

# Political Dynasties and Party Strength: Evidence from Victorian Britain

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## Abstract

Political dynasties raise concerns about elite entrenchment in democracies. While existing studies have found that dynastic politicians have an electoral advantage, they ignore the strategies of political parties to cope with dynasts. To fill this gap, I develop a theoretical framework where parties face a trade-off between nominating strong but undisciplined dynastic politicians, or loyal but weak non-dynastic candidates. Under this framework, I predict that parties rely on dynasts only in districts where their organizations are weak. Using a novel data set of party strength in Victorian Britain, a period marking the birth of mass party organizations, I show dynasts deterred political competition, had a larger personal vote, were less likely to run where parties had local organizations, and dissented from the party line in parliament more frequently. The paper demonstrates that party weakness plays a key role in explaining the temporal and spatial variation in the persistence of dynasties.

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*For a long time parties had no distinct life of their own save in Parliament; in the country they barely existed as moral entities independently of the personages or families which were an embodiment of them.*

- Moisei Ostrogorski, 1902

*(...) we owe our position in the country, and have always done, much more to local personal influence than to the popularity of our own political party.*

- Walter Hume Long, MP, *Electoral Politics and Political Change in the East Midlands of England, 1918-1935*, P. R. Shorter, Cambridge, 1975) quoted by Cannadine (1990, 150)

## 1 Introduction

Dynasties represent a form of elite entrenchment and the unequal distribution of political power in democracies. From a Rawlsian perspective, one could justify this type of inequality if it improved the welfare of society at large. However, this seems hardly the case since it has been shown that dynastic politicians are responsible for poor public goods provision (Ferraz and Finan 2009) and development projects of poor quality (Velasco Rivera 2015a). Political dynasties also undermine the quality of representation in other ways. Often, for example, members of political dynasties represent the most privileged classes in their country. This violates the principle of descriptive representation (Pitkin 1967) because dynasts only give voice to a narrow set of interests in the legislative arena.

There is a wide cross-national and temporal variation in the persistence of political dynasties. Among developing countries, for example, we find that 22 percent of national legislators in India are dynastic (Chandra Forthcoming), with the proportion having increased steadily over time (Velasco Rivera 2015b). In the Philippines, the share of dynastic politicians in the legislature is close to 60 percent (Querubin 2010). There is also significant variation in the incidence of hereditary politicians across developed nations. For instance, in Japan dynastic

legislators represent 20 percent of parliament seats (Asako et al. 2013). In the US, although dynastic politicians accounted for no more than 6 percent of national representatives in the late 1990s, in the eve of the Civil War they held a fifth of seats in Congress (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009).

What accounts for the variation in the persistence of political dynasties across time and space? While existing studies have found that members of political dynasties enjoy an electoral advantage (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009, Rossi 2009, Querubin 2010, Feinstein 2010, Asako et al. 2013), they ignore the strategies of political parties to cope with dynasts and win elections. To fill this gap, I develop a theoretical framework in which parties decide to nominate either dynastic, or non-dynastic candidates to maximize the number of seats they hold in a legislature. Parties make this decision subject to maintaining a minimum level of discipline in parliament. Parties also face a trade-off in deciding which type of candidate to nominate. While dynastic candidates have an electoral advantage, this advantage allows them to be less disciplined in parliament, thereby weakening party brands. Finally, parties have different levels of organizational strength across districts. Therefore, I predict that political parties are more likely to rely on dynastic candidates in places where their organizations are weak. Parties are willing to incur the loss in party discipline only when it is necessary to rely on dynastic politicians to guarantee their electoral success.

I test this theory by analyzing a novel data set of party strength in Victorian Britain, a country and period that represents the canonical case of the birth of mass party organizations. As evidence of the electoral advantage of dynasts, I show that dynastic politicians deterred political competition and gained a larger personal vote. In terms of the strategies parties adopted to cope with dynasts, my analysis shows that dynastic candidates were less likely to run for office in districts where parties reported the presence of local organizations. Finally, I find that dynastic legislators dissented from the party line more frequently in highly partisan roll calls. These findings suggest dynastic politicians were more likely to run in places

where parties were weak because of the trade-off parties face when nominating candidates. Together, my findings demonstrate that the strength of party organization is a key factor in explaining the cross-national and temporal variation in the persistence of political dynasties.

My paper builds on, but differs from, the existing literature that has examined the role of parties to explain the incidence of dynastic politicians. Bohlken and Chandra (2014) argue that political parties are more likely to re-nominate dynastic politicians because they want to promote loyalty. Similarly, Smith (2012) claims that the decentralization of the candidate nomination procedure leads to an increase in the incidence of dynastic politicians. Chhibber (2011) argues that weak parties are more likely to have dynastic leadership. However, in contrast to my framework, none of these arguments can explain the within-party variation in the nomination of dynasts because they focus on explanatory variables measured at the party level (e.g., decentralization and party strength) and do not consider the trade-off parties face when relying on dynastic candidates.

This paper also makes empirical contributions by providing a direct measure of party organizational strength. Existing studies rely on measures endogenous to both party strength and candidate selection. Nooruddin and Chhibber (2007) and Keefer and Khemani (2009), for instance, rely on electoral volatility to measure party strength. A problem with this measure is that lack of volatility does not imply party strength: a consistently strong incumbent may win elections relying on his own resources. Tavits (2011, 2013) proposes the use of partisan control of local office as a proxy for the organizational strength of parties. However, it is unclear whether this is a good measure, as parties may be able to control local office because of the type of candidates they nominate for office. Chhibber, Refsum Jense-nius and Suryanarayanan (2012) use qualitative knowledge of specific geographical units and time periods to ascertain the strength of parties. This approach constitutes an improvement, but the information required to construct party strength is available only at a high level of geographical aggregation (e.g., states). Instead, I rely on the surveys parties carried out to

record the presence of associations at the district level. These surveys allow me to measure party organizational strength at a lower level of geographical aggregation independent from electoral outcomes and candidate characteristics.

More broadly, my paper provides a framework for understanding the connection between the organizational strength of parties and personalistic politics. Existing work has shown, for example, that organizations increase party cohesion (Tavits 2013), but does not tell us about the implications of organizations for candidate selection. Other studies have shown that businessmen (Gehlbach, Sonin and Zhuravskaya 2010), criminals (Aidt, Golden and Tiwari 2011), and personalistic candidates (Keefer and Khemani 2009) run in places where there is low party strength, but do not shed light on the trade-offs parties face when relying on personalistic politicians. My theory and findings show that when parties invest in organizations, their reliance on personalistic candidates diminishes, thereby improving party discipline and strengthening party brands.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 introduces a theory of dynasties in a democracy. Section 3 provides a brief historical context of Victorian Britain. Section 4 describes the data used to test the theory. Section 5 demonstrates that dynastic politicians had an electoral advantage in the British context. Section 6 shows dynastic candidates were less likely to run in districts where parties had local organizations. Section 7 analyzes roll calls in the House of Commons and finds that dynastic Liberal Members of Parliament (MPs) dissented from the party line more frequently. Section 8 concludes.

## 2 Theory

In this section I introduce a theory to explain the prevalence of dynasties in a democracy. My theory relies on a framework where parties face a trade-off between nominating electorally strong but undisciplined dynastic candidates, or loyal but weak non-dynastic candidates.

The main prediction of my theory is that parties rely on dynastic politicians where their organizations are weak.

In my theory, parties care about maximizing the number of seats they hold in a legislature subject to the constraint of maintaining a certain level of discipline among its members. Parties need to ensure that they win the largest number of seats possible to pass legislation and maximize the share of rents they derive from office. In both Continental and Westminster systems, for instance, the party commanding a majority in parliament plays a dominant role in shaping the cabinet composition and setting the legislative agenda. However, capturing a large share of seats in parliament means nothing if a party cannot maintain a certain level of unity among its members. The inability to ensure discipline among its members undermines a party's efforts to push its legislative agenda through parliament, results in cabinet reshuffling (Kam and Indridason 2005), erodes party brands (Carey 2007), and ultimately hurts the electoral prospects of parties (Kam 2009*b*, Tavits 2013).

Parties face a trade-off between nominating electorally strong but undisciplined dynastic politicians, or loyal but weak non-dynastic candidates. This trade-off captures the essence of dynastic politicians (i.e., those who had a relative in power before they first ran for office). In terms of the electoral advantage, previous studies have found that dynastic politicians benefit from the political capital of their office-holding relatives to secure power (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009, Querubin 2010, Rossi 2009)<sup>1</sup>, report higher votes shares, and are more likely to win office (Asako et al. 2013, Feinstein 2010). This advantage may stem from their family name, having a more established network of operatives, and/or their pecuniary resources.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>One exception to this finding is Van Coppenolle (2013), who finds a null effect for the inter-generational incumbency advantage in the British House of Commons. One reason for the null finding is that staying in office required a significant investment on behalf of politicians (Rush 2001). As such, it may have been the case that politicians did not derive any additional benefits from holding office that could contribute towards the emergence and persistence of dynasties.

<sup>2</sup>One can think of dynasts as belonging to the general class of personalistic politicians. Members of this class enjoy an advantage in individual resources such as money, brand name, and/or network of operatives.

At the same, the advantage of dynasts implies that they depend less on party resources to get elected; this allows them to be more independent in parliament. Kam (2009b) shows that parties rely on promotion within, and expulsion from, the party to induce discipline among their members. I argue that these tools are most effective among members who depend on party resources for their electoral success. Therefore, all else equal, dynastic legislators should be less disciplined in parliament relative to non-dynastic legislators.

