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Social Mobility and Noble Rebellion in Early Modern Habsburg Austria¹

ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes changes in the social structure of the Lower Austrian nobility in the decades before the uprising of 1618-20. The author argues that the Habsburg rulers exerted considerable influence on social change but were limited by structural forces, notably demographic and economic change. Nevertheless, they managed to turn events to their advantage and manipulate the transformation of the nobility's internal structure in the hope of creating a pliable instrument of royal absolutism. The Habsburgs were less interested in creating a new nobility than in reestablishing confessional conformity, which they considered essential to strengthen their authority. However, they implemented their strategy of promoting the rise of a new Catholic upper nobility at a speed that minimized the possibility of appropriate cultural adjustment for Protestant nobles. Their exclusion from the benefits of status mobility after 1609 represented an attack not only on the religion, culture, and social predominance of the Protestant nobility, but on its continued existence as an elite. This explains, the author concludes, why redefining the rules and channels of elite recruitment in favour of a new Catholic nobility became the focal point in the conflict between Habsburgs and Protestant nobles. The author further suggests that the revolt of the nobility in the Austrian territories provides an excellent case study to show the complexities of social change affecting the early modern European nobility, and to reconsider the long-term social origins of early modern state breakdown.

Since World War II the historiography of early modern elite opposition to central governments has been dominated by what scholars now classify as the traditional social interpretation. During the last decade, however, a new orthodoxy has emerged which minimizes, or even negates altogether, the long-term social causes of elite rebellion and state break-

down. Thus revisionist historians of the English Civil War oppose the claim that subversive constitutional and religious beliefs were simply the ideological weapons of a rising gentry and bourgeoisie struggling against a declining feudal aristocracy and backward monarchy. According to the revisionists, sufficiently pronounced social distinctions between members of the top elite simply did not exist.² The English landowning class, they maintain, was a relatively homogenous group who shared a wide range of interests. Furthermore, since a section of the bourgeoisie sided with an entrepreneurial-minded crown, while leading aristocrats, who engaged in capitalist activities, joined the parliamentarians, revisionists prefer to interpret the Civil War in terms of short-run causes rather than as a conflict arising from long-term changes in the social structure.³ They argue that the causes of the civil war arose from misinformed factions, who pursued narrowly defined private interests, Charles I's misguided actions, the pressures of war, rebellion in Ireland, and subsequent financial stress, all of which suddenly converged to open the way for disruptive divisions over religion and politics.

Remarkably similar ideas have emerged in the historiography of the French Revolution. The orthodox social interpretation claimed that it was a revolution of the bourgeoisie, who asserted its own specific interests against a conservative, feudal aristocracy and monarchy.⁴ It is safe to say that this view is now widely discredited. Since French capitalism was still in its infancy, many nobles were relatively dynamic entrepreneurs, and the bourgeoisie was predominantly an elite of notables, the new orthodoxy maintains that state breakdown in France could not have been caused by long-run social factors, hinging on class conflict. Instead, revisionists see the revolution as precipitated by accidents, such as severe weather, war, and other short-term crises, and by divisions within the bureaucracy of the absolute state. With some notable exceptions,⁵ much of current historiography on the Ancien Regime concentrates on the history of the fiscal crisis and administrative institutions, or follows Furet's call for a history of political culture that studies the network of signs which supposedly determine political conflict.⁶

Recently, there is evidence that the revisionists are beginning to lose their hegemonic position. A number of eminent social theorists and historians of Western Europe have pointed to the difficulties of disassociating early modern rebellions and revolutions from long-term processes of social change and ideological differences among the protagonists. For example, in the context of English historiography, Robert Brenner has stressed that we should resist the conclusion that the failure of the traditional social interpretation means seventeenth century conflicts were without any social foundations whatsoever. Instead, he argues, we should remember "that the aim of the traditional social interpretation was initially to provide a social basis, a social logic, for what was already a broadly accepted account of seventeenth-century conflicts in terms of differences over constitutional and religious principles."⁷ If the "revolution" was little more than a large-scale historical accident, Jack Goldstone has asked, then how is one to explain the multiplicity of rebellions throughout Europe and Asia during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁸ Analy-

zing the French revolution, Colin Jones has also pointed out that research by revisionists themselves has actually provided new foundations from which to reconsider the long-term social origins of revolutions.⁹

With the exception of studies on the German peasant wars, these controversies have hardly touched work on rebellions in Central and Eastern Europe. Although it is true that during the past decade the historiography of the early modern Austrian territories¹⁰ has finally taken a turn toward socio-economic history,¹¹ surprisingly little research has been concerned with social unrest, other than with the rebellious peasantry.¹² The "Bohemian" uprising of 1618-20 has been neglected by Austrian scholars, even though one third of the Lower Austrian nobility participated in it. Consequently, most recent treatments of the revolt,¹³ which supposedly represents a watershed in Habsburg history, still follow the basic arguments of Hans Sturmbeger,¹⁴ who viewed it as a long-standing constitutional conflict that was invigorated by the religious Reformation. This idea of a troubled constitutional dualism between Habsburgs and estates, and the stress on the interlocking motives of religion and politics is compatible with recent German work, which views "confessionalization" as the motor of the early modern state-building process.¹⁵

Czech scholars have traditionally shown greater interest in the socio-economic causes of the "Bohemian" revolt, and since the 1950s have argued that the "conflict grew out of the complicated economic and social situation that prevailed in the period of transition from feudalism to capitalism."¹⁶ They placed particular emphasis on the inherent contradictions within the Bohemian form of *Grundherrschaft*, which involved a "combination of some capitalist elements with methods of purely feudal exploitation."¹⁷ However, this view has come under attack since the mid 1980s, and scholarship on the relations between Habsburgs and their estates in the Bohemian lands has tended to move away from socio-economic interpretations and toward treating political and religious issues as autonomous.¹⁸ Nevertheless, crucial questions concerning the social basis of Habsburg absolutism and elite opposition before 1620 have remained unanswered. For example, in order to illuminate such important problems as the causal role of social mobility, and of the decline of the lesser nobility, we still need more research on individual provinces, such as Upper and Lower Austria. Furthermore, comparative studies which include all of the Habsburg lands, and consider the developments in these territories in a broader European perspective are essential.¹⁹

Rather than linger any longer on this family romance "in which a succession of Revisionist Prince Charmings rescue Marianne from the clutches of a wicked, mean-spirited old Stalinist Baron,"²⁰ this paper will reconsider the social causes of early modern elite revolts by taking the much neglected rebellion of 1620 in the Austrian Habsburgs territories as a case study. It will show that social factors did indeed play an indispensable role in the conflict. But instead of launching *ad feminam* attacks against the new or old orthodoxy, I will argue that it is necessary to combine the structuralist arguments of the materialists with those of scholars adopting a political approach, and with the innovations arising from

cultural perspectives. Although I will concentrate on the role which status mobility and the subsequent changes in the social structure of the Lower Austrian nobility played in this revolt, I will also argue that it can be understood only as a multifaceted process in which long-term structural processes intertwined with various short-run contingent problems.

Using Pierre Bourdieu's expanded definition of the concept of "capital," the second part of this article will outline a theoretical framework for understanding the significance of social status in aristocratic society. The following section will explore the conditions under which social mobility could lead to serious divisions within the nobility, and especially between nobles and rulers. I will argue that the possibility for open conflict was present when status mobility brought changes in the composition of noble society, which led to the displacement of a significant proportion of its members. In the fourth part of the article, I will describe the actual changes in the social and religious composition of the Lower Austrian nobility between 1580 and 1620. I will suggest that long-term structural changes, such as population growth and inflation, aided the Habsburgs in their attempts to transform the internal structure of the noble estates. In the hope of creating a pliable instrument of royal absolutism, they promoted the rise of a new Catholic upper nobility. The resulting displacement of Protestant nobles undermined their "capital," and led them to fear that their very existence as a social elite was at stake; it was this that underpinned the revolt in 1620. However, the uprising was not inevitable. Had the Habsburgs introduced the changes in their social recruitment policies less rapidly, they would have mollified the disruptive effects of all the factors lying behind the conflict. The Protestant nobles could have more easily preserved their "capital" by modifying their values and life styles, so accommodating to the political ambitions of the Habsburgs.

The Importance and Nature of Social and Symbolic Capital

As I will show below, it is difficult to equate the interests of the nobility with material interest alone. Rather, the concept of interest must be extended to include cultural and social dimensions which lie outside of production. Pierre Bourdieu's analytical framework is illuminating in this context precisely because he enlarges upon the conventional definition of capital as an exclusively economic resource by including non-monetary investments. Bourdieu redefines capital as a set of actual or potential resources, or power capacities, which agents or groups can dispose of to sustain or improve their positions in all areas of life: economic, social, and cultural. His aim is not only to understand "capital and profits in all their forms," but also to determine how the "different types of capital (or power, which amounts to the same thing) change into one another." As Bourdieu himself explains:

Depending on the field in which it functions, and at the cost of more or less expensive transformations which are the precondition for its efficacy in the field in question, capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as *economic capital*, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the

form of property rights; as *cultural capital*, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as *social capital*, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility.²¹

Cultural capital includes cultural goods (for example, art works and books) and "long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body" (for example, education and tastes). Social capital consists of resources linked to membership in a group, understood as a durable network of relationships maintained by material and symbolic exchanges. Like any other form of capital, social capital, which is the primary focus of this paper, can be transformed into other forms of power.

The title of nobility is the purest form of social capital, as it legally guarantees the endurance of a particular system of social relations. Noble status not only authorized dominance over the peasantry but usually assured access to the court, so facilitating political influence and social connections which could be used to secure and enhance economic capital. Noble status was also the prerequisite for attending the assemblies of the noble estates, which assured some influence in the affairs of the territory, especially over taxation, but was also crucial for determining the estates' distribution of pensions and gifts. It appears, then, that in economies where markets were underdeveloped, the maintenance and accumulation of economic capital became most effective when associated with social or symbolic capital, which legitimized economic power. It must be stressed, however, that social capital is not reducible to economic resources, even though it is never entirely independent of them. Thus, some economic capital may be essential to obtain a noble title in the first place, which then may serve to produce or reproduce other forms of profits, financial and non-financial. Thus, once a member of the group, a noble gained access to collectively owned capital, such as prestige, tax exemption and other privileges, and to networks of social connections, which could underpin the further accumulation of economic capital.

The mechanisms of acquisition and transmission of cultural and social capital are less obvious than those pertaining to economic capital, because they tend to function as symbolic capital. As a consequence they are generally unrecognized as productive capital and, instead, acknowledged only as legitimate competence (e.g. as prestige). In short, symbolic capital is an important way in which the various forms of capital are legitimized. Thus, a well-known noble, richly endowed with social capital—he is known to more people than he knows—is sought after precisely because of his prestige, which is, of course, the acknowledgment of his ability to make his work of sociability highly productive. To be known and visible to all, and to be recognized by all because of distinctions or outstandingness, is an essential part of noble power, and this is, essentially, symbolic capital.

This power is the "rational kernel" behind the incessant striving of the early modern middle class to enter the nobility, and the noble "squabbles" over seemingly empty honours,

as well as the apparently "irrational" pursuit of all other forms of distinctions, such as conspicuous consumption. It must be stressed, however, that the strategies may vary greatly from individual to individual, depending on his or her socialization, and that they do not necessarily reflect a conscious 'maximizing strategy.' Actually, from the narrow standpoint of economic theory, they may seem to involve great waste. However, in the long run, in "real" societies (as opposed to the constructions of economists) sociability can be a solid investment. In consequence, conflicts over distinctions should be regarded as informal struggles for access to a resource which could, in turn, secure other resources, and generate differential benefits, monetary or otherwise.

The social world of the nobility thus tended to function as a symbolic system which was highly organized by a logic of differences. Symbolic hierarchies or distinctions, such as the hierarchy of noble titles, formed the basis of social identity, so serving to define a sense of distance from others, while at the same time providing a common framework within which the members of nobility could understand their own and others' actions. In other words, distinctions formed the basis of the sense nobles had of their place in the world. Because agents generally tend to internalize their perceptions of their own and other's position in social space, social relations can become relatively permanent. Nevertheless, for various reasons, the legitimating principles of any particular "view" that partitions the social world is insecure and can always be called into question. For instance, in the case of the nobility, rapid social mobility opened it to adulteration and thereby required a redefinition of status divisions. Categories of perception can then become the stakes in political conflicts, which basically take the form of struggles over the power to conserve or change the social world by preserving or transforming the classifications through which it is perceived. As I will show below, such a process was also behind the conflict between the Habsburgs and their nobility.

Preconditions for Status Mobility and Social Conflict

Struggle over social classification within the elite, and between rulers and nobles, was an ongoing process in early modern society. One major reason for this was that the nobility continually had to replace extinct members with newcomers, which exposed it to adulteration that could threaten its social identity and self-definition, which, as we have seen, were essential to its functioning. However, social mobility did not automatically lead to overt conflict within the elite, or between nobles and rulers. Such conflicts were least likely to occur when social mobility left unchanged the basic social structure of the nobility. And this stability would occur when the demand for entry into, or ascent within the nobility, matched vacancies (commonly created by biological extinction, downward mobility, or emigration) and when social mobility did not threaten opportunities to the benefits accruing from social status (for instance access to land and to court positions). I will define this process of absorption as "structure preserving change."²²

In contrast to this type of change, social mobility could lead to a transformation of the structure of the nobility, which nevertheless preserved the basic aristocratic nature of society. The possibility that this "type preserving change of the social structure" would lead to overt conflict was high because the turnover of members altered the distribution of resources within the nobility, and restricted access to various forms of capital for at least a portion of nobles. In short, it would lead to what Jack Goldstone defines as "turnover and displacement."²³ Since this might very well threaten the nobility's definition of its place in the community, those who suffered displacement, but could still draw on some resources, may turn to rebellion as an appropriate strategy for preserving their threatened way of life. Consequently, the nobility, essentially a backward-looking class, could find itself in a situation where it had to become politically "radical" in order to remain socially traditional. In other words, it became willing to envision fundamental political changes as necessary for the preservation of its traditional position and way of life. The Bohemian Confederation of 1619, which the Lower Austrian nobility joined, should be viewed in this light.²⁴

During the half century before the uprising in 1620 rapid social mobility did lead to "type-preserving changes" in the social structure of the Lower Austrian nobility. This played a crucial role in the rebellion precisely because the Habsburgs intervened with their own agenda. Although their actions were constrained by demographic change and economic difficulties, and by the power of the noble estates, the Habsburgs exerted a decisive influence over this process of social mobility. Since they did so overtly, and to the detriment of very specific sections of the nobility, their policy was a key factor in prompting revolt.

