joseph I hastened to console the "enraged and humiliated" estates by forbidding Lower Silesian Catholic converts to readopt Protestantism. Similarly, Charles VI failed to resolve Hungary's festering religious conflicts largely because of the opposition of the diet's Catholic magnates. Behind their leadership about seventy additional Protestant churches were closed down during Charles's reign. The *Carolina Resolutio* that he issued in 1731 limited full religious freedom to the few counties that were under Habsburg dominion at the time of the Sopron diet fifty years earlier. Elsewhere, he made a distinction between private and public worship by permitting Protestants to hold private services for immediate family members, but obliging them to celebrate all Catholic holidays. At the same time he continued the practice of appointing only Roman and Greek Catholics to government positions in Hungary and Transylvania.

For the first time the Military Border's Orthodox population also became subject to pressure to convert. The largely Serb *Grenzer* had always valued the crown's protection against the likely religious persecution and enserfment that they would suffer at the hands of the Hungarian and Croatian estates. Both Joseph I and Charles VI had confirmed their privileges and autonomy in exchange for their valuable military support against the *kuruc* and the Turks. But the crown had always regarded these arrangements as a temporary settlement that could be repealed once their Balkan homeland had been liberated from Ottoman rule. The Turks' defeat had, in fact, eliminated the need for at least some of the older Military Border districts. Although the crown intended to hold onto them for the troops and political leverage they afforded it within greater Hungary, it saw less utility in continuing to honor

the Serbs' privileges. Within months of the peace of Passarowitz, Charles acceded to pressure from the Croatian and Inner Austrian estates by allowing Jesuit missionaries and Inner Austrian officials to seek the conversion of the Military Border's Orthodox priests, bishops, and monasteries. Unfortunately, their spiritual regimen included beating several priests and killing the prior of a monastery. By 1727 Orthodox bishops had been deprived of their secular powers. Further east, Serb *Grenzer* near Arad mutinied against a combination of Catholic proselytizing, foreign colonization, and the crown's repeal of their tax privileges. In the end, neither the persecution of the Military Border's Orthodox Serbs nor the enserfment of Hungary's *hayduck* frontiersmen ever led to a full-scale insurrection. They do show, however, the pervasive influence of the privileged estates, as well as the dynasty's own capacity for repression whenever the absence of foreign threats afforded it a free hand with its own subjects.

Economic initiatives and development

Charles's deference to the land-holding nobility and Catholic church was not without negative economic consequences, especially in the countryside, where he was generally unwilling to enact most of the agrarian reforms recommended by men like Schierendorff. The persistence of clerical mortmain and religious persecution continued to cost the economy productive land and subjects, just as the heavy exactions of landlords deprived peasants of the time, funds, and incentive that they needed to increase their productivity.

The economic picture was not, however, totally bleak. In contrast to the peasantry and religious minorities, the monarchy's small bourgeoisie was the one unprivileged element in Habsburg society that clearly benefited from Charles VI's attention. Admittedly he was not the first Habsburg to evince an interest in stimulating the economy. But, unlike his predecessors, Charles was able to combine a commitment to industrial and commercial expansion with a prolonged period of peace. He certainly needed little prodding: having spent his decade in Spain as little more than a British puppet, Charles had come to appreciate the power that a strong commercial economy bestowed upon countries like England and the United Provinces. It was during his reign that the writings of men like Becher, Schröder, and Hörnigk finally gained widespread acceptance; Hörnigk's *Österreich über Alles* went through sixteen editions and was employed in the instruction of Charles's three daughters. Schierendorff also found the emperor more willing to enact his mercantile projects than his other innovations. Not surprisingly, many of the emperor's economic initiatives took place within a few years of his succession. Yet, unlike the badly needed administrative reforms in which he

quickly lost interest, Charles never relented in his efforts to develop new industrial and commercial enterprises to the point of personally inspecting and even investing his own money in them.