Organizational strength is a fundamental feature of modern political parties (Panebianco 1988, Aldrich 1995) and a key electoral resource that parties provide to their candidates. By party organizational strength, I specifically refer to one of the three dimensions considered in Tavits (2013) to define the concept: the extent of a party's local branches.<sup>3</sup> As theorized, and shown in Tavits (2013), the presence of local party branches has a positive impact on the electoral performance of a party. Where local branches exist, parties can rely on a network of canvassers to mobilize supporters during an election, use their past experience in running elections, and enlist new members during non-election periods. However, parties have limited resources and may not be able to build strong organizations across all districts in a given polity.

Given this environment, I predict that parties are more likely to nominate dynastic candidates in districts with low levels of organizational strength. When local organizations are absent, a party needs to make up for its electoral deficiencies. Dynastic candidates are a solution to this problem. When parties are weak, they are willing to pay the cost in terms

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The theory discussed in this section does not put a strong emphasis on which specific factor is the one that matters most. Rather, the argument introduced here relies on the assumption that dynastic politicians have an advantage across these dimensions over non-dynastic politicians. Other examples of personalistic politicians include movie stars, who by virtue of their profession have high name recognition, and businessmen, whose advantage may reside in their ability to fund their own campaigns.

<sup>3</sup>The other two dimensions are a party's membership and the professionalization of its leadership. The author claims that she separated these three dimensions for analytical purposes. However, she argues that each of these dimensions are likely to reinforce each other (Tavits 2013, p. 34-35). For the purposes of this section, I place special emphasis on local branches of parties, as this is the most proximate characteristic relevant for electoral competition at the local level, and party membership may be endogenous to it.

of a loss in parliamentary discipline to ensure an electoral victory.<sup>4</sup>

The theoretical framework introduced in this paper builds on existing work that has shown that parties are strategic in the selection of candidates and rely on high valence politicians in places where parties are weak. Galasso and Nannicini (2011), for example, show that in swing districts parties converge on candidates with more education. However, my contribution is to show that parties do not have to converge on high valence politicians. This simply follows from the fact that local organizations across parties do not necessarily overlap across districts. Keefer and Khemani (2009) show that legislators in districts with high party turnover spend more on pork. However, it is difficult to know whether a legislator's behavior is the result of his background or the incentives he faces in office. As I discuss below, I improve on this work by measuring party organizational strength in a direct manner and by focusing on a politician's background as the outcome.

The theory I introduce contrasts with previous efforts that have examined the role of parties to explain the prevalence of dynastic politicians in democracies (Chhibber 2011, Smith 2012, Bohlken and Chandra 2014). In contrast to my framework, none of the existing studies can explain the within-party variation in the nomination of dynasts because they focus on explanatory variables measured at the party level and do not consider the trade-off parties face when relying on dynastic candidates. Bohlken and Chandra (2014) argue that political parties are more likely to re-nominate dynastic politicians because they want to promote loyalty. But this study cannot explain why parties need to promote loyalty in some contexts but not others. Smith (2012) claims that the decentralization of the candidate nomination procedure leads to an increase in the incidence of dynastic politicians. While the nomination procedure of candidates is important, it is unclear how it explains the variation in the incidence of dynasts across time and within parties. Chhibber (2011) argues that

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<sup>4</sup>The prediction of my theory does not rely on whether candidates have agency or mobility. Appendix 8 demonstrates that giving candidates bargaining power or mobility does not change the theory's main prediction.

weak parties are more likely to have dynastic leadership. Party strength is a key feature of modern parties, but treating it as a party characteristic does not allow us to understand the trade-off parties face when dealing with dynastic politicians.

In my account, political dynasties occur not despite the goals of political parties, but because these organizations are built to win elections; dynastic candidates are sometimes the best alternative to accomplish this objective. The main insight of my theoretical framework is that the prevalence of dynasties is endogenous to the level of organizational strength of parties. Where parties are weak (in organizational terms), the incidence of dynasties will be high. This finding can give us leverage in understanding why certain regions within a given country have more dynasties than others, why some parties are more dynastic than others, and why there is variation in the incidence of political dynasties across time and countries.

### 3 Historical Context

This section discusses the historical context in Victorian Britain. The discussion of the historical case highlights three main patterns. First, the individual resources of candidates were key to guaranteeing electoral success during most of the period, and politicians used these resources to build dynasties. Second, the national leadership of parties had agency over the selection of candidates, and it was aware of the trade-offs involved when nominating well-endowed candidates. Third, and finally, the discussion in this section shows that the Second Reform Act increased the importance of party organization at the expense of individual resources.

I focus on Victorian Britain because it represents one of the canonical cases for the birth of mass party organizations (Ostrogorski 1902). Studying this case is useful because it allows us to understand the impact that the emergence of party organizations had on the demand for dynastic politicians. Examining this case also allows us to understand the relationship

between party development and dynastic persistence in other settings.

### 3.1 Candidate Resources and Elections

Scholars have referred to most of the period I examine as the “Plutocratic Era” (Pinto-Duschinsky 1981). Cannadine (1990, p. 16) notes that during most of the nineteenth century, “there was an exceptionally high correlation between wealth, status, and power for the very simple reason that they were all territorially determined and defined ...indeed, wealth, status, and power were so closely intertwined in the case of British patrician classes that it is virtually impossible to write about one without mentioning the others.”

Contributing to the correlation between wealth and power was the fact that members of parliament were unpaid, and wealth was a key ingredient to getting elected and staying in office (Rush 2001). Candidates had to cover all expenses associated with running for office. These included keeping the electors registry up to date, setting up polling stations, covering the fees of return officers, transporting voters to the polls, and entertaining them on election day, among others (Gash 1953, Hanham 1959). This required considerable expense on behalf of candidates, with the cost being higher in counties than in boroughs (Hanham 1959, Pinto-Duschinsky 1981).<sup>5</sup> Particularly before the Second Reform Act, parties could provide little help because their level of organization outside parliament was rudimentary (Ostrogorski 1902, Herrick 1945, McKenzie 1951, Bulmer-Thomas 1965, Cox 1987).<sup>6</sup>

The preeminence of resources in determining electoral success during this period may be one of the reasons why Van Coppenolle (2013) finds a null effect of office on the probability of

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<sup>5</sup> As discussed in Section 5.1, the cost of elections was higher in counties because of their larger size, the number of paid agents needed, and the transportation costs required to bring voters to the polls.

<sup>6</sup> As an example of the importance of resources, one can refer to James Lowther, a conservative MP, who, recalling a race for his seat in the House of Commons noted: “The election was the last held under the old system ... and in accordance with the electioneering practices which were then in vogue, my agent began operations by chartering every available conveyance for taking electors to the poll and by communicating with all out-voters and sending them return tickets to Oakham. One gentleman eventually came all the way from the south of France to vote - at my expense.” (Viscount Ullswater, *A Speaker’s Commentaries*, Edward Arnold, London, 1925, Vol. 1, 154) quoted by Rush (2001, 85)

a legislator having a relative hold a future seat in the House of Commons. In other contexts, holding office has been found to be key in explaining the emergence of dynastic politicians (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009, Rossi 2009, Querubin 2010). But in a setting where pecuniary resources are key to guaranteeing electoral success, office-holders may not gain additional advantages that they can transfer to their relatives.

Patrons played a particularly important role in the emergence and perpetuation of political dynasties in Britain. A patron was a property owner (of land or capital), who used his influence and coercion to select candidates and/or secure votes for his preferred electoral candidate (Gash 1953, p. 175). Constituencies in their control came to be referred to as proprietary (or nomination) boroughs, and within them, patrons usually selected family members to hold a seat in the House of Commons.<sup>7</sup> Gash's eloquence on this point is worth quoting in full:

“The predominant impression to be gained from an examination of the proprietary boroughs in this period is that they were used mainly to secure the return to parliament of members of the proprietor’s family. Younger sons or retired uncles were provided with an interesting and not unimportant career in which their status as M.P. could lend distinction and influence to their relatives.” (Gash 1953, p. 215-216)

Indeed, in appendix D, I focus on the two major parties during the period and show that 61 percent of Liberal and 73 percent of Conservative dynastic MPs serving in proprietary constituencies were related to the patron.

Finally, according to Gash (1953, p. 202), owing to their resources, MPs backed by patrons had influence over the party agenda and were independent in their parliamentary

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<sup>7</sup>Gash (1953, p. 193) also discusses the existence of family boroughs. In distinguishing family from proprietary boroughs he notes: “in the one [family boroughs] it was the candidate [popularity, local feeling, respect for the family connection], in the other [proprietary boroughs] it was the influence [a patron’s property] behind the candidate, that was the dominant aspect.” Hanham (1959, p. 42) echoes this distinction. Empirically, however, as Gash (1953) acknowledges, it is not feasible to distinguish between the two. Further, my theory does not require determining which element is more important in giving rise to a dynastic politician. All that it matters is that they have an advantage across at least one of these dimensions (e.g., charisma, pecuniary resources, etc.).

behavior. And as noted in Hanham (1959), the role of patrons was not restricted to boroughs. Several counties saw landowners using their influence to have a member of their family elected to office.

### 3.2 Candidate Selection and Trade-Offs

The national leadership of parties played an important role in the selection of candidates. This was particularly the case in the latter half of the nineteenth century. From the 1850's onwards, Liberals and Conservatives created the position of a national agent. The national agent was in charge of taking care of the business associated with election petitions throughout the country, finding candidates, and drawing candidate lists (Hanham 1959, Bulmer-Thomas 1965, p. 108).