Holding a formal monopoly power over the granting of noble status, the Habsburgs, like most other early modern rulers, created the opportunities for status mobility. While social advancement was always the most common means for rulers to reward loyalty and service, the possibilities for upward mobility widened in early modern Europe primarily because of fiscal problems, warfare, and especially the growth of central administrations.²⁵ However, in contrast to France, the number of administrative offices at the Habsburg court multiplied only moderately by about one-fourth (from 422 to 531) between 1519 and 1576.²⁶ It is evident, nevertheless, that the increased need for officials trained in Roman law did facilitate the advance of new men into the nobility. Otto Brunner has shown that a change in career mobility occurred in the Austrian lands around 1500. During the later Middle Ages, when the core of the patriciate was composed of wealthy merchants and financiers, burghers moved into the nobility by connecting their wealth with royal offices, usually in independent financial functions, such as the collection of tolls and excise taxes, which were frequently farmed out to them (*Amtsleute*). After 1500, by contrast, burghers increasingly moved into the nobility by means of careers in the growing central administration.²⁷ This change is clearly evident from the composition of newcomers to the Lower Austrian *Ritterstand* (estate of knights) between 1570 and 1620. Over two thirds of the new knights were princely servitors, and only about a quarter (18) of them had made careers as *Amtsleute*. Moreover, the majority of these *Amtsleute* were, or had been, overseers of royal

domains, and only a few held independent financial positions.²⁸ About another quarter of the new knights in royal services held positions in the central administration,²⁹ and about a third were incumbents of offices in the Imperial or Archducal household.³⁰

Most of the positions held by the newcomers to the *Ritterstand*, whether in the central administration, the household, or as *Amtsleute*, required judicial training. From the mid 1590s there was a marked increase in the number of newly admitted knights who completed their judicial training with a doctoral degree, and who were able to rise at a faster pace than before into high governmental offices. Rapid career advancement like that experienced by Baptist Linsmayr, for example, was unusual during the previous period. Linsmayr studied at Padua and in 1567 received a doctorate in jurisprudence. Holding the title of Imperial Councillor, he became procurator of the Lower Austrian Court Treasury (*Hofkammerprokurator*) in 1579. During the same year he was ennobled, and a year later admitted to the new *Ritterstand*. Linsmayr's appointment as councillor of the Court Treasury in 1608 brought him the title of baron with the predicate "von Greiffenberg."³¹ Equally dramatic was the career of Johann Paul Krauss von Krausenegg, who held a doctoral degree in jurisprudence, and moved from the position of councillor of the Lower Austrian *Regiment* (1595) to councillor of the Court Treasury (1603). He was installed as Aulic Councillor in 1607 before he became president of the Court Treasury in 1611. Johann Paul was probably ennobled around the turn of the century, admitted to the new *Ritterstand* in 1607, and, after receiving the baronage in 1613, he was raised to the estate of lords (*Herrenstand*) in 1616.³²

Although early modern rulers created the opportunities for entry into the elite, certain independent factors, such as favourable economic conditions, were essential to provide them with a pool of men who were able and eager to enter the nobility. In short, there needed to exist an urban patriciate who could afford to buy noble titles, or could obtain the educational qualifications necessary to rise in administrative offices and finance a life style appropriate for nobility. This was particularly important in the Austrian territories, as some landed property was a necessary condition for entrance into the *Ritterstand* and for ascent to higher ranks. In comparison to England,³³ the economic conditions in Lower Austria were unfavourable for the advance of men from the merchant class and only a few of the knights admitted between 1580 and 1620 had actually risen from this group. The main reason for the limited mobility of merchants was the decline of the political autonomy and financial strength of the cities in the hereditary lands after the late fifteenth century.³⁴

Nevertheless, general conditions favourable to upward social mobility existed in sixteenth century Lower Austria. Two fifths of the families belonging to the estate of knights in 1620 had been admitted during the past four decades, and a large proportion—about one third—of them newcomers had been ennobled for only one or two generations (Tables 1 & 2).³⁵ However, the great majority of these new knights were descendants of burghers who had pursued careers as municipal officeholders. Some were sons of prominent town councillors, such as Michael Pittersdorfer, whose father had served for more than thirty years in the

town council of Stein and Krems.³⁶ In a few cases, engagement in a lucrative trade enabled families to buy property and to send their sons to university to study law so as to facilitate their entry into municipal and governmental offices. The Händls, for example, having possessed a foundry for almost a century, then bought property, moved into municipal and governmental offices, and acquired a noble title in 1571.³⁷

In the absence of an adequate pool of men with the wherewithal necessary for upward mobility, rulers could provide favourites with grants of land and other capital. During the sixteenth and seventeenth century, though, the Habsburgs were considerably restricted in the distribution of resources, since inflation and war had plunged them into substantial indebtedness.³⁸ They did, nevertheless, offer positions to "foreigners"³⁹ at the Imperial and Archducal courts, and this brought many nobles and burghers from other territories to move to Lower Austria. Thus, between 1580 and 1620 only about one third of the newcomers to the *Ritterstand* were indigenous to Lower Austria.⁴⁰ As I will show below, this immigration was also stimulated by religious conflict, and the desire of the Habsburgs to distribute positions at court amongst the elite from some of their other territories.

While most of the newcomers to the estate of knights served in financial and judicial functions, the most common reason for ascent into the estate of lords was advancement to an important position in the military and in the royal household. The largest portion (one fourth) of the newcomers to the *Herrenstand* were high officials in the military administration, or were commanders of regiments. Alban Grässwein, for instance, whose ancestors had served the Habsburgs for almost a century in judicial, court, and military functions, distinguished himself in several military campaigns in Hungary and the Netherlands. Colonel and war councillor of Rudolf II and Matthias, he was raised to baron in 1607. In 1612 he was admitted to the estate of lords, and during that time he also obtained an important royal fief, *Orth an der Donau*.⁴¹ The preference of the old nobility for active military service, or for positions in the military administration, is evident throughout the period. Such positions were a reminder of the nobility's feudal military functions and, consequently, of special importance in distinguishing nobles from burgers, as well as to signifying distinctions within the nobility itself. Rapid social mobility made it more and more imperative to stress such distinctions. For instance, about two fifths of the families belonging to the estate of lords in 1620 had been elevated to baronial status since 1580 (Tables 3 & 4).⁴² The second largest portion (one fifth) of the princely servitors admitted to the lords were officials and dignitaries in the royal household. While many of these positions were conferred on an honorary basis, they placed their incumbents in close contact with the ruler and made them highly visible at court.⁴³ Salaries were clearly less important to many new upper nobles than the social and symbolic capital they could derive from court positions.

Whether rulers wanted to expand their administration, to restructure their nobility, or simply raise cash through ennoblements, they were, in principle, not compelled to concern themselves with the question of whether there were sufficient vacancies within the nobility

to absorb new members. However, a consequent growth in the size of nobility could easily lead to serious divisions within the elite, if not opposition to the monarch's social policies. Therefore, other things being equal, rulers who could not also guarantee sufficient resources to avoid the crowding out of members were wise to keep upward social mobility more or less in line with genuine vacancies.

Vacancies within the nobility were most commonly created by extinction of families in the male line. Emigration and downward social mobility also opened vacancies, although the influence of both of these factors on social mobility are usually difficult to determine from the records. It is clear, nevertheless, that during most periods of its history, the nobility had to replenish itself with newcomers in order to continue its existence. Biological extinction was not inevitable but seems to have depended to a considerable extent on the socio-economic fortunes of each family. And, as fortunes changed over time, so did the identity of the noble families. Thus, only 10 of the noble lines belonging to the upper nobility of Lower Austria during the middle of the fifteenth century survived until the late eighteenth century, and the losses among the lower nobility were certainly higher.⁴⁴ A list drawn up by the noble Estates in 1574 records 118 knightly families that had died out during the preceding fifty years,⁴⁵ and my own calculations reveal that during the following half century about another half disappeared. A number of these families probably emigrated or experienced downward mobility, but their proportion is unclear since such cases were treated in most records as if they had become extinct.⁴⁶

The failure to reproduce was also common to other European noble families. In Brandenburg, only 83 of 259 families who existed in 1540 were still around in 1800.⁴⁷ Tracing six generations of Bohemian lords, Jaroslav Honc calculated that from the early sixteenth century about one third of the lines became extinct each generation.⁴⁸ In the county of Forez in south-central France, only five of the noble lines of the twelfth century survived to the French revolution.⁴⁹ Yet it is also apparent that during periods of population growth, the nobility could counteract extinction to some extent by increasing the size of the surviving families.⁵⁰ The other response was to admit new members. However, the relationship between the disappearance of noble families and the level of social mobility was not always a direct one. The nobility of early modern Bayeux, for instance, experienced the lowest upward mobility during the period of high population losses, while it endured the largest influx of newcomers during the time of population expansion in the late sixteenth century. Clearly, then, social mobility was not only determined by demographic processes, but, as I will elaborate below, also by the political and fiscal needs of the crown.

Type-Preserving Changes of the Social Structure

Over the long run the Lower Austrian nobility proved able to regulate its own size. Thus between 1415 and 1720/27 the number of noble lines increased only by about a quarter (from 210 to 265). Extinct families were clearly replenished with newcomers, while a

growth in the number of individuals was usually followed by a decline in the number of lines (and vice versa). This was particularly true during the period from 1580 to 1620, when the general population expanded in the Austrian territories by at least one fifth. This led to the growth in the average size of noble families, prompting a 17 % increase in individual members. However, a 15 % decline in the number of lines prevented an expansion of the noble order (Table 5).⁵¹

Once we differentiate between the lower and upper nobility, the possibility of two distinct responses to demographic pressure crystallizes. On the one hand, the lower nobility lost families and individuals mainly because of biological extinction, a loss which was made up with newcomers only as far as the availability of landed property permitted. Altogether the number of knightly families declined by one third (from 197 to 128) between 1580 and 1620.⁵² Despite the high rate of extinction—almost one half of the families disappeared during these forty years—the *Ritterstand* could not restore its membership to the previous level because the population increase during the sixteenth century put pressure on the available land. While landed property, a prerequisite for admission to the Estates since 1572, was available for sale to newcomers due to the extinction of old lines, it was not available on a scale sufficient to replace all extinct families, because the number of children of the remaining families had risen. On the other hand, the extinction rate of the upper nobility was insignificant. Because the rate of social mobility was greater than the vacancies created by the disappearance of families, the estate of lords expanded by more than one half, from 56 to 87 lines. Its individual members more than doubled, from 119 males over the age of twenty in 1580 to 243 in 1620 (Table 5).⁵³ Evidently, the growth in the average size of the noble family, which had caused the decline in the total number of knightly families, because of added pressure on the available land, did not prevent the increase of families in the estate of lords. Since about one half of the new families admitted to the lords rose from the ranks of landed knights, the availability of property was of less significance for the renewal of its membership. However, the growth of the *Herrenstand* created further difficulties for newcomers to the *Ritterstand* to purchase land from this source. It appears, then, that the lower nobility declined precisely because social advancements into the upper nobility exceeded vacancies. In other words, while the knights show a strong relationship between extinction and social mobility, the ascent of families to the estate of lords was unrelated to demographic change. I will explain shortly the reasons for these divergent developments

Although the changes in the sizes of Bohemian and Moravian lords and knights, and in their proportion, are uncertain,⁵⁴ judging by the change in property owners between 1557 and 1615 it appears certain that the knights experienced losses—perhaps as many as one third⁵⁵—from which the lords benefitted in Moravia, while in Bohemia it was the towns and the crown who made the gains.⁵⁶ Certainly, the social structure and rate of social mobility in the Bohemian lands need further investigation in order to determine their roles in the 1620 uprising.

In Lower Austria it is evident that significant type-preserving changes of the nobility's internal social structure occurred during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century. The most apparent of these changes was the numerical decline of the knights and the growth of the lords. In 1580 three and a half times as many lines, and more than twice as many individuals, belonged to the estate of knights than to the estate of lords. By 1620 the knights only comprised a third (41) more lines than the lords, while the latter already counted 19 more individuals. Nevertheless, the *Ritterstand* experienced a significant turnover in membership. About two thirds of the 92 families who had disappeared were replaced by newcomers, so that two fifths of the families living in 1620 had been admitted during the past four decades (Table 2). Social ascent into the estate of lords was even higher: About half of the families living in 1620 had been admitted after 1580 (Table 4). However, since only a few (7) of the old lords had become extinct, three quarters (42) of the families living in 1580 still belonged to the estate in 1620. It remains to be seen how these changes affected the religious and ethnic composition of the nobility.

In the meantime we can conclude that a simple comparison of the size of nobility over time cannot reveal whether social mobility was characterized by absorption, or whether it led to displacement of members. In the case of Lower Austria, it appeared at first sight as if absorption was the prevalent pattern. Once I differentiated between upper and lower nobles, however, it became evident that ascent into the estate of lords caused an expansion in the size of its lines by one half between 1580 and 1620. This, together with the growth in the average size of the noble family, put pressure on the available land, prompting a numerical decline of the lines belonging to the estate of knights by one third. It must be stressed, though, that these type preserving changes of the nobility's internal social structure may not in themselves have provoked armed conflict between Habsburgs and nobles, precisely because they could have occurred without social or economic displacement. However, once we distinguish the effect social mobility had on Protestants and on Catholic nobles, it becomes clear that the Habsburgs' policy of discrimination against the Protestant nobility added a very dangerous ingredient.