For the most part the emperor merely accelerated the introduction of conventional mercantile strategies that had already been adopted in other parts of Europe. Although his brother had recently reestablished a Commerce Commission in Vienna, he now created others in regional centers like Prague and Breslau for the purpose of creating a favorable environment for new industrial enterprises. At Schierendorff's suggestion he added an office for trade and manufacturing in 1718 to coordinate his mercantile projects. In response to decades of agitation that stretched back to Leopold's reign, the government also began using tariffs as a vehicle for encouraging the domestic production of finished products, rather than simply for raising revenue. After 1728 competing imports were taxed at rates as high as 100 percent. By 1735 the repeal of the excise on native (but not foreign) goods had given an additional edge to domestic production. Two years later a more comprehensive tariff law sharply lowered export duties, while retaining substantial imposts on imports. Charles also intensified his predecessors' efforts to remove the guilds' stifling effect on competition by attacking their monopoly over various trades and their right to set prices. Finally, a reform of the currency (1716) and the establishment of a state post (1722) helped provide a more congenial environment for industrial and commercial expansion.

As in other countries, the government attempted to create new industries that could either promote exports or reduce the monarchy's dependence on imported goods. Emperors Leopold and Joseph had already granted concessions for over a dozen such factories in the first decade of the century, producing everything from wax, lamp oil, glass, and various textiles to mirrors, silk, and even gold and silver thread. Several of those established during Charles's reign made exotic luxury products like porcelain, tapestries, and tobacco. The government was, however, most active and successful in promoting the expansion of existing industries, such as textiles, glass, and iron. By 1730 Vienna itself had no fewer than seven textile factories. Bohemia and Moravia added an equal number during the previous decade for producing wool, silk, and cotton products.

Although the government aggressively promoted the creation of various industrial enterprises, it actually owned or operated very few of them. Exceptions were the state-run workhouses, which continued to grow in number with the addition of facilities in Olmütz (Olomouc) (1702), Innsbruck (1725), Graz (1735), and Prague (1737). Otherwise, the government recruited private entrepreneurs by offering a host of incentives that might include the payment of subsidies, exemption from taxes and outside

competition, or even complete religious freedom. No group was more important than the aristocracy, especially wealthy Bohemian and Moravian nobles who already had established patrimonial businesses and a ready supply of servile labor. It was, however, also necessary to attract foreign investors, entrepreneurs, and artisans, and the advanced business techniques and technology that they employed. Thus, Inner Austria's iron industry helped sustain its recovery from the depression of the last century by importing furnaces that permitted more efficient operation. The revolutionary steam engines that helped drain Upper Hungary's copper mines may have been installed by Fischer von Erlach's son, Joseph Emanuel, but they were the invention of the British engineer, Thomas Newcomen. Moreover, the mines themselves remained largely in the hands of Dutch agents. Nor would the *Erblande's* porcelain industry have ever been competitive without hiring key entrepreneurs and artisans from Trier and the famous Saxon manufacturing center at Meissen. The growth and management of greater Bohemia's cottage textile industry were carefully nurtured by British factors who settled there during the first half of the century. One such agent in the town of Rumburg (Rumburk) managed to increase the number of looms from about 30 to 580 between 1713 and 1724. Moreover, the region's textile exports remained largely in the hands of German and English middlemen. With their help textile sales now reached beyond Germany to Great Britain and Spain as well as to their American colonies.

In fact, the promotion of overseas exports became one of the emperor's major goals, especially in the decade after the conclusion of the Turkish war. He did more than any previous Habsburg to create new and better commercial arteries that might fuel foreign trade. Like his father he expanded the monarchy's commercial waterways by building canals and dredging rivers. But he also devoted huge sums to an impressive road-building program that touched virtually every province of the monarchy. Charles attempted to open up three new avenues for trade. To the southeast the lower Danube became a conduit for exports to the Ottoman empire. Six days after the peace of Passarowitz he concluded a trade treaty with the Turks that afforded both countries free navigation of the river and, beyond that, access to each other's domestic markets. Ironically, it was the Turks who benefited the most. On the one hand, they proved reluctant to import foreign goods, except for those provided by the French. Meanwhile, Ottoman Greek and Jewish middlemen took advantage of Hungary's virtually nonexistent commercial infrastructure to establish themselves there for the purpose of exporting Turkish goods to the monarchy. So dominating was the Ottoman presence that the word *görög*, or "Greek," became a common Magyar term for "merchant."