Local party organizations may have played a role in the process of candidate selection as well (Hanham 1959). However, local organizations had less influence among Conservatives because they were brought together under the umbrella of the National Union of Conservative and Constitutional Associations to provide mobilizing support at the time of the election, and not to set policy (Ostrogorski 1902, McKenzie 1951).<sup>8</sup>

Parties did not necessarily rely on local candidates. There are several instances where constituencies imported candidates from other areas because they had the necessary resources needed to secure office. For example, in cases where no class or group was dominant, Hanham (1959, p. 66) notes that “local party leaders would approach the party headquarters for lists of rich men and selected the richest of them as their candidate if he were not otherwise unsuitable.” In other cases, patrons owned property in several constituencies, allowing their preferred candidates some degree of mobility. For example, Cannadine (1990, p. 10) mentions the Buccleuchs, Derbys, Devonishire, and Bedfords, as examples of families who owned

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<sup>8</sup>H. Cecil Raikes, the first president of the National Union, declared famously: “The Union has been organized rather as a handmaid to the party than to usurp the functions of party leadership.” (*Report of the Proceedings at the Seventh Annual Conference*, p. 10) quoted by Ostrogorski (1902, 119)

properties across several counties.

There is also evidence that political actors and party leaders at the time were aware of the trade-off involved in relying on well-endowed candidates to secure seats in the House of Commons. For example, in the 1880's leftist commentators complained that the Liberal leadership had not disturbed some members despite the fact that they had opposed the leadership's foreign policy, all for the sake of party unity.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, among Liberal MPs there were complaints that the whips (i.e. the party officials in charge of making sure that MPs voted according to the party line) chose wealthy candidates at the expense of "sound" liberals (Hanham 1959, p. 355).

### **3.3 Franchise Expansion and Party Organizations**

The expansion of the franchise associated with the Second Reform Act of 1867 diminished the role that individual resources played in determining electoral outcomes and gave parties an incentive to invest in local organizations. After the reform, parties faced a strong incentive to enlist the support of newly enfranchised voters via organizations outside parliament (Ostrogorski 1902, Herrick 1945, McKenzie 1951). Indeed, Ostrogorski (1902, p. 76) notes:

"People still continued ... to rely more on direct personal influence than on principles and programmes. Only, owing to the increase in the number of voters, it was necessary ... to have an organization. The Registration Societies supplied the framework of it."

Further, a party's organization became indispensable to winning elections. Ostrogorski (1902, p. 213) notes that "it [organization] can obtain the victory for a candidate who is personally little known and a poor speaker over a candidate who is a man of mark, a good platform orator, a pillar of the party, etc." Local organizations provided a permanent body of workers that could canvass and mobilize voters at election time, thereby rendering

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<sup>9</sup>Hanham (1959, p. 354) cites the example of the *British Quarterly Review*, a Nonconformist publication, making this complaint.

personal resources superfluous. On this point Ostrogorski (1902, p. 213) makes the following remark: “the possibility or impossibility of using a corps of canvassers settles the fate of his candidature beforehand, and here lies the second reason ... which prevents an independent candidate from having any chance of success: if he were to come forward in opposition to the nominee of the Caucus, he would not get any canvassers outside his personal friends.”

### **3.4 Other Institutional Features of the Period**

Races for seats in the House of Commons were determined by simple plurality. MPs could represent county or borough constituencies. The former had a rural character and the latter represented towns and industrial centers. Counties were also more populous than boroughs, and required higher property qualifications for voting throughout the period (Seymour 1915, O’Leary 1962). District magnitude also varied across constituencies, with the number of seats ranging from 1 to 4. Differences in magnitude were the result of the First (1832) and Second Reform Acts (1867), which besides lowering voting property qualifications, redistributed seats across constituencies with the aim of abating corruption (often unsuccessfully), increasing the representation of specific classes (e.g., rising manufacturing sector), and making apportionment of seats congruent with population (Seymour 1915, ch. 3 and 11).

The period I examine coincides with the development of strong parties in parliament. In his seminal work, Cox (1987) shows that institutional changes in parliament and structural changes across constituencies led to the emergence of disciplined parties in parliament. Finally, in the last quarter of the century the country experienced a fast pace of reform, with the introduction of the secret ballot in 1872, the introduction of spending limits in campaigns and heavy penalties for corruption under the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1883, further expansion of the franchise under the Third Reform Act, and the adoption of single members districts across the overwhelming majority of constituencies in the country

under the Redistribution of Seats Act of 1885.

## 4 Data

The primary challenge in testing the theory on political dynasties introduced in this paper is identifying the dynastic background of candidates, and measuring the organizational strength of parties at the local level. British scholars and political actors have kept detailed records on both fronts that have allowed me to overcome this problem. In addition, I complement this information with the data on electoral returns and MP activity in the House of Commons that Eggers and Spirling (2014) assembled. This section describes the specific sources of the data analyzed in the paper and pertinent coding schemes.

**Dynastic Politicians** I rely on Stenton (1976) and Stenton and Lees (1978) to measure the incidence of dynastic politicians. These volumes contain the biographical profile of every MP who served in the House of Commons during the period 1832-1885. Each of these profiles includes the names of a MP's close and (or) prominent relatives, along with information on whether they served in parliament and any titles they held. I use this information to determine the dynastic status of MPs. In particular, a legislator was coded as dynastic if at least one of his relatives served in the House of Commons before he was elected.<sup>10</sup>

The left-hand side panel of Figure 7 in appendix B plots the proportion of dynastic MPs by political party. The figure shows that the share of dynastic legislators was fairly similar across both parties in the first half of the period of interest, with the proportion increasing from around 30% in the aftermath of the First Reform Act to close to 45% in

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<sup>10</sup>Often, when an MP's relative was a peer, Stenton (1976) and Stenton and Lees (1978) fail to include information on whether the person served in the House of Commons. Thus, when a relative was listed as a peer I checked in <http://www.leighrayment.com> to determine whether he had served as MP. Clark (2014) used this source to compile the names of members of the House of Commons to study historical patterns of social mobility in Britain.

1859. Thereafter, the proportion of dynastic MPs among Liberals declines, reaching a low of 18% by the end of the period. Among Conservatives, the share of dynastic legislators remained around 48% for most of the post-1859 period, and only declined after 1880 to reach a period low close to 28% percent. The right-hand side panel of the figure shows that, with the exception of the last year in the series, dynastic legislators were on average younger than their non-dynastic counterparts.

Testing my argument requires identifying the dynastic background of all candidates running for office, not only the winners. To do this, I traced the electoral history of every politician (i.e., the instances when they lost and won) who served in the post-1867 period. However, this process still leaves a subset of candidates who never won office, and for whom there are no background characteristics available. To address this concern, I report the results of my analysis relying on the sample that includes all races, and on the sample that includes only races where the background of all candidates is known.

**Patrons** As discussed in the previous section, patrons played an important role in the political life of Victorian Britain. Consequently they must be included in any explanation of the incidence of dynastic politicians during the period of interest. For the post-1868 period, Hanham (1959) provides a list with the boroughs and counties under the control of a patron, a patron's identity and partisanship, and the identity of the patron's relatives who held a seat in the House of Commons.<sup>11</sup> Using this information I coded two binary variables (one for each party) indicating whether a constituency was under the influence of a patron.

**Party Strength** A key element of the theory I introduce is the organizational strength of parties. Measuring the organizational strength of parties has been proven to be a particularly difficult problem in the literature due to a lack of data availability (Tavits 2011, 2013). In this

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<sup>11</sup>The list is found in Appendix III of (Hanham 1959).

paper, I exploit surveys of the two major parties that document the presence of local party organizations across the country in the post-1868 period. For the Conservatives, I rely on the 1874 “Conservative Agents and Associations in the Counties and Boroughs of England and Wales” survey (Office 1874). This document contains information on the name and number of associations and agents in England and Wales during this particular year. For the Liberals, I rely on the National Liberal Federation (NLF) Annual Reports and Proceedings (Barker 1880). This source provides information on constituencies affiliated to the federation. I specifically rely on the 1880 issue, as this is the first one to report information on affiliates.

The coding criteria for the measurement of party strength is as follows. For the Conservatives, I created binary variable recording whether a constituency had at least one local association in 1874. Similarly, for the Liberals I coded a binary indicator for whether a given constituency was affiliated to the NLF in 1880. A drawback of the analysis that relies on these variables is that there is no information on baseline levels of organization across constituencies for both parties. For instance, in the case of Liberals, the appearance of registration associations preceded the formation of the NLF in 1877 (Herrick 1945). Still, the approach I follow represents an improvement over what exists in the literature.<sup>12</sup> Finally, given the geographic scope of the information available for Conservatives, and for comparability purposes, I restrict the analysis to constituencies in England and Wales. Under this coding, 47% of constituencies in Britain had at least one Conservative association. The corresponding figure for Liberals is 20%.

**Electoral Data** I rely on Eggers and Spirling (2014) for electoral data of the period of interest. I use this data to obtain the following information on all electoral races in the period 1832-1888: the identity and partisanship of candidates running for office, level of turnout, number of votes for each of the competing candidates, and district magnitude. I complement

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<sup>12</sup>As discussed in the introduction, existing measures of party strength are endogenous to party strength and candidate characteristics.

this information with an indicator on constituency type (county or borough) as recorded in Craig (1977), and with population levels for specific years as recorded in McCalmont (1971).