Religion and the Struggle over Social Classification

As I have shown elsewhere,⁵⁷ families in both estates grew in size and thus confronted problems of providing for more children. This led to increased competition within the nobility for landed resources, and for positions at court and in the military, at precisely the time when the Habsburgs were less able to distribute financial resources among nobles. It also intensified the conflicts between Habsburgs and noble estates over political and religious issues. Jack Goldstone has argued forcefully that a similar constellation of problems caused state breakdown in seventeenth century England, France, and even Asia. As with other European rulers, the Habsburg confronted increased expenditures due to the changing nature of warfare and monetary inflation. Since the nobility also suffered from

inflation because of fixed rents, it showed considerable reluctance to grant increases in taxes, so forcing the Habsburgs to borrow extensively.⁵⁸ The Reformation added an explosive cultural dynamic to this situation, which goes a long way toward explaining the composition of the revolutionaries and the symbols through which they understood their actions.

In 1571, under financial strain due to a new war with the Ottomans (1566-68), Maximilian II granted the Lower Austrian noble estates and their subjects the right to freely exercise the Lutheran religion on their landed property and in their castles, in return for taking over the repayment of royal debts in the amount of 2,500,000 *Gulden*. Likewise, religious concessions were granted to the noble estates of Upper Austria (1568), Inner Austria (1572-78), and Bohemia (1575) in compensation for loan repayments.⁵⁹ At the same time the noble estates managed to limit Habsburg power over social classification. As I will show below, after 1572 rulers and nobles held a precarious balance of power over social classification, leading to a tug of war between them, and between Catholics and Protestants, over status promotion. Lacking direct legal means and adequate economic resources, Maximilian II's successors sought to increase their authority by imposing their vision of the social and political order through their power over social classification. They did so by changing channels and rules of elite recruitment and, thereby, transformed the composition of the noble estates. Their aim was to rid themselves of the unruly Protestant nobles by promoting the rise of a new, loyal, and court-centred Catholic nobility. And this was the primary reason for the previously observed growth of the estate of lords.

The strategy of favouring Catholics in status promotion began to take definite shape after the Protestant nobility had gained religious autonomy. A clear line of action toward confessional absolutism became imperative because the Lower Austrian nobility had also managed, in 1572, to restrict the power of the Habsburgs over social classification.⁶⁰ From then on, two large categories of nobility existed, as a distinction was created between nobility and noble estates (Figure 1). Previously, any noble who possessed *Dominikalland* (demesne land) was automatically considered a member of the political estates. But after 1572 only those nobles who were formally admitted by representatives of the noble estates had the right to attend political assemblies, to purchase tax-exempt land, and to claim trial and judgment by their peers. Although the ruler still granted all noble titles, the noble estates—where Protestants held a majority—now decided who was entitled to the important benefits derived from noble status (Figure 1). As I will demonstrate, this development created difficulties for the Habsburgs in pursuing their strategies and sharpened the conflict between them and the Protestant nobility, as well as between Catholic and Protestant estates. Nevertheless, for various reasons I shall also explain shortly, the new requirements for admission to the estates, enacted after 1572, reveal little about confessional hostilities.

The nature of warfare, and the centralization efforts and financial difficulties of rulers, helped facilitate increased social mobility in many other European countries.⁶¹ This prompted many nobilities to try to gain influence over regulating this flow of newcomers.

Thus, the noble estates in various German territories,⁶² and in Bohemia, began to establish more stringent rules for ascent to their order, and for mobility within it. The Bohemian nobility actually secured the right to regulate the admission of new members in 1554, long before the Lower Austrians.⁶³ Just how far they were able to limit Habsburg power over social classification and mobility is uncertain. What is clear, though, is that the redefining of the rules for social mobility was aimed largely at clarifying the demarcation boundary of the noble estates and fixing the distinctions within it, rather than simply closing the estates to newcomers.⁶⁴ However, the new rules did in fact make it more difficult for commoners to simply assume noble status and gain access to collectively owned benefits.

In Lower Austria the new admission requirements stipulated that new members had to sign a written declaration (*Revers*) promising that they would comply with the customs and rules of the noble estates, and accept the leadership of their older peers. Naturally, these customs stressed the distinctiveness of noble lifestyle, such as abstention from usury.⁶⁵ The status requirements were clearly not designed to exclude newcomers and provided for a relatively open social structure. While a simple diploma of nobility sufficed for admission to the estate of knights, applicants for incorporation to the estate of lords were required to hold the title of baron (*Freiherr*) or above (count or duke); in this case the regulations did not specify a particular age prerequisite for the title. New nobles also could rise to the estate of lords within three generations.

Social distinctions within each estate were clearly defined as well, and both the *Herren-* and *Ritterstand* divided into a new and an old order in 1575. The estate of lords required that a family belong to the new estate for three generations before it was eligible to advance into the old order.⁶⁶ Although no specific lineage requirements could be found for admission to the old *Ritterstand*, it appears that the third degree of membership in the new estate was also necessary before advancing to the old order. Immatriculation in the old estate conferred not only prestige to its occupants, but also important political powers. Thus old members could assemble in separate sessions, where they debated certain issues concerning their own order and, after 1612, decided the admission of newcomers. Moreover, they had precedence in voting at the assemblies. Since decisions at all of the Estates' meetings were based on majority vote and the oldest member of each order would speak and vote first, they thereby had the opportunity to influence and persuade the remaining voters.⁶⁷

Although the status requirements did not provide the noble Estates with effective measures to close their ranks, they were at least designed to ensure that new candidates had the wherewithal to imitate a distinctive noble life style. Thus, new members had to pay taxes on a minimum *Gült* of 10 *Pfund*—a tax unit based on self-assessed seigniorial income from the peasantry—and within a year they were to purchase landed property worth at least that amount.⁶⁸ A new member also had to pay certain admission fees to the Estates' treasury. A newcomer to the *Ritterstand*, if native to Upper and Lower Austria, was obliged to pay 50 *Thaler*, and, if a "foreigner," 100 *Thaler*. The fees required from the successful candidate

to the *Herrenstand* were much steeper, as he was required to pay a total of 3,026 *Gulden* if he had previously not belonged to the estate of knights. But if the candidate was advancing from the new *Ritterstand* to the estate of lords, his fee was reduced to 1840 *Gulden*, and a member of the old knights could rise at the low rate of 540 *Gulden*.⁶⁹ The high fee for admission to the lords were undoubtedly designed to control the flow of newcomers since it represented three times the yearly income from a small estate, or important court office, and about half the sum required to buy a small manor.⁷⁰ Although the Lower Austrian estates frequently reduced fees, the requirement could be used to eliminate undesirable candidates. Moreover, the fees could be circumvented by using the *Ritterstand* as a stepping stone to advance into the *Herrenstand*. In this case, the estate of knights retained greater control over social advancement. Clearly, the admission fees appear to have been designed to encourage the upward mobility of old, native knights and to make the direct admission of new foreign nobility into the estate of lords more difficult. Lacking a pool of native Catholic nobles, the Habsburgs, as we shall see, frequently promoted Catholic nobility from outside of the province to the baronage. Once they had obtained the required property in Lower Austria, they could not be denied direct admission to the estate of lords. The steep admission fees for direct entry into the *Herrenstand* were thus designed to limit the massive incursion of Catholic royal favourites. However, in one respect the new immatriculation rules also encouraged the admission of royal proteges, as they stipulated previous or future participation in a military campaign against the Ottomans, or in other services for monarch and country. This demand was clearly contradictory to the desire of the noble estates to prevent the entry and ascent of royal officials and officers. Since the new rules were drawn up after negotiations between estates and the court, it is evident that the service requirement demonstrates the success of the crown in retaining some means of influence over new incorporation.

Clearly, then, the powers of the Protestant nobility to control upward social mobility were limited not only because the Habsburgs remained the sole grantors of noble titles, but also because they had managed to make service to monarch and country a prerequisite for admittance. It was thus difficult for the noble estates to deny the admission of Catholic court nobles who held the required noble diploma and possessed landed property. In 1612, when fifty applicants waited for admission to the *Ritterstand*, the estates also realized that the new rules had not effectively limited the incursion of "undesirables." They complained that the regulations had not been applied consistently, and that the newcomers had found means of "persuasion" to be admitted without fulfilling the preconditions for membership. Indeed, numerous new knights had been ennobled for less than ten years at the time of admission.⁷¹ The knights therefore decided to raise the status requirements for new members, who now had to produce proof of nobility in the third degree (agnates and cognates).⁷² Moreover, in future the documents proving the qualifications of a new candidate had to be investigated by the *Landuntermarschall* (the highest official of the *Ritterstand*), the deputies, and three other knights before a decision could be made by at

least twenty members of the old estate; a common assembly of knights had to approve their decision. A similar admission procedure was observed by the *Herrenstand*, except that its highest official, the *Landmarschall*, passed on the application and documentation of the candidates' qualifications directly to an assembly of twenty old lords. The possession of a baronial status obviously eliminated the need for a lengthy investigation of social origin. This also provided the Habsburgs with greater influence over admissions to the *Herrenstand*. In addition to the existing property requirements, the estates decided in 1612 that landless knights had to deposit a sum of money in the treasury—based on the candidate's wealth—until property was acquired. The estate of lords fixed the deposit at 10,000 *Gulden*, at 5 % interest, equivalent to the amount required to buy a small estate. It is evident then that the regulations requiring the purchase of property within a year had not been observed; the money deposit provided the estates with a guarantee that taxes would be paid by landless nobles, and, more importantly, that the newcomers could afford to obtain the minimum of land required in the first place.⁷³

However, admission requirements were not consistently applied, either before 1612 or thereafter. Indeed, the proportion of landless newcomers increased after 1612, and two of the three families admitted to the new estate until 1620 had been ennobled for just two generations. Altogether, almost one third of the knights admitted between 1580 and 1620 had been ennobled for less than twenty years.⁷⁴ As I will show below, the confessional conflict was a primary reason for these inconsistencies.

The discussions leading to the new regulations concerning social distinctions and social mobility during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century reveal little about confessional hostilities. But they do show that the Protestant nobility felt threatened by adulteration. Already by the mid-sixteenth century they began to complain about land sales to "foreigners," who were coming to Vienna to serve in the central administration, and who frequently moved into the nobility. The established, native nobility objected to the new origin and wealth of newcomers because these nobles "desire to be equal to the old lords and nobles ... [and] are slowly buying up natives with their exorbitant wealth ...," a practice which they believed could only lead to "innovation and the change of old traditions."⁷⁵ The old nobles especially resented the new court nobles, royal creations, whose behaviour at the political assemblies frequently revealed loyalties to the crown rather than to noble interests. In 1572 the noble estates even asked Rudolph II to reject new nobles as officeholders unless they had reached the third degree of noble rank, but the emperor, pretending not to understand the reasons behind the demand, objected.⁷⁶

Most of the Protestant opposition against the preference shown to Catholics in status mobility was carefully couched in secular terms, probably to conceal the symbolic and economic significance status had for the survival of Protestantism. It is also possible that they did not want to disturb the atmosphere of religious toleration that officially prevailed, at least until 1608. They clearly desired to prevent a massive incursion of social "inferiors," but the real and unstated objection to newcomers and foreigners was that the large majority

of them were Catholics and royal officeholders. This is less evident from Protestant rhetoric than from the actual admission pattern. For example, the Protestant knights did not hesitate to admit newcomers even without a noble diploma when it suited their purpose. Thus, in 1579 a number of Protestant burghers who had been involved in a demonstrative confessional petition to the emperor, the so-called *Sturmpetition*, were admitted by the estate of knights without possessing a noble diploma, in order to protect them from royal punishment.⁷⁷ The admission practices reveal further irregularities, indicating that the religious conflict was of vital importance in explaining their erratic pattern. In 1608, mobility into the new *Ritterstand* came to a near standstill after more than a decade of substantial influx (Figure 2). Moreover, the social, economic, occupational, and geographic background of the knights was fundamentally different after 1609, and became more homogeneous compared to the preceding decades. Thus, the new knights were of older nobility and had either served in the army or held no position at all; they possessed smaller landholdings, and they were frequently of foreign origin. Most importantly, nearly all of them were Protestant. Evidently, their xenophobia was directed only against Catholic foreigners. This contention is also supported by the alliance between the Bohemians and the Austrians in 1620.

A comparison of the admission frequency per confession and per decade clearly reveals the tug of war between Protestants and Catholics over membership (Figure 3). With the strengthening of the Counter-Reformation after 1580 the number of Protestant admissions declined drastically. While the 1590s were again favourable for the advancement of Protestants, the number of new Catholic knights more than tripled during the following decade. This advancement of Catholic knights was facilitated largely by the instalment of a Catholic *Landuntermarschall* in 1595.⁷⁸ Presiding over all of the meetings of the *Ritterstand*, he could influence admissions by encouraging and manipulating the attendance of knights favourable to certain candidates. After the events of 1608/9 a Protestant was installed again as *Landuntermarschall*⁷⁹, which explains the drastic reduction in Catholic admissions. Nearly all of the knights incorporated to the new and the old estate after 1609 were Protestants.⁸⁰

Since the crown increasingly favoured Catholics in status promotion, it is not surprising that the only step available to forestall the eventual domination of the estates by Catholics was to advance older or foreign Protestant nobility to the *Ritterstand*. Seen in this connection the complaints of the knights against new nobles, and the establishment of stricter admission rules regarding noble status in 1612, appears to have had a strong religious ingredient rather than purely social roots. This contention can be further supported by the fact that after 1612 the admission of Protestants to the old estate accelerated, even though the candidates could frequently not fulfill the new property requirements. Most were landless because they had recently immigrated from the hereditary lands (especially from Inner Austria) and from the Reich.⁸¹ A large proportion were officers because the military became the only possible avenue of career mobility for Protestants after 1608.⁸² While the

incorporation of foreign landless nobles did not violate the admission rules, as long as they obtained property within one year, recently created Catholic nobles could be turned away on the grounds of the new status requirements. This explains, why admissions to the new *Ritterstand* almost ceased after 1608. In short, since the crown began to exclude native Protestant burghers from status promotion, the Protestant *Ritterstand* had no choice but to admit old foreign nobility if it wanted to retain a numerical predominance over the Catholics. Even though the Protestant knights were thus able to curtail Habsburg influence over membership in the estate of knights, Catholic families multiplied by about three quarters (from 19 to 33), while Protestant families decreased by about one half (from 179 to 99). In other words, the Catholics had increased their proportional strength from about one tenth to one quarter,⁸³ and the diminution of the *Ritterstand* was largely a consequence of losses among Protestants (Table 6).