Charles was much more successful in his efforts to develop a second export outlet through the Mediterranean. He literally paved the way during the 1720s with a complex network of roads. One traversed the Brenner Pass into northern Italy, another the Semmering Pass all the way to Trieste and the Adriatic littoral. He also spent 3 million fl. building a *Via Carolina* to improve Hungary's access to Fiume. The two Istrian towns were the focus of Charles's vision. In 1719 he made both free ports in the hope that they would encourage the *Erblände's* merchants to circumvent the high Prussian tariffs that dominated the northbound trade route along the Elbe and Oder rivers. He even granted full religious freedom to skilled workers who relocated in either place, despite sustained protests from the littoral's Catholic estates. Many found employment with the Oriental Company that he set up in the same year. The company soon became a major enterprise with numerous industrial operations, including a textile manufacture in Vienna and another in Linz that ultimately employed 12,000 spinners and weavers. Despite its initial profitability, the Oriental Company went bankrupt in 1734. The Adriatic ports themselves also proved too distant to attract exports from the Bohemian lands. Yet the emperor's efforts were hardly in vain. For centuries Venice had enforced a monopoly on the Adriatic trade that limited the coastal populations of Istria and Croatia to little more than fishing and piracy. Under Charles VI the monarchy not only competed with the island republic but quickly surpassed it as the Adriatic's principal commercial power. Meanwhile, the Croatian littoral utilized its forests to become a center for shipbuilding and lumber exports. The roads that Charles built also greatly increased the volume of trade between the Adriatic provinces and the rest of the Austrian lands.

Charles focused his third overseas venture in the Austrian Netherlands. Belgium's economy had long been handicapped by ruthless Dutch competition. For the past 150 years the Dutch had used their control of the Scheldt estuary to blockade its main port of Antwerp. More recently they and the British had extracted far-reaching commercial concessions that had been written into the Barrier Treaty of 1715. Nevertheless, here was a crownland with the human and capital infrastructure to support the emperor's bold vision. The merchants of the crownland's principal port of Ostend had, in fact, already established themselves along India's Coromandel coast, from where they hoped to challenge the Anglo-Dutch monopoly in the Far East. In 1723 Charles offered them imperial protection from Dutch threats by chartering and funding the East India, or Ostend Company. The first colonial venture in the monarchy's history was an immediate success, paying its shareholders a 140 percent stock dividend after only four expeditions. It immediately expanded its operations in India, while launching new operations in North Africa and China. By 1730 the company's profits had matched the 6 million fl. originally invested by stockholders.

In keeping with contemporary strategies of political economy, the government focused its commercial initiatives on finding new markets for those dominions with an existing industrial base, such as the Bohemian lands, the two archduchies, and Belgium. Meanwhile, it took a rather different approach toward greater Hungary, which was classified as an agricultural area that would provide the rest of the monarchy with foodstuffs and assorted raw materials. As a result it made virtually no attempts to develop an industrial or commercial infrastructure there. Enterprising magnates tried to fill the void. Led by Sándor Károlyi, the diet of 1715 formed a commission to investigate strategies for mercantile development, including the creation of industries to refine the raw textiles, leather, and minerals that the kingdom produced. But the absence of support from Vienna foreclosed any chance for success. Károlyi ultimately created his own private company to carry through his plans, which included the construction of Hungary's first woolen factory in 1722, as did other magnates such as the Croatian ban János Pálffy and assorted members of the Esterházy family. All of these projects had, however, collapsed by mid-century. The kingdom remained very much an agrarian zone. Even its towns were typically inhabited primarily by peasant farmers, with craftsmen comprising only 10–20 percent of their population.