**Parliamentary Divisions** To assess whether dynastic MPs were more likely to dissent from the party line, I rely on Eggers and Spirling (2014) and Eggers and Spirling (Forthcoming). I obtained information on all divisions (roll calls) in the three parliaments following the Second Reform Act from Eggers and Spirling (2014). I then relied on Eggers and Spirling (Forthcoming) to identify all divisions whipped by the government (i.e., those where the party Chief Whip was the teller). This information allows me to identify party preferences across votes and the divisions that parties cared about the most. As I explain below, I use this data to examine how dynastic MPs stood in relation to the party line in important pieces of legislation.

## 5 Dynastic Advantage in Victorian Britain

In this section I show that dynastic candidates were more likely to represent counties (where elections were more expensive), and to run unopposed more frequently (particularly when they enjoyed the backing of a strong relative). I also show that dynastic candidates gained a larger personal vote, possibly as a result of their advantage in the distribution of patronage. Together, this evidence demonstrates that dynastic politicians enjoyed an electoral advantage over their non-dynastic counterparts.

### 5.1 The Deterrence Effect of Dynastic Politicians

Figure 1 shows that throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century dynastic politicians were more likely to represent counties (left panel) and to run for office without facing opposition (right panel). The gap in dynastic representation between the two constituency types was largest in 1874

(about 25 percentage points) and did not vanish until the election of 1885. The difference in proportions between dynastic and non-dynastic MPs elected without opposition was about 10 percentage points throughout the entire period.<sup>13</sup> <sup>14</sup>

Higher barriers to entry and the coercive power of landowning families over tenants explain why dynastic politicians were more likely to represent counties than boroughs. First, elections in counties were more expensive (Pinto-Duschinsky 1981, p. 17). Hanham (1959, p. 251) notes that the large geographic size, the number of paid agents, and the expense necessary to transport voters to the polls were factors responsible for the higher cost of elections in counties. Second, landlords provided basic public services to the members of their community, and charged tenants lower rates in times of economic hardship. This allowed landowners to rely on coercive means to influence the vote of their tenants (Hanham 1959, ch. 1). For example, when tenants ventured to exercise political freedom, landlords threatened eviction. Therefore, the higher barriers to entry and the availability of tenants, ensured the monopoly of landowning families over county seats.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Figure 8 in Appendix B shows that differences in dynastic representation between boroughs and counties, and unopposed rates between dynastic and non-dynastic MPs are statistically significant.

<sup>14</sup>As noted in Eggers and Spirling (2014), the right-hand side panel shows that the proportion of races without opposition decline over time. Here I add that the trends were virtually the same regardless of a politician's type.

<sup>15</sup>Neither the Second Reform Act of 1867 (a reform that doubled the electorate in the boroughs and increased it by half in the counties) nor the introduction of the secret ballot in 1872 altered the status quo. As we can see on the left panel on both Figure 1 and Figure 8 in Appendix B, there is no significant decrease in the share of dynasts in boroughs relative to counties in either of the elections coinciding with (1868) or shortly after the reform (1874). Indeed, we observe that the gap between the two constituency types does not disappear until the 1885 general election, which was preceded by the following reforms: the expansion of the franchise under the Third Reform Act, the introduction of spending limits in electoral races and heavy penalties for corruption under the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1883, a major redistricting reform under the Redistribution of Seats Act of 1885, and the adoption of single member districts across the vast majority of constituencies in the country.

It is hard to determine with absolute certainty which reform did away with the power of political dynasties, but we can rule out several alternatives. First, regarding the expansion of the franchise, Berlinski, Dewan and Van Coppenolle (2014) have shown that the Second or Third Expansion did not have a direct effect on the background of MP in the House of Commons. Second, with regards to spending limits, results available from the author show that spending caps in electoral races did not have a negative impact on the probability of a dynastic MP winning office. Third, the change in district magnitude seems unlikely to explain change in the incidence of dynastic MPs. Figure 9 in Appendix B shows, for example, that prior to the reform there were no significant differences between Single-Member Districts (SMD) or Multi-Member Districts (MMD)

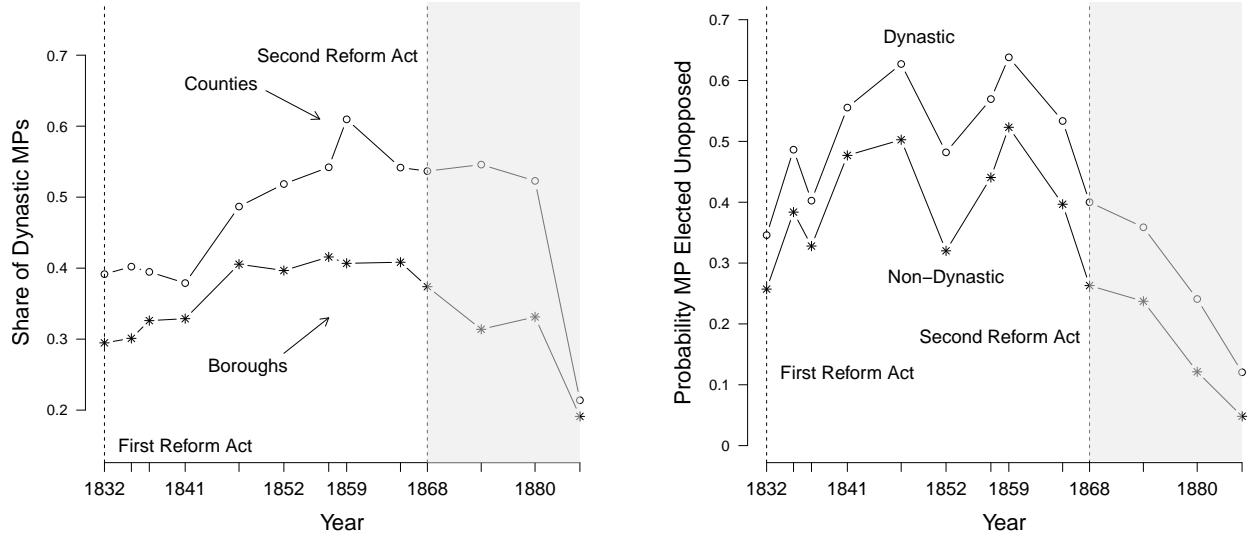


Figure 1: Proportion of Dynastic MPs by Constituency Type and Unopposed Rates for Dynastic and Non-Dynastic MPs 1832-1885. Panel 1a plots the share of dynastic MPs in boroughs and counties during the period 1832-1885. The panel shows that for all elections that took place in the period, dynastic politicians were more likely to be elected in counties than in boroughs, where elections were less costly. Panel 1b plots probability of returning a dynastic and non-dynastic MP to parliament without any opposition. The figure shows that throughout the period, dynastic MPs were about 10 percentage points more likely to run unopposed relative to their non-dynastic peers.

The higher unopposed rates among dynastic politicians demonstrate that, owing to their electoral advantage, dynasts deterred political competition. One may be concerned, however, that the preponderance of dynastic representation in the counties explains the gap in unopposed rates between dynasts and non-dynasts. In other words, rather than discouraging other candidates from running, dynastic politicians may have simply chosen to run in places with higher barriers to entry (i.e. counties). To address this possibility, Figure 2 plots the

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in terms of the proportion of dynastic MPs. Instead, one possibility explaining the collapse in the proportion of dynastic representatives is that the division and abolition of several county constituencies did away with the hold that landowners had over the political freedom of their tenants. In addition, Cannadine (1990, ch. 3 and 4) notes that in the late 1870's there was a decline in agricultural prices that prompted landowners to sell some of their landholding and assets, which could have further undermined their hold over tenants, and curtailed the income needed to run for office.

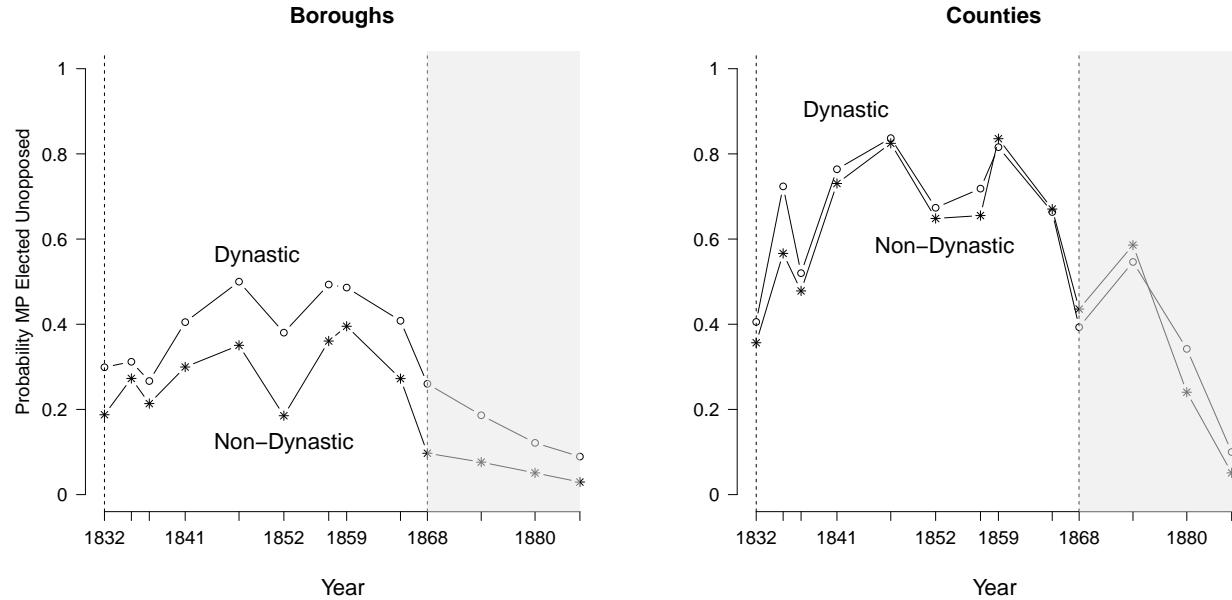


Figure 2: Unopposed Rates for Dynastic and Non-Dynastic MPs by Constituency Type. This figure plots the probability that dynastic and non-dynastic MPs are elected without facing opposition by constituency type (boroughs in Panel 2a and counties in Panel 2b). Consistent with the deterrence mechanism, the figure shows that in boroughs (where the barriers to entry were significantly lower) dynastic MPs were more likely to run unopposed relative to their non-dynastic MPs. The figure also shows that in counties unopposed rates between dynastic and non-dynastic MPs were virtually the same.

