

Source: [KBHistoryMasterIndex](#)

1 | Diplomacy, Kissinger

The Document: [KBe20hist201srcKissingerAnnotated](#)

#disorganized #flo

- European balance of power system emerged after medieval collapse
- Development into model of “universality” => one emperor, one church
- If the Holy Roman Emperor were to actually succeed, all of Europe would become auxiliaries to it
 - So, why no central control?
 1. Lack of transportation and communication systems made tying large countries together difficult
 2. HRE had separation between church and state, which makes the authority less authoritative
 - Pope + emperor constantly fought
 - Need constitution to settle
 - Enabled feudal rulers to enhance autonomy
 - Hasburg dynasty + combination with Spanish royalty => Über powerful HRE => Almost centralized nation
 - CLAIM: eventually weakened pope brought end to religious universality, which brought end to that centralized Europe idea
 - Raison d’etat
 - *Each state depended on the other. The well being of the state justified whatever means were employed to further it. The national interest supplanted the medieval notion of a universal morality.*
 - Balance of power became dominant
 - INFERENCE: more sensible government
 - “Depended on reason and ability to assess power relationships”
 - France!
 - CLAIM: lost the most by the boom of the Holy Roman Empire
 - Near-death of HRE would allow France to expand eastwards
 - Cardinal de Richelieu
 - “Father of the modern state system”
 - Proposed and practiced Raison d’etat for France
 - Counter-reformation
 - HRE trying to revive Catholic universality + stamp out protestantism
 - Lead to Thirty Years’ War => 1618
 - Danish and Swedish armies cut into Germany
 - French army joined in too
 - Devastated central Europe + lost Germany a third of its population
 - And then... our good friend Richelieu instituted Raison d’etat
 - France was surrounded by HRE
 - All others loyal to HRE
 - Hence, the Cardinal disregarded the fact that he is the Cardinal, and instituted this idea => State > Religion
 - Sided with the Protestants
 - CLAIM:

Had the Habsburg emperors played according to the same rules or understood the emerging world of *raison d'état*, they would have seen how well placed they were to achieve what Richelieu feared most—the pre-eminence of Austria and the emergence of the Holy Roman Empire as the dominant power on the Continent

- HRE Emperor Ferdinand II
 - Practiced the opposite of *raison d'état*, which means religion + morality > state interest
 - Refused to treaty with the Muslim Turks/Protestant Swedes
 - Less concerned with the Empire's welfare than that of the will of god
 - "The state existed to serve religion ... for Ferdinand"
 - Richelieu is secular as minister, while salvation is only a personal objective => conflict with Ferdinand
 - To Richelieu, "the state has no immorality" => acting on the state means must act now or never
 - CLAIM: HRE would have expanded more if they agreed to work with the protestants who were totally fine with HRE dominating politically
 - Edict of reinstatution
 - Demanded land taken by protestants since 1555 be returned
- Richelieu subsidized the Protestant German fight against HRE
 - Unique and novel secular support (especially because Richelieu himself is a Catholic)
 - In the French national interest => prevented HRE encirclement of France
- Raison d'état extention and failure
 - Too much power without morals is no good
 - Louis XIV over exploited the rest of europe
 - In the end, this was detrimental to France
 - When most states starts being fully rational and not at all moral, this becomes less fun > Under Raison d'état, "The stronger would seek to dominate, and the weaker would resist by forming coalitions to augment their individual strengths"
- CLAIM: Federick the Great's decision to invade Silesia was pure strategy move
 - Conquest made Prussia a "*bona-fide* Great Power"
 - Prussia joined by France, Spain, etc. in war of 1740-1748
 - In 1756-1763, switched sides
 - CLAIM: pure result of calculations of benefit
- Nonsecular wars less violent than holy wars because CLAIM: they did not involve emotion
- England mediated
 - Policy based on throwing itself into the weaker side
 - King William III engineered this
 - *Raison d'état* did not require expansion, for "national interest to be in the preservation of the European balance"
 - Glorious revolution kicked James II off the throne, chose William of Orange of the Netherlands as replacement
 - Used the fact that if France occupied Belgium, it would surely eat up the Netherlands, to cause England to fight in the war
 - So, William fought Louis XIV
 - Formed Grand Alliance — Sweden Spain Savoy, Austria, Netherlands, and England all against France
 - Constantly fought, and left France to be strong but not dominant
 - Textbook Balance of Power!

- The fighting as a classic example of *Raison d'état*: ideologically, England and France are on the same side. However, it is not in England's best interest to join them

CLAIM:

In this manner, Great Britain became the balancer of the European equilibrium, first almost by default, later by conscious strategy. Without Great Britain's tenacious commitment to that role, France would almost surely have achieved hegemony over Europe in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, and Germany would have done the same in the modern period.

Kissinger's Take Home Messages

And I quote:

” ” ”

- Power is difficult to access
- Equilibrium best achieved if they are in common interest
- Balance of power inhibits capacity to overthrow order
- Agreement on shared values inhibits desire to overthrow order

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