Charles and his ministers could be excused if they foresaw little else in Hungary's future. The Rákóczi Revolt had compounded the destruction wrought by two centuries of war and rebellion. Perhaps 85,000 *kuruc* had died in the fighting; famine and a devastating plague that broke out in 1708 may have carried off an additional 400,000 civilians. Fortunately, the prolonged period of stability brought by the peace of Szatmár enabled the kingdom to begin a remarkable recovery from an era of war and devastation that had begun two hundred years earlier. The government assisted the recovery of its agrarian economy through an ambitious program of peasant colonization. While it focused on those frontier districts that it ruled directly, individual ministers and other loyalist landlords worked to repopulate the central plain on lands they had received from the *Commissio Neo Acquistica*. They attracted tens of thousands of colonists with promises of land and tax exemptions, as well as personal and religious freedom. As always, German settlers from the *Erblände* and the empire were favored. Yet there also followed a significant redistribution of the kingdom's population with the attraction of Magyars, Slovaks, and Ruthenes from the more densely inhabited parts of Upper Hungary as well as Romanians from nearby Transylvania. Significant numbers of Balkan Serbs, Romanians and Bulgarians also settled in southern Hungary, as did a smattering of French, Italians, Catalans and even Russian Cossacks. At the height of the colonization the Banat spoke seventeen different languages, a pot-pourri of nationalities with ominous implications for the future. For now, however, the colonization was

an unqualified success. German colonists led the way in draining swamps, clearing forests and employing new techniques and crops, such as corn, tobacco, and potato. The Hungarian plain resumed grain exports, while the Banat and the eastern reaches of Slavonia also converted their open stretches to large-scale cattle production.

It is difficult to judge precisely how successful Charles VI's economic policies were, at least in the immediate term. His initiatives benefited the well-established textile industry. Wool production increased dramatically in Bohemia (60 percent) and Silesia (100 percent) and Upper Austria; as early as 1725, the Linz woolen-stuffs factory had become one of Europe's largest, with a workforce of 4,400. Some new projects, such as the Meissen porcelain factory, the new commercial arteries, the Adriatic ports, and the colonization of Hungary brought immediate returns on the government's investment. Other enterprises remained dependent on government assistance or failed altogether. An estimated 30–50 percent growth rate in Austria's towns between 1660 and 1730 suggests growth, but is not conclusive given the likely flight of peasants from the countryside; certainly the tremendous increase of Vienna and its suburbs from 110,000 residents at the beginning of the reign to 160,000 at its end is due more to court patronage than commercial-industrial expansion. At the very least, Charles did help to establish a mercantile infrastructure, an inconspicuous but necessary first step in the monarchy's evolution as a formidable economic power.

He deserves less credit for his half-hearted attempts to resolve the government's chronic fiscal and administrative problems. Total state income had more than doubled to nearly 20 million fl. during the War of the Spanish Succession. There was, however, only a modest increase in either cameral or extraordinary revenue under Charles VI, even though the monarchy had nearly doubled in size. Instead the emperor made good use of the Vienna City Bank, which had assumed over half of the government's 100 million fl. debt by the end of his reign. Although they provided little in the way of revenue, the Austrian Netherlands also helped close the gap by loaning him over 10 million fl. during the 1730s. The rest, however, had to be financed by loans from foreign sources, his own ministers, and Jewish purveyors, just as his predecessors had done. Indeed, the 78 million fl. that the court Jews extended to the *Hofkammer* during the half-century 1698–1739 has prompted Ernst Wangermann to suggest that the monarchy owed as much to them as it did to the genius of Prince Eugene.

Manifestations of weakness: defeat and disillusionment

The monarchy's internal weaknesses were somewhat less critical now that its security zone extended so far beyond its center. Those threats that survived

were directed primarily at its distant outposts in the Low Countries, Italy, and the Balkans, rather than at its core. Nevertheless, if the monarchy had enhanced its security, it had lost virtually all of its traditional allies. With its new acquisitions and the pretensions they inspired, it had outgrown its usefulness as an instrument against French or Turkish aggression. The new France that had emerged under Louis XV was, in fact, more cooperative and less threatening to the European balance of power. The French foreign minister, Cardinal Fleury (1726–43), was fond of pointing out that France was a "satiated power" that had no interest in wars of conquest. Rather than prop up the monarchy against France, countries like Great Britain were now inclined to nurture smaller states like Sardinia and Prussia as a counterpoise to any larger power, including the Habsburg monarchy.