unopposed rates between dynasts and non-dynasts by constituency type. The panel on the left shows that in boroughs dynastic MPs were more likely to be elected without facing any competition. This pattern is consistent with the deterrence mechanism as the barriers to entry in boroughs were lower than in counties. In turn, the panel on the right shows that the difference in unopposed rates between dynastic and non-dynastic MPs disappears in counties. One potential reason for this is that the barrier to entry mechanism predominates, and only sufficiently powerful non-dynastic and dynastic politicians run in rural constituencies.

## 5.2 Patrons and the Deterrence Effect of Dynasts

Patrons – an important figure in the political life of Victorian Britain – are largely responsible for the higher frequency of dynastic politicians running without opposition in the boroughs. Patrons controlled the political life of about 20 percent of constituencies in England and Wales in the years 1868-1885, and in these constituencies they selected close relatives to serve in the House of Commons. Indeed, between 61 to 73 percent of dynastic MPs representing proprietary constituencies were related to the patron (see Appendix D).

To demonstrate the importance of patrons in explaining the incidence of dynastic candidates running for office without opposition, I fit a simple linear probability model, where the outcome is a dummy variable for whether a Conservative (or Liberal) dynastic candidate ran for office unopposed in any of the three general elections in the period 1868-1880. The main predictor of this outcome is a binary variable indicating whether a borough was under the influence of a Conservative (or Liberal) patron. Since in the past smaller constituencies were associated with more corruption and less political competition (Hanham 1959), I also control for the log of population size. I also consider an alternative specification where the main outcome is a dummy variable for whether a dynastic candidate from the opposite party runs unopposed. I include this specification to explore whether patrons were strong enough to deter dynastic candidates from the opposite party.

Table 1 shows that there is a positive correlation between the presence of a Conservative (or Liberal) patron and the probability of a Conservative (or Liberal) dynastic candidate running for office unopposed. Columns (1)-(2) reports the main OLS estimates for Conservatives and Columns (4)-(5) for Liberals. The estimates indicate that constituencies reporting the presence of a Conservative (or Liberal) patron were 50 (or 25) percentage points more likely to see a dynastic Conservative (or Liberal) dynastic candidate running for office in a borough. Columns (3) and (6) show that only Liberal patrons were strong enough to deter

Conservative dynastic candidates from running unopposed.

	Unopposed Dynastic Candidate (1868 - 1880)					
	(C)	(C)	(L)	(L)	(L)	(C)
Patron (C)	0.478*** (0.118)	0.502*** (0.118)	0.065 (0.130)			
Log(Population)		0.020 (0.016)			0.014 (0.022)	
Patron (L)				0.236** (0.120)	0.252** (0.121)	-0.087*** (0.023)
Intercept	0.022* (0.013)	-0.181 (0.155)	0.117*** (0.025)	0.098*** (0.023)	-0.044 (0.224)	0.087*** (0.023)
Observations	158	156	182	182	179	158
R <sup>2</sup>	0.335	0.340	0.002	0.047	0.052	0.005

*Note:*

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 1: Patrons and Unopposed Dynastic Candidates in Boroughs (1868-1880). The table reports OLS estimates for the relationship between the presence of a Conservative (and Liberal) patron and the probability of observing a Conservative (and Liberal) dynastic candidate run unopposed to office in the period 1868-1880. Columns (1)-(2) show that the presence of a Conservative patrons is positively correlated with the probability of observing a conservative dynastic candidate run unopposed for office, and Column (3) shows that their presence is not correlated with the probability of observing an unopposed Liberal dynastic candidate. Similarly, columns (4) and (5) show that the presence of a Liberal patron is positively correlated with the probability of observing a Liberal dynastic candidate run unopposed, and column (6) shows that it is negatively correlated with the probability of observing a Conservative dynastic candidate running unopposed. These estimates suggest that the backing of a patron explains the presence of unopposed dynastic candidates in boroughs.

### 5.3 Dynastic Politicians and the Personal Vote

Finally, this subsection shows that dynasts enjoyed an electoral advantage when they faced competition. My analysis focuses on races in two-member constituencies where at least one

candidate running for office was dynastic. In this set of races I show that dynastic candidates had a larger personal vote.

Focusing on races in two-member constituencies is useful because the ballot structure in Victorian Britain gave candidates running under the same party banner an incentive to differentiate themselves from each other. In these races voters could cast two votes. Further, they could either give these votes to candidates of the same party, split them among candidates from different parties, or opt to plump (i.e., use only one vote for any of the candidates on the ballot) (Cox 1987, p. 95). These rules encouraged candidates to cultivate their personal vote since partisanship alone would not guarantee electoral success.

Owing to their backgrounds, dynastic candidates competing in these races could rely on different resources to produce a larger personal vote. For instance, a voter deciding to give his vote either to a Conservative non-dynast or a dynast may opt for the latter simply because of his higher name recognition. Similarly, candidates in Victorian Britain used resources to influence individuals through outright bribing, treating (i.e., providing food, drink, and entertainment to voters), and employing voters as fictitious party workers (O’Leary 1962, Kam 2009a). As shown in Appendix E, dynastic MPs, irrespective of their partisan affiliation, were more likely to oppose amendments to Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1885 that restricted patronage. Dynastic MPs supported amendments that protected patronage more frequently. This evidence suggests that dynastic politicians enjoyed an advantage in the provision of patronage, which could explain why they could have cultivated a larger personal following.

To show that dynasts had a larger personal vote, I rely on the set of races in two-member constituencies that took place in the three general elections in the period 1868-1880, and where more than one candidate (where at least one of them was dynastic) ran for office under the same party banner. For each of these races, the analysis focuses on co-partisan pairs as the unit of interest and compares the difference in party vote share between dynastic candidates

and non-dynastic candidates. As an alternative, the analysis focuses on candidates across races as the unit of interest and fits an OLS regression to predict party vote share as a function of the dynastic status of candidates. In these regressions I include incumbency and time trends as additional controls.

Table 2 reports OLS estimates showing that dynastic candidates exhibited a larger personal vote. Columns (1)-(4) report estimates relying on the sample where there was at least one candidate whose dynastic background is not known (i.e., candidates who were never elected to office).<sup>16</sup> The first column reports the results where the unit of analysis is the co-partisan pair (dynastic vs. non-dynastic). The point estimate shows that dynastic candidates had on average 1.3 percentage points higher party vote share than non-dynastic candidates. Columns (2)-(4) report the results for OLS specifications where the unit of analysis is the candidate. The point estimates show that on average dynastic candidates had close to a 2 percentage point advantage in party vote share. All estimates are statistically significant and robust to controlling for the incumbency status of candidates (Column 3) and time trends (Column 4).

The result showing that dynasts had a larger personal vote is robust to restricting the sample to include only candidates whose background is known. The estimates from the restricted sample (reported in Columns (5)-(9) of Table 2) are similar in magnitude to those obtained in the full sample, and are statistically significant despite the smaller sample size. Finally, the magnitude for the size of the personal vote reported here is similar to the one found around the same period for members of the House of Representatives in the United States (Anscombe, Snyder and Stewart 2000).

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<sup>16</sup>Candidates who were never elected to office were dropped from the analysis.

Share of Party Vote								
	Full Sample				Restricted Sample			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dynastic	0.013** (0.006)	0.019*** (0.006)	0.019*** (0.006)	0.019*** (0.006)	0.011** (0.004)	0.015** (0.006)	0.015** (0.006)	0.015** (0.006)
Incumbent				0.011* (0.006)	0.011* (0.006)		-0.001 (0.007)	-0.001 (0.007)
Intercept	0.480*** (0.005)	0.480*** (0.005)	0.475*** (0.006)	0.471*** (0.007)	0.482*** (0.005)	0.482*** (0.005)	0.483*** (0.005)	0.482*** (0.007)
Year FE	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Observations	203	415	415	415	120	245	245	245
R <sup>2</sup>		0.025	0.033	0.041		0.024	0.024	0.029

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 2: Share of Party Vote for Dynastic Candidates in Two-Member Constituencies (1868-1880). The table displays the average difference in the share of party vote between dynastic and non-dynastic candidates in the three general elections in the period 1868-1880. Columns (1)-(4) report the results relying on the sample of races where there was at least one candidate whose dynastic background is not known because they were never elected to office (these were dropped from the analysis). Columns (5)-(9) report the estimates for the sample that only includes races where the background of every candidate is known. The first column reports the results where the unit of analysis is the co-partisan pair (dynastic vs. non-dynastic). The point estimate shows that dynastic candidates had on average 1.3 percentage points higher share of party vote than non-dynastic candidates. Columns (2)-(4) report the results for OLS specifications where the unit of analysis is the candidate. The point estimates show that on average dynastic candidates had close to a 2 percentage point advantage relative to non-dynastic candidates. All estimates are statistically significant and robust to controlling for the incumbency status of candidates, time trends, and limiting the analysis to races where the background of all candidates is known.