The Habsburgs retained more influence over admissions into the estate of lords. Here, two fifth of the families admitted between 1580 and 1620 belonged to the Catholic faith.⁸⁴ A comparison of mobility by decade and by confession into both noble estates reveals similar but also contrary trends. Thus, after 1580 admissions of Protestants lords also suddenly declined. Evidently, the accession of Archduke Ernst to governor (*Statthalter*) of Lower Austria, and subsequent efforts to strengthen the Counter-Reformation, had the same effect in both estates. After 1590, however, the two noble estates appear to have played a confessional tug of war (Figures 4 and 5). While the number of Catholics admitted to the estate of knights declined during the decade after 1590, it increased in the estate of lords. The reason for this development in the *Herrenstand* must be sought in the succession of a Catholic (Sigmund von Lamberg) to the office of *Landmarschall* in 1592. Of some importance, too, was that Catholics had already a stronger numerical position within the estate of lords. This made a reaction against the promotion of Catholics more difficult. Yet, even though the office of the *Landmarschall* remained in Catholic hands throughout the period, Protestant mobility into the *Herrenstand* more than tripled between 1600–09. Since about half of the new Protestant lords had advanced by means of military careers, it is clear that the Ottoman war exerted some influence on their increased admission during this period. The other, more important, factor appears to have been Matthias' attempts to muster and reward Protestant support for his schemes against his brother, the emperor Rudolf II. After this period of rapid ascent within the noble ranks, the Protestants were suddenly confronted with a complete reversal of royal policy, when Matthias, once in power, excluded them from promotion to the rank of baronage and above. As a consequence, Protestant admission to the *Herrenstand* declined by almost one half between 1609 and 1619, and after 1613 only one Protestant family (Tattenbach) was incorporated.⁸⁵

Obviously, the *Landmarschall* and the estate of lords responded more readily to the status promotions and pressures of the Habsburgs than did the knights. In the admission of the Catholic Georg Leonhard von Stozzing, for example, it is known that Matthias pressured the lords to advance his favourite.⁸⁶ Moreover, the *Herrenstand* often had no choice but

to admit royal proteges, since the barons, frequently of older landed nobility, were much more likely to fulfill all of the admission requirements, which did not specify the age of baronial status, than newly ennobled knights. However, since the *Ritterstand*—comprising the pool of older Lower Austrian nobility eligible for status advancement—was largely Protestant, the Habsburgs had to promote lesser Catholic nobles from outside territories to the baronage. Consequently three quarters of the Catholics entered the estate of lords directly. Moreover, the large majority (nine tenths) of them were first generation immigrants, especially from Styria, while only half of the Protestants originated from territories outside of Lower Austria.⁸⁷ In contrast, only half of the Protestant families incorporated between 1580 and 1620 originated from territories outside of Lower Austria, and about three fourth of them rose from the estate of knights. Although the number of Protestant families slightly multiplied by about one third (from 44 to 60), the expansion of the Catholic camp caused the proportional strength of Protestant families in the estate of lords to decline from about three quarters to three fifths. Overall, Catholic baronial families almost tripled (from 14 to 38), and rose proportionally from one-quarter to nearly two-fifth (Table 7).

The Catholic gains in both estates were thus substantial and explain the activism of the Catholic party, which increased during the early seventeenth century. It must be stressed that this advance was mainly the result of social mobility rather than of conversions, which were surprisingly low.⁸⁸ By 1620 the combined Catholic nobility had more than doubled, and now comprised almost one third of the lines and about a quarter of the individual members of the nobles Estates. Because of the moderate gains in the estate of lords, the combined losses of Protestants are less striking. Nevertheless, the number of families had declined by one third (from 223 to 159), and the proportional strength of Protestant families in the combined estates had fallen by 1620, from about nine tenths to seven tenths; the individual members were reduced to one quarter. While they were still in the majority, the Protestant nobility could legitimately fear that they soon would be outnumbered by Catholic nobles. Considering that the latter had a strong ally in the first estate, the clergy, Protestant power at the political assemblies was already threatened.⁸⁹

The rise of new nobles, and the increase of foreign Catholic lords, in themselves might not have caused the rebellion of the Protestant nobility in 1620. As I have shown elsewhere, statistical analysis of the relationship between political affiliation and social background suggests that noble status did not have a significant influence on the political position of the Protestant nobles. Old and new nobles were fairly evenly distributed among the three Protestant parties that formed during 1620, indicating that antagonism between the new and old nobility *per se* did not determine political activism. The statistical analysis does indicate, however, that the principal factor determining whether a Protestant took a neutral, loyal, or opposing position toward Ferdinand II was office holding. None of the rebels held offices, and the few Protestants who were still employed by the crown, either remained loyal or took a neutral position in the revolt.⁹⁰ Exclusion from office was thus the common experience uniting the Protestant rebels, precisely because by 1620 the Habsburgs had been

more successful in changing the composition of its officials to benefit Catholics than in manipulating the social structure, although changes in the latter were clearly essential for altering the former.⁹¹

I suggest that such inequalities in the distribution of social and economic resources were also the major factor in polarizing the elite in Moravia and Bohemia. The evidence indicates that in these territories the numerical growth of the Catholic faction after 1600 enabled Catholic nobles—frequently of foreign origin—to successfully compete with native Protestants over important offices.⁹² This issue must be further investigated, but it is already evident that between 1594 and 1604 the Catholic nobility acquired all the important positions in Moravia.⁹³ Moreover, confessional parity in the distribution of offices was a major demand of the Bohemian and Austrian Confederates. Access to royal office became generally more important during the sixteenth century to supplement noble incomes, to provide for numerous sons, and to gain access to crucial social, cultural, and symbolic capital at the new centres of power. It is thus not surprising that the attitude of the Protestants hardened, and they tried to prevent the preferential treatment of Catholics in status and office promotion. This also reinforced the fears and intolerance within the Catholic party, and ossified relations between Protestants and Habsburgs.

Conclusion

Clearly, the changes in the nobility's social structure was not a causal factor separate from the economic, cultural, and political problems underlying the rebellion of 1620. Because the various forms of "capital" were mutually reinforcing, each being more or less dependent upon the other for the production, or reproduction, of noble power, a restriction on the access to one form of capital also meant a constraint on the access to profits (monetary or otherwise) derived from the other forms of capital. Consequently, exclusion from the benefits of status mobility represented an attack not only on the religion, culture, and social predominance of the Protestant nobility, but on its continued existence as an elite. In short, social mobility was of utmost importance to the early modern elite because status was a resource crucial for generating a whole syndrome of benefits, and because social distinctions were an essential part of noble power and legitimacy. It is understandable, then, why redefining the rules and channels of elite recruitment could become a focal point in the conflict between Habsburgs and Protestant nobles. The party who managed to transform or conserve existing social categories in ways that conformed to its own advantage would necessarily also alter social and power relations in its favour.

Although such struggles between rulers and nobles over social classification were an ongoing process in early modern society, largely because of continual, and often rapid, social mobility, I maintain that really serious conflicts were most likely to occur when type-preserving changes in the social structure lead to the displacement of a definite portion of the elite and did so very quickly. During the half century before the rebellion of 1620,

the transformation of the internal structure of the Lower Austrian nobility did lead to the social displacement of the Protestant majority, and this played a crucial role in the uprising.

Status mobility into the Lower Austrian noble estates thus provides an excellent case study to show the complexities of social change in early modern Europe. Nearly everywhere, social advancement accelerated significantly after the mid-sixteenth century. While similar causes lay behind these processes, they were not always linear or identical. Although the Habsburgs frequently rewarded creditors with noble titles, they did not, like the French rulers, resort to the sale of titles to cover their debts. High social mobility in Lower Austria did not signify the rise of a wealthy, commercial bourgeoisie, as it did in England. Instead, it was primarily the increased need for men trained in Roman law to work in the central administration that led the Habsburgs to accelerate status mobility. The new nobles who entered the estate of knights had mostly risen by virtue of their judicial training and administrative functions in municipal offices to positions in the central administration, or in traditional *Ämter*. After 1609, however, it was mainly Catholics who benefited from these recruitment policies.

As did European rulers generally, the Habsburgs obviously exerted considerable influence on social change. While different personalities, and conflicts within the dynastic family, left their mark on the social structure, it is also evident that the rulers' actions were limited by structural factors, notably demographic and economic change. The population growth of the sixteenth century put pressure on the available land, thereby limiting social mobility into the lesser nobility. Because the noble population increased, and landholdings—a prerequisite for membership—were frequently small and indivisible, the knights could not replace all of the losses they suffered from biological extinction. Nevertheless, the high mortality rate facilitated the admission of a large number of new families to the estate of knights. Demographic change exerted less influence on mobility into the *Herrenstand* because the lords could advance knights who already possessed landed property, and because the lords' landholdings still allowed for some divisibility. As a consequence, the upper nobility could expand in size at the expense of the lesser nobility.

The Habsburg rulers managed to turn these developments to their advantage and manipulate the transformation of the nobility's internal structure to benefit a new, presumably more loyal, Catholic nobility. They were in fact less interested in creating a new nobility than in reestablishing confessional conformity among the elite, which they considered an essential prerequisite to strengthen their authority.⁹⁴ Since they had been forced by financial considerations to permit religious freedom, they had to use their power as distributors of social capital to subdue the Protestant nobility. But they erred in the rapidity with which they implemented their policy. The expectations of the Protestant nobility had been considerably raised after the conciliatory termination of differences in 1608/9, and by the rewards Matthias bestowed on the Protestants who sided with him against Rudolf. They were even more disappointed when they suddenly realized that in the future the Habsburgs were determined to distribute social resources only to Catholics. Instead of bringing about

the change gradually, Matthias and Ferdinand implemented their strategies for attaining dominance at a speed that minimized the possibility of appropriate cultural adjustment.⁹⁵

The transformation occurred despite the fact that in 1572 the Protestant estates had been successful in limiting the power of the Habsburgs over social mobility. Their aim in establishing a dual system of nobility and dual estates was to strengthen and clearly define social distinctions, rather than close the noble estates to advancing commoners. Certainly, the established Protestant nobility distrusted and resented the new nobility. However, the conflict of interest between new and old nobles became especially dangerous because of the religious divide, and its significance for the preservation of social capital. Contemporaries were clearly unable to separate secular from religious interests, and the social from political and cultural factors. This makes it difficult for historians to do so either, and it is certainly a mistake for them to conclude that social mobility and social differences played no role in the conflict. Religion reinforced the social, economic, and political grievances of the nobility; in turn, their material problems strengthened their commitment to guarantee the survival of their religion. None of this was accidental; it reflected the nature of "capital" in early modern society.

Notes

1. Sections of this article were presented at the Social Science History Conference in New Orleans in November 1991, and at the German Studies Conference, Los Angeles, October 1991. Research for the project has been supported by fellowships from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada, and from the Austrian Ministry for Science and Education. As always, I am deeply grateful to Michael C. Howard, who gave the manuscript a vigilant reading, improved its style, and offered many important criticisms.

2. Two important books providing a traditional social interpretation of the Civil War and English Revolution are Lawrence Stone, *The Causes of the English Revolution, 1529-1642* (New York, 1972) and Christopher Hill, *The Century of Revolution, 1603-1714* (New York, 1961). For summaries of the debates see the review articles by John Kenyon, "Revisionism and Post-Revisionism in Early Stuart History," *Journal of Modern History (JMH)* 64 (Dec. 1992), 686-99, and Tim Harris, "From Rage of Party to Age of Oligarchy? Rethinking the Later Stuart and Early Hanoverian Period," *JMH* 64 (Dec. 1992), 700-20. J.C.D. Clark, *Revolution and Rebellion: State and Society in England in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 1986) offers a lengthier exposition on the topic.

3. Some early revisionist approaches were presented by R. C. Richardson, "Puritanism and the Ecclesiastical Authorities in the Case of the Diocese of Chester," in *Politics, Religion, and the English Civil War*, ed. B. Manning (New York, 1973); C. Roberts, "The Earl of Bedford and the Coming of the English Revolution," *JMH* 49 (1977), 600-16; K. Sharpe, *Factions and Parliaments: Essays on Early Stuart History* (Oxford, 1978); and The most famous representative of the new doxa is C. Russel, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (Oxford, 1990).

4. The most eminent representatives of this school are G. Lefebvre, *The Coming of the French Revolution* (Princeton, 1947); A. Soboul, *A Short History of the French Revolution, 1789-1799* (Berkeley, 1977); and M. Vovelle, *The Fall of the French Monarchy, 1787-1792* (Berkeley, 1984).

5. See, for instance, W. Beik, *Absolutism and Society in Seventeenth Century France* (Cambridge, 1985).

6. W. Doyle offers the best summary of the revisionist position in *The Origins of the French Revolution* (Oxford, 1980); see also his *The Oxford History of the French Revolution* (Oxford, 1989). J. Dewald, *Aristocratic Experience and the Origins of Modern Culture* (Berkeley, 1993); and L. Hunt, *The Family Romance of the French Revolution* (Berkeley, 1992) offer excellent approaches to the study of political discourse. For summaries of the debates see Colin Jones, "Bourgeois Revolution Revivified: 1789 and Social Change," in *Rewriting the French Revolution*, Colin Lucas, ed. (Oxford, 1991), 69-118; and Louis Bergeron, "The Revolution: Catastrophe or New Dawn for the French Economy?" in *Rewriting*, 119-131.