Charles could still count on strong support within the empire, especially from those smaller and middle-sized states that relied on him for protection from their larger neighbors. Prince Eugene's most recent victories had further enhanced the widespread sense of Austro-German solidarity. Thus it was German auxiliaries returning from the Balkans who composed and first sang the famous *Prinz-Eugen Lied* and a duke of Württemberg who named all of his five sons after the Austrian generalissimo. With the able assistance of Imperial Vice Chancellor Schönborn, Charles VI exploited his prestige by continuing his brother's bold exercise of imperial prerogatives.

But even in Germany the fading French threat to the empire now encouraged Charles's most powerful vassals to focus more on their own selfish dynastic goals. In the north, Prussia's elevation as a kingdom (1701) and the Hanoverian succession in Great Britain (1714) rendered the two Protestant electors much more ambitious and less dependent on the emperor. Meanwhile, Charles alienated the Catholic electors of Saxony and Bavaria by his provisions for the Austrian succession. The Pragmatic Sanction had minimized the claims of Joseph I's two teenage daughters, Maria Josepha and Maria Amalia, especially after the birth of Maria Theresa (1717) and Maria Anna (1718). Nevertheless, both Augustus II and Max Emanuel eagerly sought the hand of Charles's nieces for their male heirs, both because of his daughters' tender age and because of the precedence that the earlier *pactum mutuae successionis* had awarded the Josephine archduchesses. Nor were the two electors alone in their faith in the "higher legitimacy" of the *pactum*. Upon reviewing that document, the Privy Conference actually urged the emperor not to wed either of his nieces to "two German princes whose pretensions can one day plunge this country into a long and unfortunate war." Yet Charles ignored their advice. Instead, he contented himself with a fifty-nine-page renunciation to which Augustus II, the Saxon Crown Prince Frederick Augustus, and Maria Josepha all swore on the occasion of their wedding in 1719; the same procedure was repeated by Max Emanuel, the

Bavarian Crown Prince Charles Albert, and Maria Amalia at the time of their nuptials in 1722. The recent fate of renunciations should have given the emperor pause, but he hoped that the two marriages would strengthen his ties with both electors. Instead, they immediately prompted Saxony and Bavaria to conclude a series of alliances with each other and with France that were aimed at making good their claims to the Austrian succession. By 1725 Max Emanuel had also concluded a family compact that enlisted the support of the Wittelsbach electors of Trier, Cologne, and the Palatinate. Once the elder Maria Josepha and her Saxon husband had produced the first of their fourteen children, Max Emanuel kept alive his hopes for a Habsburg legacy for the younger Maria Amalia by forging an “authentic and original” copy of a sixteenth-century Austro-Bavarian marriage compact that purported to award most of the *Erblande* to Bavaria upon the extinction of the dynasty’s male line.

Two decades earlier, half of Europe would have rushed to support the Pragmatic Sanction as an absolute necessity for the preservation of the balance of power. Now Charles VI was obliged to press hard for its acceptance by the great powers. Unfortunately, his stubborn refusal to surrender his Spanish titles or to confirm a Farnese succession in Parma and Tuscany alienated not only Philip V, but also Great Britain and France. By 1721 the three countries had concluded a Triple Alliance to force the emperor’s compliance.

In May 1725 Charles temporarily ended the monarchy’s isolation by concluding an extraordinary alliance with his Spanish adversary. In return for meeting Philip V’s dynastic agenda, the emperor secured two things close to his heart: recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction and commercial concessions for the Ostend Company in Spanish America. The so-called First Treaty of Vienna aroused so much suspicion among the other great powers that it quickly divided Europe into two hostile camps. By the end of 1726 the League of Herrenhausen (France, Great Britain, and the United Provinces) stood on the brink of war with Spain and Austria. Charles strengthened his position somewhat by concluding separate alliances with Russia and Prussia. He also extracted a promise of Spanish subsidies in exchange for the promise to marry his daughters to the sons of Philip V and the irrepressible Elizabeth Farnese. The prospect of his former Bourbon enemy succeeding in Vienna does not appear to have troubled Charles, especially since all of the children involved were still far from puberty. He was, however, jolted by the outbreak of limited hostilities between Spain and Great Britain, together with the massing of League forces in central Europe. Indeed, Charles had the good sense to realize that the monarchy lacked the financial and military strength to win such a war. During 1727 he attempted to mollify the Maritime Powers by suspending the Ostend Company’s operations. His subsequent refusal to