## 6 Party Strength and Political Dynasties

Conservative and Liberal dynastic candidates were less likely to run in constituencies where parties reported the presence of local branches – a finding that is consistent with the claim that parties relied on the electoral advantage of dynasts to make up for their organizational weakness. My analysis also addresses endogeneity concerns. In particular, I show that even after controlling for the presence of patrons and the magnitude in the expansion of the franchise following the Second Reform Act, the negative relationship between dynastic politicians and party strength still holds.

### 6.1 The Origins of Party Organization in Victorian Britain

The foregoing analysis focuses on the period after the Second Reform Act because it is considered to mark the birth of mass parties in Britain (Ostrogorski 1902, McKenzie 1951, Bulmer-Thomas 1965). As previously noted, the reform doubled the electorate in the boroughs and increased it by half in the counties. This shock gave parties a very strong incentive to invest in organizations, which in turn affected their demand for dynastic politicians. Although the nature of political competition may not have changed, the prospect of having a larger electorate forced parties to invest in building a machine that could help them win elections. Party organization provided candidates with a permanent cadre of canvassers, who in turn provided indispensable support to mobilize a large number of voters at election time, making the resources of individual candidates less valuable.

Figure 3 shows that parties displayed significant variation in the level of local party organization. The maps in the figure display the presence of party organizations using the indicator variables described in section 4. Conservatives reported a significant presence in the center of the country and in some parts of northern and southern England (constituencies in dark blue in the left-hand side panel). In contrast, Liberals had a strong organizational

presence across boroughs and in the center of the country (constituencies in red). However, Liberal organizations were virtually non-existent in the counties (boroughs have a smaller area than counties).

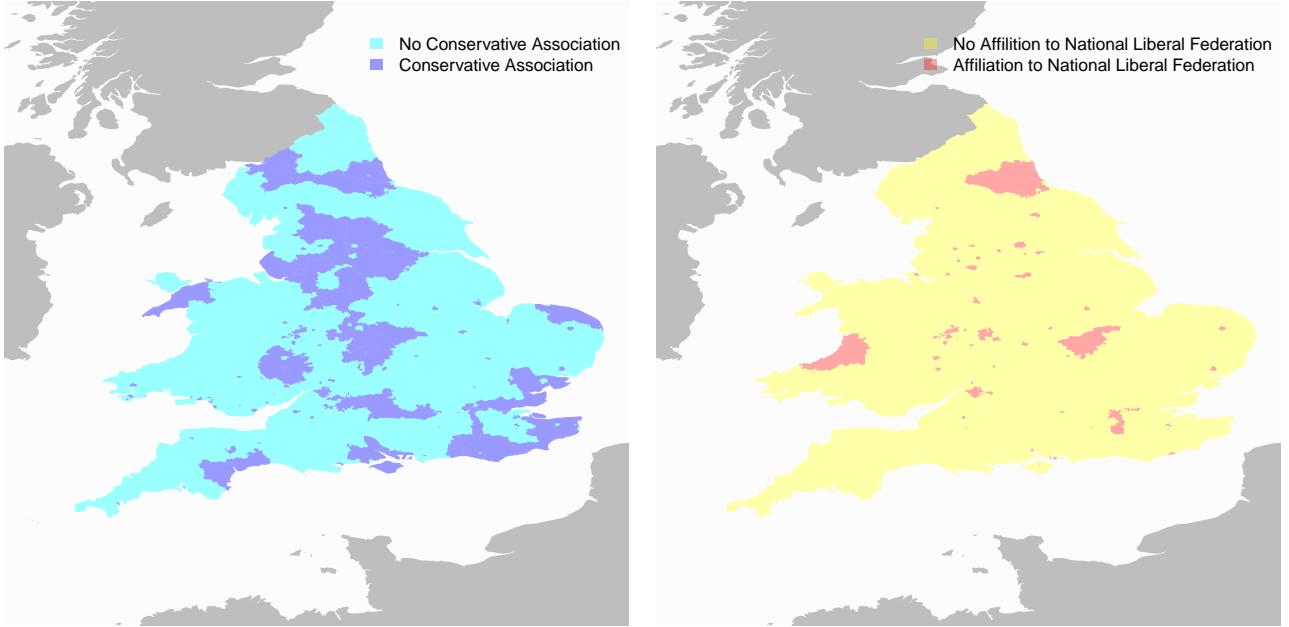


Figure 3: Organizational Strength of the Conservative and Liberal Parties in England and Wales (Selected Years). The left panel of Figure 3 displays the distribution of conservative associations across constituencies England and Wales in 1874. Constituencies in dark blue report the presence of at least one association; those in light blue report none. The map shows that the Conservative party had a strong organizational presence in the center of the country and in some constituencies in the northern and southern England. The right panel of the figure presents the distribution of constituencies affiliated to the National Liberal Federation (NLF) in 1880. Constituencies in red were affiliated to the NLF; those in yellow were not. The map shows that the NLF had a strong organizational presence across boroughs in the center of the country but was virtually non-existent in the counties.

Table 3 shows that party organizations trace their origins to the absence of patrons and the expansion of the franchise following the Second Reform Act. The table reports OLS estimates of the relationship between each of these variables and the probability of observing a party local organization. Columns 1 and 3 (for Conservatives) and 4 and 6 (for Liberals) show that the point estimate for the presence of a patron (a proxy for the strength of political

dynasties) is negative and statistically significant. Under the most conservative estimates, constituencies under the influence of patrons were about 22 percentage points less likely to report the presence of a local party organization. Column 2 and 3 (for Conservatives) and 5 and 6 (for Liberals) also show that constituencies that experienced a larger expansion of the franchise following the Second Reform Act were more likely to report the presence of a local organization. The franchise expansion estimates imply that a borough doubling its size was 45 percentage points more likely to report the presence of an organization.

The historical record and the empirical results reported above indicate that the presence of patrons and the expansion of the franchise are two important confounders in assessing the relationship between party organizations and the demand for dynastic candidates. Patrons, for example, were strong enough to select their relatives as candidates for a seat in the House of Commons. The presence of patrons also discouraged parties from investing in an organization because parties could rely on his resources to win office. However, the analysis in the next subsection shows that even after controlling for the two confounders, there is still a strong relationship between the presence of party organization and the incidence of dynasts.

## 6.2 Party Strength and the Incidence of Dynasts

To assess the relationship between party strength and the incidence of dynasts, I focus on constituencies as the unit of analysis, and on the number of Conservative and Liberal dynastic candidates running for office as the two main outcomes of interest. As described in section 4 there is some measurement error in the outcome given that there is no biographical information on candidates who were never elected to office. To address this issue, I report results when relying on the sample including candidates with uncertain dynastic status and the restricted sample where the background of all candidates is known.

	Pr(Conservative Org.)			Pr(Liberal Org.)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Patron (C)	-0.373*** (0.088)		-0.226*** (0.085)			
Log( $\Delta$ Elec. <sub>68-65</sub> )		0.200*** (0.028)	0.225*** (0.043)		0.137*** (0.024)	0.218*** (0.036)
Log(Population <sub>71</sub> )			-0.051 (0.035)			-0.099*** (0.030)
Patron (L)				-0.227** (0.090)		-0.189** (0.087)
Intercept	0.516*** (0.030)	-1.022*** (0.212)	-0.643** (0.257)	0.227*** (0.025)	-0.798*** (0.182)	-0.347 (0.214)
Observations	291	250	250	291	250	250
R <sup>2</sup>	0.059	0.167	0.197	0.022	0.114	0.164

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 3: Endogenous Party Organizations. The table reports OLS regression estimates for the relationship between the probability of a constituency reporting a local conservative (Columns 1-3) or local liberal (Columns 4-6) party organization and the presence of a patron, the degree of franchise expansion following the Second Reform Act, and log population. The estimates shows that there is a negative relationship between the presence of patrons and the probability of observing a party organization, and a positive correlation between the outcome of interest and the log magnitude in the expansion of the franchise.