7. Robert Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution. Commercial Change, Political Conflict, and London's Overseas Traders, 1550-1653* (Princeton, 1993), 644. See also Ann Hughes, *The Causes of the English Civil War* (London, 1991); and M. S. Kimmel, *Absolutism and Its Discontents* (New Brunswick, 1988).

8. Jack A. Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion in the Early Modern World* (Berkeley, 1991), 12-23

9. Jones, "Bourgeois Revolution Revivified."

10. In this paper, the term "Austrian territories" refers to the German speaking hereditary lands of the Habsburgs, such as Lower and Upper Austria, Inner Austria, Fore Austria, and the Tyrol.

11. H. Rebel, *Peasant Classes. The Bureaucratization of Property and Family Relations under Early Habsburg Absolutism* (Princeton, 1983); K. J. MacHardy, "Der Einfluss von Status, Besitz und Konfession auf das politische Verhalten des Niederösterreichischen Ritterstandes 1580-1620," in *Spezialforschung und "Gesamtgeschichte,"* vol. 8 of *Wiener Beiträge zur Geschichte der Neuzeit*, eds. Grete Klingenstein and Heinrich Lutz (Vienna, 1981), 56-83; MacHardy, "The Rise of Absolutism and Noble Rebellion in Early Modern Habsburg Austria, 1570 to 1620," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 34 (1992), 407-439; E. Bruckmüller, *Sozialgeschichte Österreichs* (Vienna, 1985); H. Knittler, *Nutzen, Renten Erträge. Struktur und Entwicklung frühneuzeitlicher Feudaleinkommen in Niederösterreich* (Vienna, 1989); B. Bastl, *Herrschaftsschätzungen. Materialien zur Einkommens- und Besitzstruktur niederösterreichischer Grundherrschaften 1550 bis 1750* (Vienna, 1992); Michael Mitterauer and Reinhard Sieder, *The European Family: Patriarchy to Partnership from the Middle Ages to the Present* (Chicago, 1982).

12. See, for example, F. Dörrer, ed., *Die Bauernkriege und Michael Gaismair* (Innsbruck, 1982); H. Valentinitz, "Die Bauernunruhen in der untersteirischen Herrschaft Sannegg 1668-77," *Zeitschrift des Historischen Vereins für Steiermark* 74 (1985); T. Winkelbauer, *Robot und Steuer. Die Untertanen der Waldviertler Grundherrschaften Gföhl und Altpölla zwischen feudaler Herrschaft und absolutistischem Staat* (Vienna, 1986).

13. See, for example, most of the contributions in R.J.W. Evans and T.V. Thomas, eds. *Crown, Church and Estates. Central European Politics in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (New York, 1991). Thomas Winkelbauer, "Der Adel in Ober- und Niederösterreich in der frühen Neuzeit. Versuch eines Literaturüberblicks (seit etwa 1950)," in *Spojijuci a Rozdelujuci na Hranici - Verbindeendes und Trennendes an der Grenze, Opera Historica* 2 (Ceske Budejovice, 1992) eds. Vaclav

Buzek et. al., 13-33, provides a succinct summary of the research on the Upper and Lower Austrian nobility since 1950.

14. Hans Sturmberger, *Georg Erasmus Tschernembl. Religion, Libertät und Widerstand; ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Gegenreformation und des Landes ob der Enns* (Linz, 1953), and *Aufstand in Böhmen. Der Beginn des dreißigjährigen Krieges* (Munich, 1959).

15. Leading this school of thought, which received its initial impetus from Ernst Walter Zeeden, "Grundlagen und Wege der Konfessionsbildung in Deutschland im Zeitalter der Glaubenskämpfe," *Historische Zeitschrift* 185 (1958), 249-99. have been Wolfgang Reinhard, "Zwang zur Konfessionalisierung? Prolegomena zu einer Theorie des konfessionellen Zeitalters," *Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung* X (1983), 268-79; and Hans Schilling, *Konfessionskonflikt und Staatsbildung: eine Fallstudie über das Verhältnis von religiösem und sozialem Wandel in der Frühneuzeit am Beispiel der Grafschaft Lippe* (Gutersloh, 1981); see also chapter 5. of his *Religion, Political Culture and the Emergence of Early Modern Society* (Leiden, 1992). R. Po-Chia Hsia, *Social Discipline in the Reformation. Central Europe 1550-1750* (London, 1989), provides an excellent synthesis in English of this research. I, myself, have applied the term "confessional absolutism" to characterize the links between social change, religion, and politics of the early modern statebuilding process in the Habsburg territories, MacHardy, "The Rise of Absolutism."

16. J.V. Polisensky, and collaborator Frederic Snider, *War and Society in Europe, 1618-1648* (Cambridge, 1978), 55; see also Polisensky's, *The Thirty Years War* (Berkeley, 1971).

17. M. Hroch and J. Petran, *Das 17. Jahrhundert. Krise der feudalen Gesellschaft* (Hamburg, 1981), 147. For a review of Czech literature on the period between 1526-1620 see Jaroslav Pánek, "Das Ständewesen und die Gesellschaft in den böhmischen Ländern in der Zeit vor der Schlacht auf dem Weissen Berg (1526-1620)," *Historica XXV* (1985) and Václav Buzek, "Nizsi Slechta v Predbellohorských Cechách," (The lower nobility of Bohemia before the Battle of the White Mountain), *Cesky Casopis Historicky* 91 (1993), 37-53. Eila Hassenpflug-Elzholz, *Böhmen und die böhmischen Stände in der Zeit des beginnenden Zentralismus. Eine Strukturanalyse der böhmischen Adelsnation um die Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Munich, 1982) summarizes the historiography for the subsequent period.

18. See, for instance, J. Pánek, "The Religious Question and the Political System of Bohemia before and after the Battle of the White Mountain"; Josef Válka, "Moravia and the Crisis of the Estates' System in the Lands of the Bohemian Crown," both in *Crown, Church and Estates*, 129-57; Winfried Eberhard, *Monarchie und Widerstand. Zur ständischen Oppositionsbildung im Herrschaftssystem Ferdinands I. in Böhmen* (Munich, 1985); and Winfried Becker, "Ständestaat und Konfessionsbildung am Beispiel der böhmischen Konföderationsakte von 1619," in *Politik und Konfession*, ed. Dieter Albrecht, et. al. (Berlin, 1983), 77-96. Much of the literature provides summaries of older research, and therefore does include some information on social composition and the structure of property; see, for instance, Jaroslav Mezník, "Der böhmische und mährische Adel im 14. und 15. Jahrhundert," *Bohemia* 28 (1987), 69-91; Eduard Maur, "Der böhmische und mährische Adel vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert," in *Adel im Wandel*, ed. Helmuth Feidl and Willibald Rosner (Vienna, 1991), 17-37; Thomas Winkelbauer, "Wandlungen des mährischen Adels um 1600," in *Jan Amos Comenius und die Politik seiner Zeit*, ed. Karlheinz Mack (Munich, 1992), 17-35; T. Winkelbauer, "Krise der Aristokratie? Zum Strukturwandel des Adels in den böhmischen und niederösterreichischen Ländern im 16. und 18. Jahrhundert," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung (MIÖG)* 100 (1992), 328-53.

19. Orest Subtelny, *Domination of Eastern Europe. Native Nobilities and Foreign Absolutism, 1500-1715* (Kingston, 1986), provides an interesting comparative approach to rebellions in Eastern Europe, which includes Habsburg Hungary. Antoni Maczak, et. al., eds., *East-Central Europe in Transition. From the fourteenth to the seventeenth century* (Cambridge, 1985) offers contributions on the economic history of Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary. For an succinct overview of Hungarian historiography see Janos M. Bak, "Politics, Society and Defense in Medieval and Early Modern Hungary," in *From Hunyadi to Rákóczi. War and Society in Late Medieval and Early Modern Hungary*, eds. János M. Bak and Béla K. Király (Columbia, 1982), 1-22; this volume also contains several contributions on early modern rebellions in Hungary.

20. Jones, "Bourgeois Revolution Revivified," 78.

21. For a detailed description of his concepts, see Bourdieu's "The Forms of Capital," in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (New York, 1986), 241-58. The following section is also based on ideas developed by Bourdieu in his "The Social Space and the Genesis of Groups," *Theory and methods* 24 (June 1985), *Distinction. A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984); *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, Mass., 1977); *The Logic of Practice* (Stanford, 1980). In *Other Words. Essays Towards a Reflexive Sociology* (Stanford, 1990), contains a complete bibliography of Bourdieu's publications until 1988.

22. For further elaboration of this and the term "type preserving changes," see G. A. Cohen. *Karl Marx's Theory of History. A Defense* (Princeton, 1978), 85.

23. Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion*, 227-8.

24. Winfried Becker, "Ständestaat und Konfessionsbildung am Beispiel der böhmischen Konföderationsakte von 1619," in *Politik und Konfession. Festschrift für Konrad Repgen zum 60. Geburtstag*, eds. Dieter Albrecht et. al. (Berlin, 1983), 77-97, views the Confederation as a progressive development. I pursue this theme further in chap. 1 of *Obedience and Rebellion. The Rise of Absolutism and Noble Rebellion in Early Modern Habsburg Austria* (Macmillan, forthcoming).

25. In Lower Austria, for example, admissions to the noble estates reached an unprecedentedly high level during the first two decades of the Thirty Years War. However, such rapid upward mobility may also reflect the practice of new rulers, at the time of their accession, or shortly thereafter, to replace key officials with their own favourites, which frequently necessitated status improvement. Although the fiscal needs of rulers were another important factor behind intensified social mobility in sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe, the Habsburgs did not resort to the outright sale of titles, as did the French and the English rulers, although they imposed a fee, or tax, for issuing the decree. Nevertheless, for the Habsburgs status promotion was also the cheapest form of distributing rewards during times of financial difficulty. On many occasions they repaid money lenders with the grant of titles. For example, Lazarus Henkel, a wealthy merchant and purveyor to the crown, was raised to baron in 1608 after providing emperor Rudolph II with a substantial loan, in the amount of 222,000 Gulden, in 1608. Henkel, who claimed to be of old Hungarian nobility, was also repaid with landed property for this loan. F. K. Wißgrill, *Schauplatz des landsässigen Nieder-Österreichischen Adels vom Herrn- und Ritterstande von dem XI. Jahrhundert an bis auf unsere Zeiten* (Vienna, 1794-1824), vol. IV:238.

26. H. Ch. Ehalt, *Ausdrucksformen absolutistischer Herrschaft. Der Wiener Hof im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 1980), 57. This number may have decreased thereafter because the Archducal and Imperial court were merged in 1612.

27. O. Brunner, "Bürgertum und Adel in Nieder- und Oberösterreich," in *Neue Wege der Verfassung- und Sozialgeschichte* (Göttingen, 1968), 266-80.

28. Caspar Anfang, Georg Christoph Rosenberg, and Georg Stettner were overseers of royal domains; see Niederösterreichisches Landesarchiv (thereafter: NÖLA), Ritterstandsarchiv (thereafter: RStA), Aufnahmeakten C II; *Grosses und allgemeines Wappenbuch 4/4: Der Niederösterreichische Adel*, vol. 2 (Nürnberg, 1919), 348. Georg Stettner's father had been chief forester on the royal domain in Styria, and Georg himself rose from the position of *Pfleger* of the monastery at Göttweig to secretary of the Court Treasury; see Siebmacher, *Nieder-Österreichische Adel 2:228-229*; for additional sources used on this and the following statistics see endnote 34.

29. The overwhelming majority were, or had been, councillors in the Imperial Aulic Council *Reichshofrat* the functions of which were primarily judicial. While the Imperial Court at Prague was separated from the Archducal Court at Vienna (1578-1612), a number of new knights were councillors to the archdukes; others held the position of councillor in the Lower Austrian *Regiment* or the Court Treasury.

30. The majority of these knights (15) held the title of *kaiserliche Hofdiener* (Imperial Court Servant) and were responsible for the judicial administration of the royal household (*Hofmarschallgericht*). The remainder—less than one fifth—served in the army.

31. Wissgrill III:388; A. Luschin v. Ebengreuth, "Österreicher an italienischen Universitäten zur Zeit der Rezeption des römischen Rechts," *Sonderabdruck aus den Blättern für Landeskunde von Niederösterreich*, vol. 1 (Vienna 1886), 49-50.

32. Wissgrill 5:276; NÖLA, RStA, Aufnahmeakten CI. The rise of Christoph Pirkhaimer, the son of a town councillor, was also rapid. He studied jurisprudence at Bologna and Paris (1573), received a doctorate, became Imperial Aulic Councillor, and was ennobled in 1589. In 1592, at the age of 37, he was installed as Chancellor of the Lower Austrian Government (*Niederösterreichischer Kanzler*), and in 1596 he was admitted to the new *Ritterstand*. See *Jahrbuch des Heraldisch-Genealogischen Vereins Adler* (henceforth *Jahrbuch Adler*), vol. III (Vienna, 1876), 92; and Luschin, "Österreicher", vol 1:59.

33. For social mobility in seventeenth century England, see L. Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy, 1558-1641* (Oxford, 1965); and R. Brenner, *Merchants and Revolution*.

34. The Ottoman invasions, the redirection of trade routes, such as the neglect of the Danube, and the subsequent shift of trade and finance to South German cities, weakened the mercantile economy of Lower Austria; see E. Liechtenberger, "Von der mittelalterlichen Bürgerstand zur City. Sozialstatistische Querschnittanalysen am Wiener Beispiel," *Beiträge zur Bevölkerungs- und Sozialgeschichte Österreichs*, H. Helczmanovski, ed. (Vienna 1973), 303-33. The towns were unable to recover their economic position during the period of urban growth in the sixteenth century, and this left them vulnerable during the commercial contraction which probably began about 1600; see R.J.W. Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy, 1550-1700* (Oxford, 1979), 80-81; Bruckmüller, *Sozialgeschichte*, ch. IV and V.3.; and John P. Spielman, *The City and the Crown. Vienna and the Imperial Court, 1600-1740* (West Lafayette, 1993).