launch military operations or to conclude a formal marriage compact ultimately prompted Philip V to desert his ill-conceived alliance with the emperor.

The Anglo-Spanish Treaty of Seville (November 1729) isolated Charles once again and compelled him to capitulate to their demands. In the Second Treaty of Vienna (March 1731) he accepted the succession of Philip’s and Elizabeth’s eldest son, Don Carlos, in Parma and Tuscany. He also appeased the Maritime Powers by abandoning the Ostend Company altogether. In return for these concessions, the emperor did secure Anglo-Dutch recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction. As elector of Hanover, George II also endorsed Charles’s testament when the Electoral College ratified it by a six to three vote at the beginning of 1732. Charles interpreted his accommodation with the Maritime Powers as a return to the “old system” by which the Habsburg monarchy and German empire had achieved great victories at the beginning of the century. Indeed, in seeking the electors’ recognition of the Pragmatic Sanction, he had reminded them of the need to remain united against the historic French threat. The argument no longer carried any weight with Saxony or the Wittelsbachs of Bavaria and the Palatinate, all of whom had accepted French subsidies and voted no. Nor were the Maritime Powers overly concerned. Whereas Charles perceived the Second Treaty of Vienna as an alliance, they saw it only as a means of achieving a stable settlement that would leave them free to pursue their overseas commercial ventures in splendid isolation.

Unfortunately, the emperor’s plans for the succession made war inevitable. With the end of the Spanish marriage alliance, he decided to wed the Habsburg heiress presumptive, Maria Theresa, to Francis Stephen of Lorraine. The match constituted a fitting reward for a loyal imperial vassal and a young prince whose own easygoing nature appealed to Charles VI. Yet Cardinal Fleury warned Vienna that France would not tolerate a match that would merge neighboring Lorraine with the Habsburg dominions. Even the Maritime Powers indicated that the interests of European stability would incline them to support French annexation of the duchy in the event of a Habsburg–Lorraine marriage. By 1732 Louis XV and Philip V had concluded a family compact with the intention of seizing the duchy, together with Charles’s Italian possessions.

They were already mobilizing for an attack when the death of Augustus II in February 1733 provided them with an ideal pretext. The emperor and his Russian and Prussian allies initially opposed Frederick Augustus’s attempt to succeed his father as king of Poland. The new Saxon elector won Charles over, however, by promising once again to renounce his wife’s rights to the Austrian succession in favor of Maria Theresa. In September the Polish diet’s election of Louis XV’s father-in-law, Stanislaus Leszczyński, gave the

emperor a strategic reason for supporting the Saxon candidate. Led by the gifted Privy Conference Secretary, Johann Christoph von Bartenstein, several of Charles's advisors cautioned that Austrian intervention in Poland would prompt a French counterthrust in Germany and Italy. Yet the emperor regarded the reality of a pro-French Polish king as a greater threat to the monarchy than the prospect of retaliation elsewhere, especially since he persisted in the belief that the Maritime Powers would eventually come to his aid. He was also aware that failure to support the Russians in Poland might cost him their assistance in the event of war with France.

The emperor did not have to wait long either to realize his objective or its consequences. A Russian invasion of Poland soon enabled the Saxon elector to succeed his father as King Augustus III (1734–63). In a futile effort to avoid French retaliation, Charles VI limited Austrian participation to a military demonstration in neighboring Silesia. By October French forces had overrun Lorraine. Over the next year they seized the key imperial fortress at Philippsburg and joined Spanish and Sardinian armies in overwhelming the Austrian garrisons in Habsburg Italy. Meanwhile, to Charles's dismay, France preserved Anglo-Dutch neutrality by pledging not to invade Belgium – the one crownland that the Maritime Powers were determined to keep in his hands.