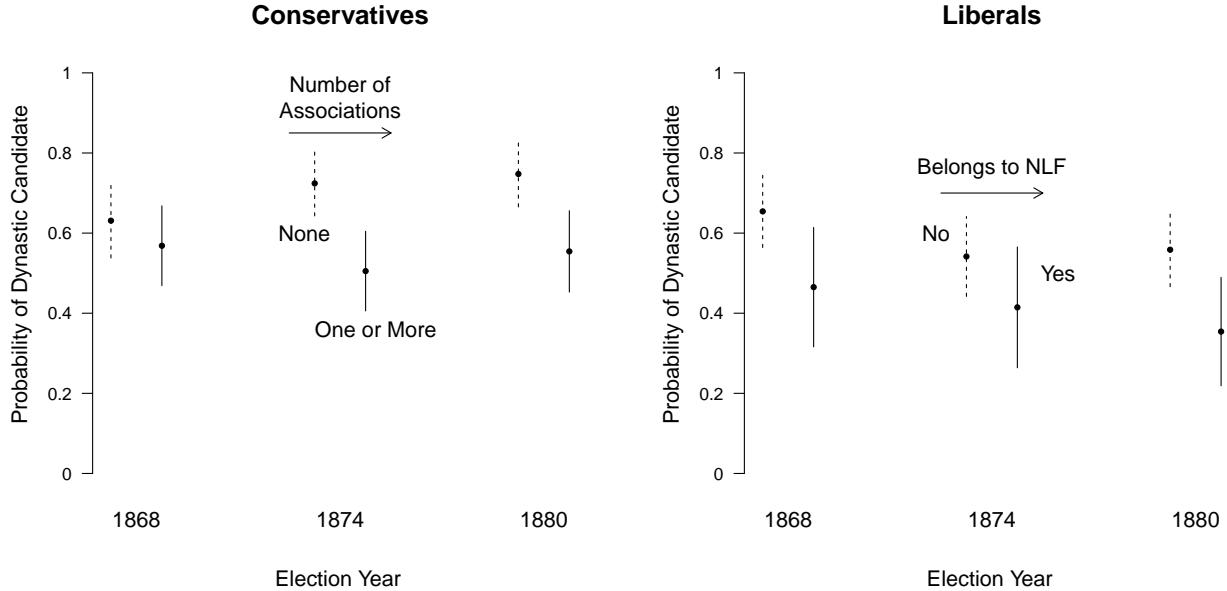


Figure 4: Probability of Conservative and Liberal Dynastic Candidates Running for Office by Level of Party Organizational Strength (Selected General Elections in England and Wales). The panel on the left displays the probability that a Conservative dynastic candidate runs for office by the level of organizational strength across constituencies across three general elections (1868, 1874, 1880). The figure shows that Conservative dynastic candidates were more likely to run for office in constituencies reporting no associations relative to those with one or more of these organizations. This pattern is apparent, however, only after 1874 – the year the party commissioned the report on its organizational strength. The panel on the right displays the probability that a Liberal dynastic candidate runs for office by level of organizational strength (sample restricted to boroughs). The figure shows that dynastic liberal candidates were less likely to run in constituencies affiliated to the NLF.

Figure 4 begins the analysis by showing a negative relationship between the level of party organization and the probability of a dynastic candidate running for office across the Conservative and Liberal parties. Among Conservatives, the relationship is strongest in 1874 (the year the party's confidential survey of local associations was published). In this year, constituencies reporting two or more organizations, for example, were about 22 percentage points less likely to have a Conservative dynastic candidate running for office. Among Liberals, the relationship is strongest in 1880 (three years after the creation of the

National Liberal Federation).<sup>17</sup> Constituencies affiliated to the federation in that year were about 20 percentage points less likely to report having a dynastic candidate running for office.<sup>18</sup>

To examine the relationship between party strength and the demand for dynastic politicians more carefully, I fit (separately for each party) a binomial regression where the outcome is the number of dynastic candidates running for office.<sup>19</sup> As the main predictor I use the binary variable measuring the organizational strength of parties, Organization (P) (for  $P \in [C, L]$ ). My theory predicts that this variable should be negatively correlated with the number of dynastic candidates running for office, indicating that they run only in places where parties are weak. The regression also includes the following controls: the district magnitude of a constituency (since the number of seats in a constituency may increase the value of the personal characteristics of candidates (Shugart, Valdini and Suominen 2005)), a binary variable indicating whether the constituency is under the influence of a patron (since as shown above, patrons explain the presence of unopposed dynastic candidates in the boroughs, and they also prevented the emergence of organizations), the log of population in 1871, and the log of magnitude in the expansion of the franchise<sup>20</sup> (since in constituencies with larger franchise politicians may have been induced to compete on policies and not on patronage (Cox 1987, Lizzeri and Persico 2004), and Berlinski and Dewan (2011) have shown that this variable had an impact on the number of Liberal candidates that ran for office).

Table 4 reports logit estimates from the binomial regression for the Conservative party, and shows that the presence of local organization is negatively correlated with the probability

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<sup>17</sup>For Liberals, I limit the sample to boroughs since organizations were virtually non-existent in counties.

<sup>18</sup>For the Liberal party we see that this pattern holds even before the formation of the Federation. The reason for this is that the existence of many (if not all) Liberal local associations predated the formation of the National Liberal Federation (Herrick 1945).

<sup>19</sup>The sample for the Liberals comes from the 1880 races, the first election following the measurement of the NLF constituency affiliations. For Conservatives, the sample consists of races in the 1874 general election, the year that the survey of the party's organizational strength was published.

<sup>20</sup>Some constituencies do not have information available on the number of electors in the 1868 election. These observations were dropped from the analysis.

of a dynastic candidate running for office. That is, Conservative dynastic candidates were less likely to run for office in constituencies where their party reported the presence of one or more associations. Columns (1)-(3) present estimates when using all the sample, including constituencies where I was not able to ascertain the dynastic background of at least one Conservative candidate. Columns (4)-(6) report the estimates relying on the sample where I was able to ascertain the dynastic background of all Conservative candidates. The point estimate for the main predictor is negative, statistically significant, and robust to the inclusion of potential confounders such as the presence of a patron (Column 1), and the size of population (Column 2). Further, the regression estimates for the party strength coefficient imply that a constituency with organization was about 12 percentage points less likely to see a dynastic candidate running for office (with a [1, 22] percentage points 95% confidence interval).

For Conservatives, the relationship between organization and the incidence of dynastic candidates is not robust when including the change in the size of the electorate following the Reform Act of 1867 (Columns 3 and 5). The reason why the main result is not robust to the inclusion of this factor as a control is that, as shown above, this is a very strong predictor of organizations. This makes it hard to disentangle the effects of each of these variables on the incidence of dynastic candidates.

Table 5 reports the estimates from the binomial regression for Liberals, and shows that party strength is negatively correlated with the probability of a dynastic candidate running for office. In other words, the regression estimates indicate that dynastic candidates were less likely to run for office in constituencies where the Liberal party had a local association affiliated to the NLF. Columns (1)-(3) present estimates when using all the sample, including constituencies where I was not able to ascertain the dynastic background of at least one Liberal candidate. Columns (4)-(6) report the estimates relying on the sample where I was able to ascertain the dynastic background of all Liberal candidates. Across all specifications

	Probability of Conservative Dynastic Candidate					
	Full Sample			Restricted Sample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Organization	-0.544** (0.232)	-0.568** (0.234)	-0.293 (0.291)	-0.489** (0.246)	-0.521** (0.250)	-0.223 (0.320)
Patron (C)	1.428*** (0.388)	1.526*** (0.409)	1.267** (0.510)	1.217*** (0.398)	1.340*** (0.425)	1.070** (0.521)
Total Seats	0.371 (0.249)	0.178 (0.291)	0.262 (0.323)	0.211 (0.268)	-0.040 (0.326)	-0.060 (0.353)
Log(Population <sub>71</sub> )		0.164 (0.127)	0.557*** (0.168)		0.200 (0.143)	0.616*** (0.189)
Log( $\Delta$ Elec. <sub>68–65</sub> )			-0.491*** (0.125)			-0.457*** (0.150)
Intercept	-1.246*** (0.459)	-2.672** (1.194)	-4.357*** (1.380)	-0.726 (0.507)	-2.451* (1.313)	-4.423*** (1.538)
Observations	269	269	213	213	213	164
Log Likelihood	-207.196	-206.243	-148.533	-175.804	-174.646	-125.506

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 4: Party Strength and the Probability of Conservative Dynastic Candidates. This table reports binomial regression estimates for the relationship between Conservative party strength (Organization) and the probability of a dynastic politician running for office in the 1874 general election. The point estimate is negative and statistically significant, indicating that where organizations were present, the Conservative party was less likely to rely on the resources of members of political dynasties. The results are robust to the inclusion of potential confounders such as the presence of a patron (Column 1) and population size (Column 2). The result is also robust when analyzing constituencies where there is no ambiguity about the dynastic background of candidates (Columns 4-6). The result is not robust when including the log of the magnitude of the franchise expansion following the Second Reform Act (Columns 3 and 6). This has to do with the fact that organization and franchise expansion are highly correlated, making it difficult to disentangle the independent effect of each variable.

the point estimate for the party strength coefficient is negative and statistically significant. The estimates from Table 5 imply that dynastic candidates were 15 percentage points less likely to run in constituencies affiliated to the NLF (the 95% confidence interval for the point prediction is [5, 25]).

Since the Liberal organization was virtually non-existent in counties, Table 6 reports regression estimates when restricting the sample to boroughs. The table shows that even in this sample one still finds a negative association between party strength and the probability of a Liberal dynastic candidate running for office. In this sample, the magnitude of the point estimate for the main predictor is slightly smaller. Further, the estimates are marginally significant when relying on the sample that includes candidates without biographical information (Columns (1)-(3)), but significant when using the sample with no ambiguity about the background of candidates.

The results presented in this section are consistent with the main prediction outlined in the theoretical section of the paper. Following the Second Reform Act, and the ensuing expansion of the franchise, parties had an incentive to invest in party organizations. Once these organizations came into place, a party's need to rely on the electoral resources of dynastic politicians diminished. In addition, the presence of organizations diminished the bargaining power of members of political dynasties relative to the party. As a result, we should expect a lower incidence of dynastic candidates in constituencies where local party organizations are present. The next section analyzes divisions in the three parliamentary periods following the Second Reform Act to examine how dynastic politicians diluted party brands.