35. The statistical analyses of this chapter are on data derived from a variety of sources: (NÖLA), RStA, Aufnahmeakten CI-XXXVIII, D1; Herrenstandsarchiv (thereafter: HStA), Aufnahmeakten (A-Z), Lade IV/5, fol. 10, Lade V, Varia; Ständisches Archiv (thereafter: StA), Ständische Akten AI/3-4, AI/5, AIII/5, AIII/18, AIII/20; Codes Diplomaticus Austriacus, Tom. IV, Haus- Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, fol. 203-309; F. C. Khevenhiller, *Annales Ferdinandeï oder Wahrhafte*

Beschreibung Kaisers Ferdinandi des Andern ... vol. IX, fol. 1065-60; Handschrift der österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 10.100d (Retzer Jurament). This data was supplemented with information from genealogical works: Wissgrill, *Schauplatz*, 5 vols. (Vienna, 1794-1824); continued in *Jahrbuch Adler* (Vienna, 1872-90); Siebmacher, *Der Niederösterreichische Adel*, 2 vols. (Nürnberg, 1919); Karl Friedrich von Frank, *Standeserhebungen und Gnadenakte für das Deutsche Reich und die Österreichischen Erblände bis 1806 ...*, 5 vols. (Senftenegg, 1972); Ignaz Hübl, "Die Ächtungen von evangelischen und die Konfiskationen protestantischen Besitzes im Jahre 1620 in Nieder- und Oberösterreich," *JbGPO* 59-60 (1938-39), 42-62, 105-25; A. Starzer, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der niederösterreichischen Statthalterei. Die Landeschefs und Räte dieser Behörde 1501-1896* (Vienna, 1967); H. F. Schwarz, *The Imperial Privy Council in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass., 1943).

36. Leopold and Jakob Hutstocker's father, Christoph, had been municipal judge and mayor of Vienna, and the service of his ancestors in municipal office can be traced at least to the fifteenth century. Another example is Johann Strasser the Younger, who succeeded his grandfather and father as mayor of Steyr, and held this position before he was admitted to the estate of knights in 1601; see *Jahrbuch Adler* III (1876), 93. Wissgrill IV:471; A. Starzer, *Beiträge* (Vienna 1897), 427; Wissgrill IV:87-97; and Siebmacher, *Nieder-Österreichische Adel* II:244-245.

37. Wissgrill IV:84-87.

38. MacHardy, "The Rise of Absolutism," 411-15.

39. The estates considered anyone from outside of Lower Austria as "foreign," although at times they excluded the Upper Austrians. In this study all nobles who had settled in Lower Austria for more than three generations will be considered as natives.

40. Another third were first and second generation emigrants from the other hereditary lands, especially from Inner Austria, while about one fifth had recently migrated from the Reich. The majority of this last group had come from the Habsburg territories in Swabia, but a number were natives of Franconia, Saxony, Bavaria, Brandenburg and the Rhineland. For example, Igelshofer, Kleindienst, Rindsmaul, Lembsitz and Mierzer were first generation immigrants from Styria. Heisberg had come to Lower Austria from Hessen; Kätzler, Kremmer and Hoe from Franconia; Grünberg from Saxony, while Hirschberg had emigrated from Brandenburg, and Reiffenberg from the Rhineland. Only a few knights had moved to Lower Austria from non-German speaking countries, mainly from Bohemia and Italy. Some of these men already held noble titles at the time of immigration.

41. Wissgrill III:109-110. Another family, the Becks, had risen to power, wealth, and noble status during the early sixteenth century through judicial functions, as military enterpriser and money lenders to the Habsburgs. Joachim and Markus Beck, who held positions in the military, were admitted to the estate of lords in 1597, but it appears that an outstanding loan to the emperor, rather than courage, was the primary motive behind these promotions. However, Joachim Beck did distinguish himself during a military campaign in Hungary a year later; see Wissgrill I:325-35.

42. The sources are less clear on the age of the noble status of the new lords. Most claimed to be of ancient nobility, and only seven families living in 1620 appear to have obtained noble status during the sixteenth century. Most of the Lower Austrian lords were barons, and only a handful of families—about one tenth—held the rank of count. Only one, Karl von Liechtenstein, was made prince (*Fürst*) in 1608. The following families were of new noble origin: Beck, Kunriz, Greiffenberg (Linsmayr), Salburg, Henkel, and probably also the Unverzagt and Wolzogen. Since the number of old families hardly changed, the addition of new members caused a relative decline of the old lords

(from 35 % to 22 %). While social mobility was thus high, it must be noted that the proportion (but not the number) of families who had been elevated to barons between 1580 and 1620 was as large in 1580 as in 1620 (about two fifth).

43. Most of these lords served as royal or archducal chamberlains and belonged to the old nobility. Frequently, such honorary functions were combined with positions in the central administration. Thus, Christoph von Teuffenbach was war councillor as well as Imperial chamberlain; see Siebmacher, *Niederösterreichische Adel* II:315.

44. H. Hassinger, "Die Landstände der österreichischen Länder. Zusammensetzung, Organisation und Leistung im 16.-18. Jahrhundert," *Jahrbuch für Landeskunde von Niederösterreich* (thereafter: *JbLkNÖ*) 34 (1964), 1004.

45. NÖLA, StA. AI/5, fol. 24ff.

46. Since some noble titles were granted only to the individual and not extended to their family and heirs, it is also possible that this affected the number of nobles who were recorded as having become extinct.

47. R. Endres, *Adel in der frühen Neuzeit* (Munich, 1993), 50.

48. Jaroslav Honc, "Populacni vyvojsesti generaci 125 ceskych panskych rodu v letech 1522-1794" [Die Populationsentwicklung der sechs Generationen von 125 böhmischen Herrengeschlechte 1522-1794], in *Historická demografie* 3 (1969), 20-51, cited by E. Maur, "Der böhmische und mährische Adel vom 16. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert," in *Adel im Wandel. Vorträge und Diskussionen des elften Symposions des Niederösterreichischen Instituts für Landeskunde Horn, 2.-5. Juli 1990*, eds. H. Feigl and W. Rosner (Vienna, 1991), 22.

49. E. Perroy, "Social Mobility among the French Noblesse in the Later Middle Ages," *Past and Present* 21 (1962), 31.

50. Between 1463-1666 the nobility of the French *election* Bayeux, for instance, secured its survival by multiplying the number of children who belonged to the surviving lines. In other words, noble houses became extinct, but, since the size of the surviving noble families multiplied, the nobility did not decline to the extent that the extinction of lines would indicate; see J.B. Wood, "Demographic Pressure and Social Mobility Among the Nobility of Early Modern France," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* VIII/1 (April 1977), and *The Nobility of the Election Bayeux, 1463-1666*. Continuity through Change (Princeton, 1980), Chap. II.

51. Thereafter the proportion of individual members slightly diminished, or possibly remained steady, which is in line with the general population stagnation in Lower Austria from the Thirty Years War to the late seventeenth century. Figures for 1415 and 1717 are derived from Hassinger, "Die Landstände," 1003; for the *Herrenstand* in 1720 see NÖLA, StA, AI/5, fol. 183ff. The number of individuals listed in the latter document probably do not include landless nobles and could therefore have been higher. On demographic trends see Klein, "Die Bevölkerung Österreichs vom Beginn des 16. bis zur Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts," in *Beiträge zur Bevölkerungs- und Sozialgeschichte Österreichs*, ed. Heimhold Helczmanovsky (Munich, 1973), 67-68.

52. The actual disappearance of old lines was much more spectacular. Only about one third (75) of the families living in 1580 still belonged to the estate of knights in 1620, since 30 (15 %) rose to the estate of lords, and almost one half (92) seem to have become extinct in the male line. It must be stressed that these figures are tentative because it was difficult to determine the exact size of the *Ritterstand* from the existing sources. For a number of families listed in some documents—such as the Hanauer, Haselbach, Hausmannstetter, Kirchhammer, Pfefferkorn, Pierbaum, Rosenhart—no eviden-

ce of immatriculation and membership in the Estates could be found. They were, therefore, excluded from the statistical analyses. Some, like the Pfefferkorns, clearly did not belong to the Estates, but owned property belonging to the estate of knights. Others, like the Hanauer, had become extinct in the male line but were listed as still living even in 1590. Some families had returned to the region of their origin (e.g. Schweinpeck and Kirchmayer). The evidence on a few families, such as the Mayer and Stubner was so contradictory that they had to be excluded as well. For a list of nobles included in this study see K. MacHardy, "Nobility in Crisis: The Case of Lower Austria, 1568-1620," (PhD Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1985), 291-308.

53. While no estimates have been made for the size of the upper noble estate for the late sixteenth century, a list drawn up by the baron Gundacker von Polheim in the early 17th century has been considered the most reliable source for the year 1620; see Hassinger, "Die Landstände," p. 1003. However, the *Polheim'sche Libell* does not include most of the Protestants who were proscribed during 1620, and also excludes many landless nobles. It omits entire new families who owned property in Lower Austria, while including members of families who clearly belonged to the estates of other provinces and countries, as well as nobles who had long been dead; see NÖLA, StA. AU/5, fol. 58ff. The *Polheim'sche Libell* was probably drawn up in 1621, if not later. The numerical differences between this list and my own estimates are not very great. I counted 24 more persons and 14 more families. However, our lists diverge greatly on the names of some 50 nobles who belonged to branches of families living in other provinces, notably in Upper Austria (e.g. Bartholomäus Dietrichstein, Wolf and Erasmus Gera and Gottfried Polheim), or others who had died before 1620 (e.g. Georg Christoph Concin, Marquard Christoph Urschenbeck, Christian and Hans Wolfart Tschernembl). On the other hand, Polheim omitted the names of over seventy lords, most of whom had been proscribed or were landless, and also a number of other nobles for reasons not entirely clear (e.g. Wolf Georg Althan, Georg Friedrich Herbertstein, Johann Eusebius Khuen and Georg Sigmund Lamberg).

54. The figures provided by various historians differ. For instance, it is unclear whether the lesser nobility declined in size; according to K. Richter, "Die böhmischen Länder von 1471-1740," in *Handbuch der Geschichte der böhmischen Länder*, vol. II: *Die böhmischen Länder von der Hochblüte der Ständeherrschaft bis zum Erwachen eines modernen Nationalbewusstseins* (Stuttgart, 1974), 243 it lost only about one tenth of its members, since most of the losses (311 or one third disappeared between 1557 and 1615)) were replaced with new admissions. However, according to V. Buzek, "Nizsi Slechta," 54, only 215 knights were admitted. In this case, the lesser nobility would have declined by 16 %. One of the problems seems to be that it is never clear which of the Bohemian territories have been included in the calculations, and whether the landless nobles, or only tax-paying nobles have been counted. Compare also the figures provided by T. Winkelbauer, "Krise der Aristokratie? Zum Strukturwandel des Adels in den böhmischen und niederösterreichischen Ländern im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 100 (1992), 328-53; Idem. "Wandlungen des Mährischen Adels um 1600," in *Jan Amos Comenius und die Politik seiner Zeit*, eds. K-H. Mack (Vienna, 1992), 16-36; J. Panek, "Das Ständewesen und die Gesellschaft in den böhmischen Ländern in der Zeit vor der Schlacht auf dem Weissen Berg (1526-1620)," *Historica XXV* (1985), 73-175.

55. This estimate is derived from the figures provided by Maur, "Der böhmische und mährische Adel," 21. However, the statistics in Winkelbauer. "Krise der Aristokratie," 332-33 suggest that the losses were lower.

56. Winkelbauer. 1992b, 330-33.

57. MacHardy, "The Rise of Absolutism," 411-15.

58. MacHardy, "The Rise of Absolutism," 412.

59. V. Bibl, "Die Vorgeschichte der Religionskonzession Kaiser Maximilian II.," *JbLkNÖ*, NF 13-14 (1914-15), 400-31; Pickl, "Die wirtschaftlichen Bestimmungen," 563-586.

60. Codicis Austriaci I (Vienna 1704), fol. 737.

61. The literature on social mobility in Western Europe is extensive. H. Kamen, *The Iron Century: Social Change in Europe, 1550-1660* (New York, 1971) provides an excellent overview on the earlier period. The best treatments on seventeenth century England is still Stone, *The Crisis of the Aristocracy*; and Stone and J.C.F. Stone, *An Open Elite? England, 1540-1880* (Oxford, 1984); see also Helen Miller, *Henry VIII and the English Nobility* (Oxford, 1986). The historiography on social nobility in France before the Revolution is equally rich; for a succinct summary of the debates see Goldstone, *Revolution and Rebellion*, 228-32, and G. Chaussinand-Nogaret *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: From Feudalism to Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1985). However, social ascent into the nobility during in sixteenth and seventeenth century France has been relatively neglected; see D. Bitton, *The French Nobility in Crisis, 1560-1640* (Stanford, 1969), and J.B. Wood, *Bayeux*. I.A.A. Thompson, "The Purchase of Nobility in Castile, 1552-1700," *The Journal of European Economic History* 8 (1979), 313-60 and C. Jago, "The Crisis of the Aristocracy in Seventeenth Century Castile," *Past and Present* 84 (1979), 60-90, review developments in Spain. The nobilities of the Holy Roman Empire have received much attention of late, but statistical treatments on social mobility, such as the excellent study by H. Reif, *Westfälischer Adel 1770-1860. Vom Herrschaftsstand zur regionalen Elite* (Göttingen, 1979), are still exceptional. Wolfgang Zorn, "Deutsche Führungsschichten des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts. Forschungsergebnisse seit 1945," in *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur*, vol. 6, eds. Georg Jäger, et. al. (Tübingen, 1981), 176-97; H. Reif, "Der Adel in der modernen Sozialgeschichte," in *Sozialgeschichte in Deutschland*, vol. IV: *Soziale Gruppen in der Geschichte*, eds. Wolfgang Schieder and Volker Sellin (Göttingen, 1987); and Endres, *Adel*, provide bibliographies and historiographical summaries. See also the contributions in H.H. Hofmann and G. Franz, eds., *Deutsche Führungsschichten in der Neuzeit. Eine Zwischenbilanz* (Boppard, 1980); and the articles in W. Schulze, ed., *Ständische Gesellschaft and soziale Mobilität* (Munich, 1988).