It is not difficult to explain the monarchy's defeat in the War of the Polish Succession (1733–8). Except for Germany and Russia, the emperor fought alone. Admittedly Russia was now emerging as a powerful and committed ally. It was, however, preoccupied in Poland and too far away to assist its Habsburg ally in the West until later in the war. When 13,000 Russian auxiliaries did march to the Rhine in 1735, it was the local civilian population, rather than the French enemy who panicked at their approach. Meanwhile, the empire's usually anemic military effort was further undermined by the Wittelsbach princes, who withheld their contingents from the imperial army pending Charles's satisfaction of their dynastic agenda. Nor did Charles receive sufficient support from his own estates, which provided considerably less money than they had during either the War of the Spanish Succession or the recent "cold war" with the League of Herrenhausen. The monarchy's generals proved incapable of overcoming their enemies' overwhelming numerical superiority. Although he took the field against the French at Philippsburg, the 71-year-old Prince Eugene was mentally and physically a mere shadow of his former self; his death in 1736 surprised no one. The commander of Austrian forces in Italy fared no better. Having recently been rendered nearly blind and deaf by a stroke, Count Mercy was killed in battle in a valiant, but unsuccessful attempt to save Milan from the enemy.

Given the army's collapse and the *Hofkammer's* inability to finance another campaign, the emperor was compelled to conclude a preliminary

peace with his enemies after just two years of hostilities. What was most surprising was the advantageous conditions that he received. The Peace of Vienna (30 October 1735) illustrates how cabinet diplomats like Clemens von Metternich used dynasticism, legitimacy, and compensation to achieve a stable peace. Whereas it confirmed the Saxon succession in Poland, the treaty compensated Stanislaus Leszczyński with Lorraine, which would then pass to France after his death. In Italy the monarchy surrendered Naples, Sicily, and the strategic Tuscan Presidii Ports to Don Carlos, as well as a western slice of Milan to Sardinia. In return, however, the Spanish prince ceded Parma to Charles VI and Tuscany to Francis Stephen. Finally, France joined its allies in recognizing the Pragmatic Sanction. Such a settlement pleased everyone in Vienna except Charles's future son-in-law, who proved reluctant to relinquish Lorraine. It was Bartenstein who finally won his acquiescence, though only after presenting him with the blunt *quid pro quo*: "No renunciation. No archduchess." In the end, three years passed before the Habsburg–Lorraine nuptials (February 1736) and the death of the childless Duke Gian Gastone of Tuscany permitted the signatories to sign a formal Treaty of Vienna (November 1738) implementing all of the territorial exchanges foreseen by the preliminary peace.

By then the monarchy was already on the verge of losing yet another conflict. Given its desperate finances, its leaders had little interest in fighting another Balkan war against the Ottoman empire. It was their Russian ally that forced a confrontation over a border dispute along the remote shores of the Caspian Sea. In the end the emperor and his ministers decided to join Russia simply because they feared losing their only remaining major ally. The Turkish War of 1737–9 involved the usual cast of belligerents: aside from Russia, the monarchy was assisted by troops from several German states, as well as by large sums raised by the *Reichstag* and the Papacy. The *Türken-glocken* rang throughout the *Erblände* each morning, calling the people to pray for victory and reminding them of the horrors of past conflicts against the Infidel. The estates gave early moral and monetary support for what everyone hoped and expected would be a quick and easy war. Instead, a series of five incompetent commanders managed to drag out hostilities for three campaigns, during which they steadily gave up territory despite winning every one of the four major engagements that they fought. The chief Austrian peace negotiator, Reinhard Wilhelm Count Neipperg, compounded their blunders by concluding the disastrous Peace of Belgrade (September 1739). In addition to recognizing the Turks' recent recovery of northern Serbia and Little Wallachia, the treaty actually compelled the Austrian army to surrender the virtually impregnable fortress of Belgrade.