62. For these developments in the German territories, see E. Böhme, *Das fränkische Reichsgrafenkollegium im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Stuttgart, 1989), ch. I; and Endres, *Adel*, ch. II, who also provides an extensive bibliography.

63. Richter, "Die böhmischen Länder," 241.

64. Endres, *Adel*, 78, misinterprets the conclusions in my article. "Status, Konfession und Besitz," where I also stress this point and do not, as he assumes, assert that the nobility was closing its ranks

65. Besides abstention from usury, nobles had to conduct themselves in an "honorable fashion," which included peaceful relations with neighbours, refraining from adultery, or having illegitimate children. Other important rules to preserve social distinctions stipulated abstention from engaging in a bourgeois trade and marriage with commoners. All of these offenses could lead to rescission of membership; see NÖLA, RstA AI, fol. 63ff.; NÖLA, RstA AI/4, fol. 2 (1599.II.19). It should be noted that the establishment of a distinction between nobility and noble estates created in Lower Austria a situation where engagement in bourgeois occupations became theoretically acceptable among nobility who did not belong to the *Herren- and Ritterstand*, whereas before it had been prohibited to the entire nobility.

66. NÖLA, HStA, Lade XV, Varia (1588.IV.2).

67. For this voting procedure, see the minutes of the estates' meetings in NÖLA, Ständische Bücher 55-87, 98-126.

68. A landed estate taxed at 10 lbs. usually included some five to twenty-five peasant households, with a purchasing value between 5,000 to 10,000 *Gulden*, but the price could be higher. For example, in 1620 the estimated value of Hans Wilhelm Mayer's estate with 26 peasant households was 5,000 *Gulden*. Wolf Polani's property with 34 peasant households was worth 8,000 *Gulden*. See I. Hübel, "Die 1620 in Nieder- und Oberösterreich politisch Kompromittierten Protestanten," *Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für Geschichte des Protestantismus in Österreich (JbGPr)* 59 (1938), 59, and vol. 60 (1939), 107.

69. E. G. Schimka, "Die Zusammensetzung des Niederösterreichischen Herrenstandes von 1520-1620 (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Vienna, 1967), 36-37.

70. H. Knittler, "Adelige Grundherrschaft im Übergang," *Wiener Beiträge zur Geschichte der Neuzeit* 8 (1981), 84-111, provides examples of income from landed estates. For salary levels of officials see T. Fellner and H. Kretschmayr, eds., "Die Österreichische Zentralverwaltung. I Abteilung: Von Maximilian I. bis zur Vereinigung der Österreichischen und böhmischen Hofkanzlei" (1749), vol. 2: *Aktenstücke 1491-1681*, 202-206.

71. Some, such as Hans and Christoph Klee and Johan Baptist Linsmayr had been ennobled for only one year.

72. NÖLA, RstA AI, fol. 86 (1612).

73. Already in 1606 an attempt had been made by the estates to exclude landless nobles from voting at the assemblies, but this rule could not be enforced easily; see D. Schopf, "Die im Zeitraum von 1620-1740 erfolgten Neuaufnahmen in den Niederösterreichischen Herrenstand," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Vienna, 1960), p. 5

74. For example, before 1600, the Hüttendorfers, Facis, Isperers, Kneissls, and Pirchhaimers, all waited for less than ten years after ennoblement to be incorporated. During the following two decades, Matthias von Bloenstein was admitted after being ennobled for only nine years, Ferdinand and Maximilian Hoe von Hoeneegg for ten, and Zacharias Starzer for five years.

75. *Codicis Austriaci* I, fol 736-38; quote on fol. 737.

76. NÖLA, RStA AI/6-7, fol. 16-19.

77. V. Bibl, "Die Berichte des Reichshofrates," *JbLkNÖ*, NF 8 (1909), 94.

78. Georg Bernhard von Urschenbeck was *Landuntermarschall* from 1595 to 1609.

79. Christoph Greiss was *Landuntermarschall* from 1608 to 1618.

80. Spett, Grünberg, Hirschberg, Lembsit, Mierzer, Golz, Kain, and Pannicher were Protestants; only Reiffenberg was Catholic. The confession of the four remaining newcomers is uncertain.

81. Already after 1600, the number of Protestant knights from the Reich increased. These were the Heuberger, Wopping, Pannicher, Hoe, Gruenberg, Hirschberg, and Kain. Most were first and second generation émigrés from Saxony, Brandenburg, Bavaria, and Swabia.

82. MacHardy, "The Rise of Absolutism," 421-25.

83. Since the religious affiliation of 82 lines living in 1580 is unknown, it is difficult to give an accurate confessional breakdown for this year. It is highly unlikely that even a portion of the 82 unknown lines existing in 1580 were Catholic, as this would imply that the proportion of Catholic knights had been stagnant or decreasing until 1620. However, since all other evidence indicates that the Catholic nobility multiplied and since the socio-economic characteristics of the confessionally

unknown knights resemble those of the Protestant nobility, it is more probable that in 1580 the ratio between Catholic and Protestant knights was 10:90. If these unknown families are not counted, then 19 (16 %) of the lines and 28 (14 %) of their members were Catholic, while 166 (86 %) knights of 97 (84 %) lines were Protestant. One of these families, the Concin, had members belonging to both confessions. Such confessionally mixed families have been counted as separate branches and added to the total number of 'pure' families. By 1620 the proportion of Catholic families had increased to 29 (25 %), with 40 (20 %) individuals, while the number of Protestants had declined to 161 (75 %) knights, belonging to 87 (80 %) lines. The confessionally mixed families had risen to four. For the year 1620, the number of families with unknown confessional affiliation was sixteen, which provides for a fairly accurate distribution of the confessions, especially since a proportional number of these families seem to have belonged to the Catholic faith. If the percentage distribution is calculated on the above assumption, then the Catholic lines increased by about three quarters from 19 to 33, and their members by less than two thirds from 28 to 45, while the Protestant families had declined by about one half from 179 to 99, and their members by almost one third from 253 to 179.

84. Twenty-six of the new families were Protestant, while eighteen were Catholic. In actual numbers, then, incorporations of new Catholics were about the same in both noble estates, but the proportion of new Catholics was higher in the estate of lords because of the smaller total number of admissions. Since the confession of eight new families is unknown and two new families had members belonging to both confessions, the terminal number for calculating the percentage was 44 rather than 50. Two Catholic families, the Khevenhüller and Dietrichstein, re-emigrated to Lower Austria without being formally admitted.

85. The Rheingrafen were probably Catholics, while the confession of the Henkels at the time of admission is uncertain. The barons of Salburg and Krausenegg were also Catholic.

86. NÖLA. HStA, Aufnahmeakten S-22, fol. 2.

87. Overall, the proportion of immigrants from the other hereditary lands was very high in the estate of lords. Nearly half (28) of the new lords were first and second generation émigrés from these territories, especially from Styria. Only 16 % originated in the Reich, another 5 % came from Bohemia, and 3 % from Latin countries. It is unclear why the immigration of Protestant lords from Inner Austria was so intense during this period. The Catholic influx might be explained by the successful counter-reformatory activities of Archduke Ferdinand in Inner Austria after 1595, and by the great demand for Catholic nobles at the Imperial court. Ironically, the Counter-Reformation also may have prompted Protestants to move to Lower Austria where their religious persecution probably seemed comparatively mild.

88. Although the conversion to Catholicism of such prominent and old families as the Liechtenstein, or members of the barons of Puchheim and Althan, invigorated the Catholic opposition, it could not have been, as some historians assumed, the main force facilitating the formation of the Catholic Union in 1604. G. Reingrabner, *Adel und Reformation* (Vienna, 1976), 14, has made this assertion. Only between six and eight branches (at most 4 %) of the Protestant knights, and ten of the lords, had converted to Catholicism by 1620. Since one of these (Salburg) had embraced Catholicism in 1608 before entering the estate, and four others (the barons of Oedt, a branch of the Kollonitsch, Ehrenreich Gera, and Christoph Thonradl) had converted before they advanced from the estate of knights, only five branches (or 13 %) of the Protestant lords existing in 1580 had actually converted by 1620. The Lampl and a branch of the Welzer also converted, but they remained in the *Ritterstand*. The confession of the Anfangs and the Grünbergs, both members of the estate of knights, is not known for 1580, but

in 1620 they were Catholics. It is thus possible that they also were converts. Of the old lords, branches of the Puchheim, the Losenstein, Herbertstein, and Althan, as well as the entire house of Liechtenstein converted to Catholicism. I have assessed the loyalty of the Protestant nobles to their faith elsewhere; see MacHardy, "The Rise of Absolutism," 434-37.

89. Evidently, in the past the unreliability of lists drawn up by the Estates has made it impossible to arrive at exact figures about the confessional make-up of the noble Estates. G. Reingrabner has asserted that 10 % of the nobles living in 1580/83 were Catholic but that their proportion was higher in the *Ritterstand* than in the estate of lords. By 1620 about one quarter of the individual nobles were estimated to be Catholic, although by then, Reingrabner suspects, about a third of the nobles of the *Herrenstand* belonged to this confession. While the proportion of Catholics was clearly larger in the estate of lords already in 1580—with or without the "unknown" cases—it is nevertheless astonishing that Reingrabner's estimates of the percentage distribution based on just a few incomplete contemporary lists, does come fairly close to my results. However, the number distribution, the actual growth of Catholics, and diminution of Protestant nobles, are not apparent from his study. Moreover, the pitfalls inherent in his sources, of which he was largely aware, become clear if the actual number of nobles on which his estimates are based are analyzed more closely. Unfortunately, Reingrabner did not always provide the base number from which his percentages were calculated, but it is clear that he excluded all the nobles whose confession are uncertain as he considered them to be small in number; see Reingrabner, *Adel*, 14, 18. In another study, Reingrabner has provided a list of noble lines which he determined as Protestant, naming only 58 families belonging to the Estate of Knights in 1620; see G. Reingrabner, "Der protestantische Adel in Niederösterreich—seine Zusammensetzung und sein Beitrag zur Reformationsgeschichte des Landes" (Ph.D dissertation, University of Vienna, 1973), 266–67. This is much lower than the 87 knightly families which could be identified as Protestants in this study. Some other, less important, differences also exist between our data. Reingrabner's lists for 1580 and 1620 show members of the *Ritterstand* such as Ulrich von Pranck, also among the estate of lords, or includes nobles like Georg Bernhard Kirchberger among those who paid homage in 1620, as well as under those who had not done so. Stephan Pathy is surely Stephan Palffy, and Weikhard von Polheim seems to be identical with Weikhard von Puchheim; see Reingrabner, *Adel*, 12–13, 15, 17–20. We also differ on the number of families who had members belonging to both confessions, such as the Althans, Geras, Khevenhüllers, and Oedts, who clearly had Catholic and Protestant members in 1620, as well as the barons of Eck (or Egg) whose Catholic line resided in Carnolia, and not in Lower Austria; see Reingrabner, "Der protestantische Adel," 266–67; Wissgrill II:324–330.

90. I included among the "loyalists" all those Protestants who paid homage to Ferdinand II; all those who were proscribed, refused homage, and/or were active with the Homer Directorium, the Retzer Jurament, or fought in the Confederate army, were counted among the rebels; the remainder were defined as "neutral." The names of the proscribed Protestants, and those who paid homage, are derived from: Codes Diplomaticus Austriacus, Tom. IV, Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv Vienna, fol. 203-209; NÖLA, StA AIII/20, fol. 137-42; Khevenhiller, *Annales Ferdinandeae*, IX, fol. 1065-69; Handschrift der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 10.100d (Retzer Jurament); Ignaz Hübl, "Die Ächtungen."

91. Wealth, or more accurately the size of landholding, also appears to have had little influence on a Protestant noble's political choices since a cross section of rich and poor property owners joined with the landless in opposition. They were also well distributed among the other two factions.

However, this does not mean that political dissent was unrelated to economic difficulties. As I have argued before, the growth in the average size of noble families, the increase of landless nobles, and the loss of church property, all had a profound effects on the resources of the Protestant nobility; see MacHardy, "The Rise of Absolutism," 430-31.

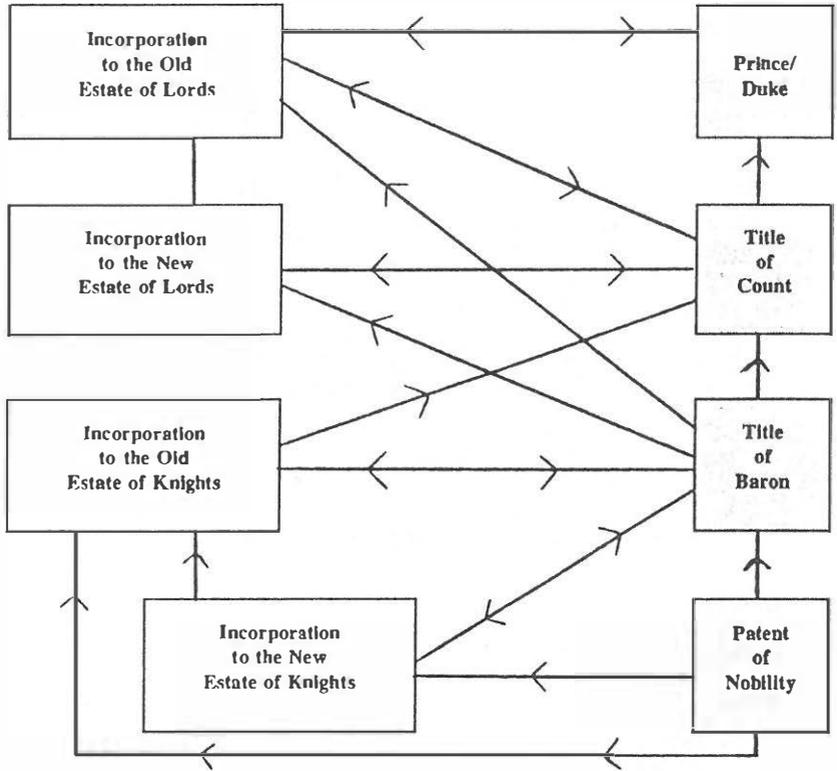
92. Panek, "Das Ständewesen," 108; Richter, "Die böhmischen Länder," 244, 264.

93. Winkelbauer, "Wandlungen," 23.

94. R. Birely, "Ferdinand II: Founder of the Habsburg Monarchy," in *Crown, Church and Estates*, eds. R.J.W. Evans and T.V. Thomas (New York, 1991), 234-35.

95. For a closer analysis of this problem, see MacHardy, "The Rise of Absolutism," 434-38.

Figure 1. Possibilities of Upward Status Mobility



Legend:

Status
Conferred by
Estates

Status
Conf.
by Ruler

Figure 2. Yearly Admissions to the Old and New Estates of Knights, 1580-1620

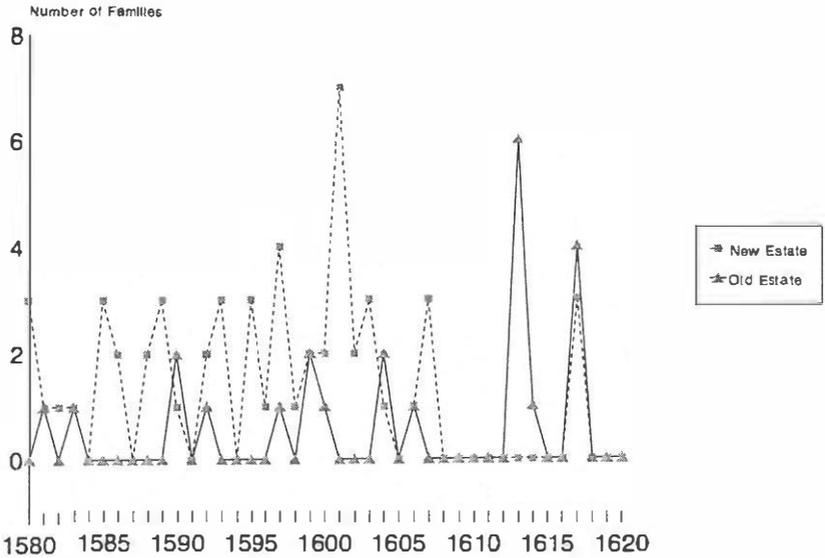


Figure 3. Admissions to the Estates of Knights per and Decades, 1570-1619

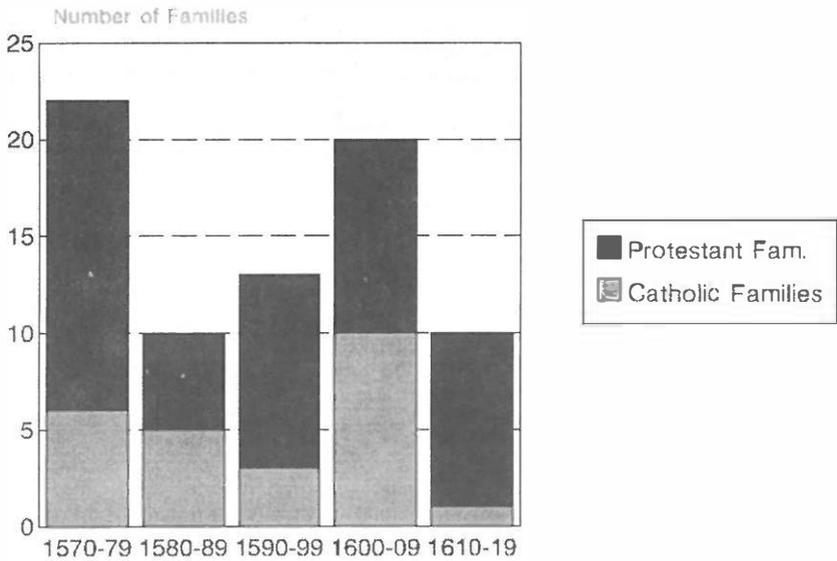


Figure 4: Yearly Admissions to the Old and New Estate of Lords, 1580-1620

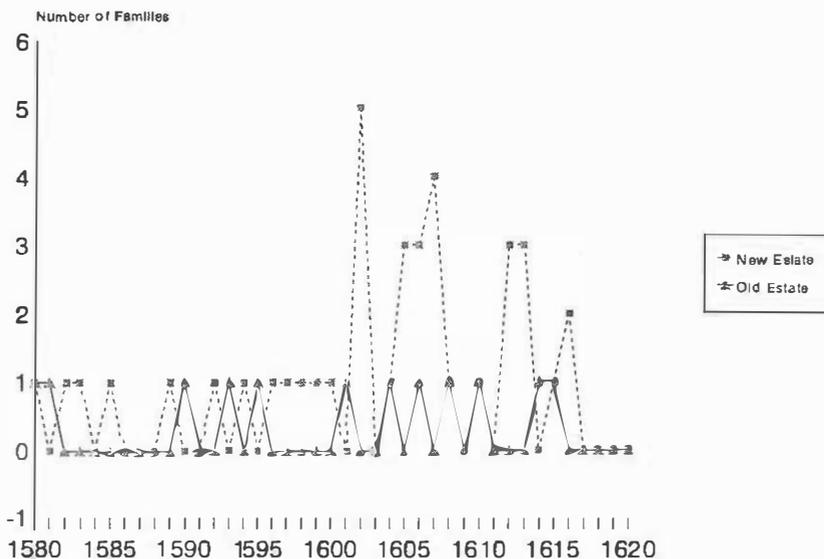


Figure 5: Admissions to the Estate of Lords per Confession and Decade 1570-1619

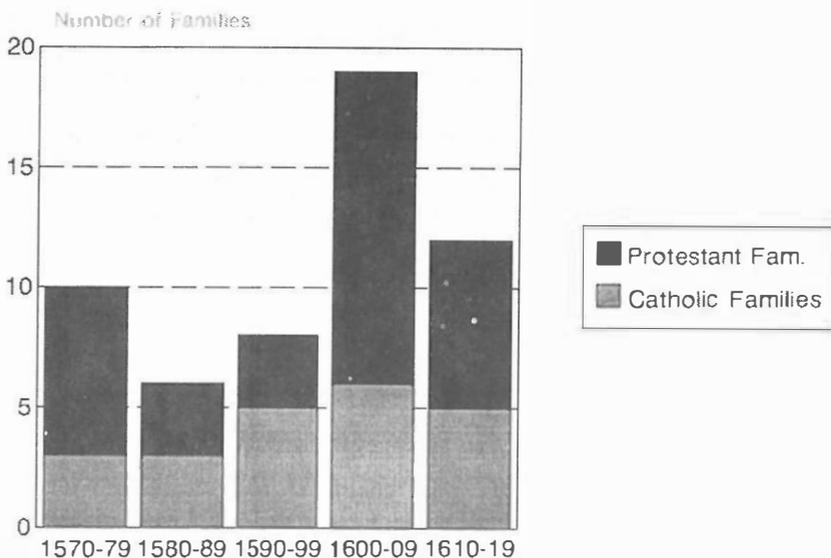


TABLE 1				
Age of Nobility of Knightly Families 1580 and 1620				
	1580		1620	
<i>Noble Status in</i>	<i>Fam.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Fam.</i>	<i>%</i>
3rd Generation and above	97	72.4	62	68.1
2nd Generation	18	13.4	25	27.5
1st Generation	19	14.2	4	4.4
Total	134	100.0	91	100.0
Status Unknown	63		37	
	197		128	

TABLE 2		
Membership of Families in the Estate of Knights 1620		
<i>Admitted</i>	<i>Families</i>	<i>%</i>
Before 1568	62	48.4
1568-1579	16	12.5
1580-1599	17	13.3
1600-1620	33	25.8
Total	128	100.0

TABLE 3				
Social Composition of the Estate of Lords by Age of Baronage				
	1580		1620	
<i>Age of Baronage</i>	<i>Fam.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Fam.</i>	<i>%</i>
Ancient	14	25.9	14	16.7
15th Century	5	9.3	4	4.8
1500-1539	13	24.1	10	11.9
1540-1579	22	40.7	21	25.0
1580-1620	-	-	35	41.6
Total	54	100.0	84	100.0
Status Unknown	2		3	

TABLE 4				
Social Composition of the Estate of Lords by Date of Admission				
	1580		1620	
<i>Admitted</i>	<i>Fam.</i>	%	<i>Fam.</i>	%
Ancient	14	26.4	12	13.8
15th Century	5	9.4	4	4.6
1500-1539	9	17.0	9	10.3
1540-1580	25	47.2	19	21.8
1580-1620	-	-	43	49.4
Total	53	100.0	87	100.0
Unknown	3			

TABLE 5
Distribution of Families and Members
in the Lords' and Knights' Estate (combined)

A. Lines

<i>Year</i>	<i>Lords</i>		<i>Knights</i>		<i>Total</i>	
1580	56	22%	197	78%	253	100%
1620	87	40%	128	60%	215	100%
Diffe- rence	+31	+55%	-69	-35%	-38	-15%

B. Members

<i>Year</i>	<i>Lords</i>		<i>Knights</i>		<i>Total</i>	
1580	119	30%	281	70%	400	100%
1620	243	52%	224	48%	467	100%
Diffe- rence	+124	+106%	-57	-20%	+67	+17%

TABLE 6										
Distribution of the Confessions in the Estate of Knights										
A. Lines										
Catholics					Protestants				Total	
Year	No.	Proportion of Unknown	Estimated Total	%	No.	Proportion of Unknown	Estim. Total	%	Mixed Confession	Total
1580	19	-	19	10%	97	82	179	90%	1	198
1620	29	4	33	25%	87	12	99	75%	4	132
Difference			+14				-80			-69
B. Members										
Year	No.	Proportion of Unknown	Estimated Total	%	No.	Proportion of Unknown	Estim. Total	%	Mixed Confession	Total
1580	28	-	28	10%	166	87	253	90%	-	281
1620	40	5	45	20%	161	18	179	80%	-	224
Difference			+17				-74			-57

TABLE 7 Distribution of the Confessions in the Estate of Lords										
A. Lines										
	Catholics				Protestants				Total	
Year	No.	Proportion of Unknown	Estimated Total	%	No.	Proportion of Unknown	Estim. Total	%	Mixed Confession	Total
1580	13	1	14	25%	40	4	44	75%	2	58
1620	37	1	38	39%	57	3	60	61%	11	98
Difference	+24		+24				+16			
B. Members										
Year	No.	Proportion of Unknown	Estimated Total	%	No.	Proportion of Unknown	Estim. Total	%	Mixed Confession	Total
1580	19	1	20	17%	93	6	99	83%		119
1620	76	2	78	32%	161	4	165	68%		243
Difference	+57		+58				+66			

**HISTORY & SOCIETY
IN CENTRAL EUROPE
2
MEDIUM ÆVUM QUOTIDIANUM
29**

**Nobilities in Central and Eastern
Europe:
Kinship, Property and Privilege**

edited by

János M. Bak

**Hajnal István Alapítvány
Budapest**

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LECTORI SALUTEM!

The aim of the editors and publishers of this series of occasional papers is to present recent results of research in social history to the international public. In the spirit of the Hungarian historian of Europe, István Hajnal (1892-1956), we believe that the history of "small nations" may highlight aspects of general development that are less visible in the life of major civilisations.

The volumes in this series will address specific aspects of social development in medieval and modern central Europe. We intend to focus on the region between the German lands and the Byzantine-Russian world, to explore similarities and differences in this area. Instead of arguing the validity of the term, we shall publish studies that may enable our readers to decide to what extent is "central Europe" a historical reality or merely a dream of intellectuals and politicians. That is why we chose a medieval map for our cover: it emphasizes the centuries-old connecting function of the great rivers but contains no ephemeral political boundaries.

It is also our hope to contribute to the understanding of present developments and upheavals in a region about which few critical analyses are available in the English-speaking world. At the same time we should like to foster modern methods and approaches in social history, for so long neglected in our countries.

The present volume appears in close cooperation with the *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* Society and contains studies mainly on medieval and early modern nobilities of the region. The papers of two recently deceased Hungarian medievalists as well as articles of a Czech, a Polish and a Bulgarian historian discuss the social history medieval nobilities. Two articles, on Hungarian and Austrian nobles of the ancien régime look at social mobility and estate in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The volume closes with an essay by István Hajnal on the end of the noble-corporatist world in nineteenth-century Hungary. With publishing three articles of the generations preceding ours, we wish to bow to those who taught us, without wanting to hide that their questions and answers are not necessarily ours. By printing papers of younger scholars, in turn, we hope to present recent research in the area on topics that are discussed among social historians everywhere.

The volume editor wishes to express his gratitude to those friends and colleagues who assisted in the - often almost unscramountable - task of translating and editing the Czech, Magyar and Polish contributions: Catherine Allen, Simon Carne, Tamás Domahidy, Vera Gáthy, Ryszard Grzeziak, and Paul Knoll. Needless to say that he alone feels responsible for the remaining shortcomings, which are, probably, many. Maybe, we shall publish once a volume only on the intricacies and pitfalls of translating medieval and medievalist texts.

H & S

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