The people of Vienna reacted to news of the treaty with riots and demands for Neipperg's head. The latest defeat was, in fact, much more of a shock

than the recent setbacks against the Bourbon Powers. After all, this time the monarchy had had allies. The Russians not only had forced the Turks to divide their forces, but had conquered nearby Moldavia just as Neipperg was negotiating the surrender of Belgrade. Moreover, the men and money provided by the German princes and the pope eventually accounted for half of the emperor's own 45,000-man army. There were, however, a couple of parallels with the War of the Polish Succession that justified the court's sense of *déjà vu*. Once again, the monarchy had not been well served by its military commanders. The government was quick to punish them for not duplicating Prince Eugene's Balkan triumphs, even though the great general was himself responsible for the *Hofkriegsrat's* failure to find a suitable successor. Of course, a larger field army would have compensated for the absence of a military genius. Yet, after the initial outlays and disappointments of the 1737 campaign, the estates had lost much of their enthusiasm for the war. As he prepared for the last campaign of his reign, Charles had actually been compelled to reduce the size of the army after they rejected his requests for money and supplies. Another, less evident parallel was the extent to which the government had been sucked into an unwanted war by the aggressiveness of its Russian ally. The emperor certainly needed to retain his allies, but not at the cost of making enemies and wars that he could not win.

It was a measure of the monarchy's new-found security that the recent campaigns and the territorial losses that followed occurred far from its center. If anything, the Treaty of Vienna had strengthened the monarchy's position in Poland and Lombardy at the expense of less defensible outposts in Lorraine and southern Italy. Although the loss of Serbia and Belgrade would have major ramifications in the twentieth century, none of the cessions made at the Peace of Belgrade seriously jeopardized Hungary's frontier with the Ottoman empire. The recent defeats did far more damage by exposing the monarchy's profound military weakness. The realization had a demoralizing effect on the court, which surmised that foreign adversaries might now be tempted to dispute Maria Theresa's impending succession. The nearly universal international acceptance of the Pragmatic Sanction was, indeed, of little benefit without the ability to defend it by force. Just before his death Prince Eugene had urged the emperor to neutralize Bavarian opposition by betrothing Maria Theresa to Elector Charles Albert's son. By then, however, Charles's antipathy toward his troublesome vassal and his daughter's own attachment to Francis Stephen made such a move impossible.

Of all the early modern Habsburgs, Charles VI contributed the least to the monarchy's development. This is not to dismiss the strategic and economic value of his territorial acquisitions, especially in light of his efforts to establish a commercial and industrial infrastructure. Nor should we downplay the role that his patronage of the arts played in enhancing his subjects' pride and

identification with a unified Habsburg great power. In the end, however, the *Kaiserstil* proved to be as much a façade as the numerous foreign and domestic guarantees of the Pragmatic Sanction. Although his celebrated testament proclaimed the monarchy's indivisibility, the last male Habsburg did little to fortify it through constitutional, administrative, or military reform. In his defense, Charles VI had less immediate motivation to attend to these problems: unlike virtually all of his predecessors his realm never faced a crisis of survival that demanded drastic action. Of course, he should have anticipated the succession struggle that awaited his own demise. Instead, the monarchy's apparently secure position afforded him and his ministers a lengthy, fool's holiday that was funded by a false sense of security and greatness. Thus he let pass a rare opportunity when the monarchy was in the position to attend to internal reconstruction while free from the threat of foreign invasion.

Defeat at the hands of the French and the Turks called attention to these deficiencies at a time when it was too late to take remedial action. Barely a year later Charles VI contracted a severe cold while hunting along the Austro-Hungarian frontier. At the first sign of a recovery, he gorged himself on a prodigious pot of mushrooms, stewed in his favorite Catalan oil. The mushrooms were either tainted or simply too much for his system to handle. Although his attendants rushed him back to Vienna, he expired at the suburban Favorita palace on 29 October 1740. Fittingly enough, the last word to pass his lips was "Barcelona."