	Probability of Liberal Dynastic Candidate					
	Full Sample			Restricted Sample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Organization	-0.605** (0.296)	-0.601** (0.298)	-0.548* (0.319)	-0.972*** (0.316)	-0.979*** (0.319)	-0.872** (0.344)
Patron (L)	1.582*** (0.357)	1.524*** (0.370)	1.563*** (0.419)	1.170*** (0.386)	1.103*** (0.398)	1.134*** (0.429)
Total Seats	0.344* (0.194)	0.457* (0.264)	0.433 (0.280)	0.423* (0.233)	0.562* (0.299)	0.622* (0.341)
Log(Population <sub>71</sub> )		-0.092 (0.134)	0.007 (0.202)		-0.105 (0.139)	0.070 (0.198)
Log( $\Delta$ Elec. <sub>68–65</sub> )			-0.097 (0.144)			-0.192 (0.144)
Intercept	-1.497*** (0.373)	-0.705 (1.198)	-1.140 (1.437)	-1.189*** (0.434)	-0.292 (1.242)	-1.149 (1.413)
Observations	271	271	238	213	213	191
Log Likelihood	-196.160	-195.829	-173.589	-162.989	-162.599	-146.048

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 5: Party Strength and the Probability of Liberal Dynastic Candidates. This table reports binomial regression estimates for the relationship between Liberal party strength (Organization) and the probability of a dynastic candidate running for office in the 1880 general election. The point estimate is negative and statistically significant, indicating that where organizations were present, the Liberal party was less likely to rely on the resources of member of political dynasties. The results are robust to the inclusion of potential confounders such as the presence of a patron (Column 1), the size of population (Column 2) and the change in the size of the electorate following the Reform Act of 1867 (Column 3). The result is also robust when analyzing constituencies where there is no ambiguity about the dynastic background of candidates (Columns 4-6).

	Probability of Liberal Dynastic Candidate					
	Full Sample			Restricted Sample		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Organization	-0.547 (0.333)	-0.460 (0.338)	-0.468 (0.355)	-0.772** (0.358)	-0.711* (0.364)	-0.697* (0.385)
Patron (L)	1.514*** (0.414)	1.375*** (0.426)	1.418*** (0.519)	1.222*** (0.446)	1.002** (0.464)	1.043** (0.519)
Total Seats	0.331 (0.220)	0.562* (0.311)	0.547* (0.323)	0.261 (0.291)	0.626* (0.378)	0.674* (0.404)
Log(Population <sub>71</sub> )		-0.218 (0.159)	-0.225 (0.245)		-0.306* (0.166)	-0.201 (0.261)
Log( $\Delta$ Elec. <sub>68–65</sub> )			0.024 (0.173)			-0.068 (0.182)
Intercept	-1.494*** (0.397)	0.359 (1.370)	0.287 (1.707)	-1.062** (0.499)	1.496 (1.429)	0.708 (1.788)
Observations	193	193	175	159	159	146
Log Likelihood	-137.616	-136.494	-124.839	-121.221	-119.156	-110.336

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 6: Party Strength and the Probability of Dynastic Candidates (Only Boroughs). This table reports binomial regression estimates for the relationship between Liberal party strength (Organization) and the probability  $a$  of dynastic candidates running in the 1880 general election, when the sample is restricted to include only boroughs. The point estimate is negative and statistically significant, indicating that where organization were present, the Liberal party was less likely to rely on the resources of members of political dynasties. The results are robust to the inclusion of potential confounders such as the presence of a patron (Column 1), the size of population (Column 2) and the change in the size of the electorate following the Reform Act of 1867 (Column 3). The result is also robust when analyzing constituencies where there is no ambiguity about the dynastic background of candidates (Columns 4-6).

## 7 Political Dynasties and Party Cohesion

This section focuses on key divisions (roll-calls) in the House of Commons to show that Liberal dynastic MPs dissented more frequently from the party line relative to their non-dynastic peers. The section also shows that the dissent rates among Conservative dynastic MPs were similar to those reported by their non-dynastic co-partisans. I argue that the difference between the two parties is due to the fact that while old Whig families - from which dynasts came from - lost control of the party agenda in the Liberal party after 1867, the Conservative party remained under the control of the landed aristocracy throughout the period. Together, the evidence suggests that the trade-off involved in relying on dynastic candidates was particularly strong for Liberals.

### 7.1 Measuring Partisan Dissent in the House of Commons

My analysis focuses on partisan divisions to test whether dynastic MPs were more likely to dissent from the party line. Partisan divisions are defined as those in which the chief whip (party officer in charge of instructing members how to vote) of each major party acted as the teller (the individual in charge of tallying party votes in a given division).

Focusing on partisan divisions has three main advantages. First, following the existing literature, one can measure party preferences with the direction of the whip's vote in these divisions (Kam 2009*b*, Eggers and Spirling Forthcoming). Second, focusing on partisan divisions ensures analyzing votes that commanded the electorate's attention and issues over which parties cared about maintaining unity. Third, a partisan division (as defined here) is close to the definition of party vote that Cox and McCubbins (2007, ch. 6) analyze in the US context.

Identifying the votes that most likely captured the electorate's attention is particularly important in the British context. Reflecting the rise of cabinet government, the share of

government divisions (i.e., those where the chief whip of the party in government was the teller) increased steadily throughout the 19th century, representing about 90 percent of the total by the end of the period. However, the majority of these divisions were simply procedural, and it is likely that the voters did not pay attention to most of these votes. Instead, focusing on divisions where both whips were tellers guarantees one is analyzing votes the electorate cared about, and over which parties wanted to display a united front. Indeed, as discussed in (Kam 2009*b*, ch. 6), it is not so much the frequency of dissent but the salience of it that hurts party brands.

The sample I analyze comes from Eggers and Spirling (Forthcoming), and includes all the partisan divisions that took place in the three parliaments in session during the years 1868-1885. For each division and party, I code the party line as aye (or nay) if its whip voted aye (or nay).<sup>21</sup> The total number of divisions in the sample for the three parliaments is 25, 34, and 94 respectively. To measure dissent, I code for each division and legislator a binary indicator taking the value of one if his vote is different from that of the party line and zero otherwise.<sup>22</sup> The final data comprises 865 unique MPs and a total of 1,372 votes.

## 7.2 Dynasts and Party Dissent in the House of Commons

To test whether dynastic MPs were more likely to dissent from the party line, I fit separately for the Liberal and Conservative party a binomial regression (with a logistic link function) where the outcome is the number of times a legislator votes against the whip in the sample of partisan divisions. I rely on a binomial regression to account for the fact that in the

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<sup>21</sup>To identify the identity of the chief whip, Eggers and Spirling (Forthcoming) checked whether his name was listed as one of the tellers in the division. When the name of the chief whip in a given division did not correspond to someone who served as MP, the authors assume that the whip was the previous or subsequent chief whip. For more details on the specific coding see Eggers and Spirling (Forthcoming, p.6)

<sup>22</sup>Following Eggers and Spirling (Forthcoming) and Kam (2009*b*), I treat missing votes as simple absences, as it is impossible to determine whether the missing votes were purposeful or not.

data not all MPs voted the same number of times.<sup>23</sup> The main predictor in this regression is a binary indicator taking the value of one if an MP is dynastic and zero otherwise. In this regression I include, as additional controls, the presence of a local organization (to account for the possibility that parties use them to enforce discipline), the existence of a patron in a constituency, the interaction between the dynastic and patron variables (to test whether dynasts backed by a strong relative report a higher rate of dissent), and the type of constituency an MP represents.

Table 7 reports the binomial regression results for Liberals. Across all specifications, the estimate for the dynastic status of MPs is positive and statistically significant, indicating that Liberal dynastic MPs were more likely to dissent from the party line relative to their non-dynastic co-partisans. The relationship between the dynastic status of MPs and the likelihood of dissent is stronger among legislators backed by a patron (Column 4). Further, these estimates are robust even after controlling for the type of constituency a legislator represents (Column 5), and including parliament random effects (Column 6). Finally, it is interesting to note that MPs representing constituencies affiliated with the NLF were less likely to dissent from the party whip. The relationship between organizations and dissent is consistent with an account in which the leadership uses local organizations to discipline its members. Further, this result contrasts with the findings in other contexts where a proxy for organizations (i.e., participation of parties in local electoral contexts) has been found to bolster the electoral independence of legislators in parliament (Tavits 2011, 2013).

Table 8 reports regression estimates for Conservatives. The table reports a negative and statistically significant relationship between the dynastic status of MPs and their propensity to dissent from the partly line relative to their non-dynastic co-partisans. In other words, Conservative dynastic legislators were *less* likely to dissent from the party line in partisan

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<sup>23</sup>This approach contrasts with the one followed for example in Eggers and Spirling (Forthcoming) and Tavits (2011), where the votes of legislators are aggregated to create a cohesion score.

	<i>Probability of Vote Against Party Line</i>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dynastic	0.617*** (0.107)	0.520*** (0.109)	0.359*** (0.113)	0.209 (0.128)	0.228* (0.129)	0.215* (0.129)
Organization (L)		-0.563*** (0.139)	-0.366** (0.144)	-0.394*** (0.144)	-0.428*** (0.147)	-0.424*** (0.147)
Patron (L)			1.023*** (0.131)	0.401 (0.295)	0.395 (0.295)	0.395 (0.296)
Dynastic * Patron (L)				0.826** (0.328)	0.820** (0.328)	0.819** (0.329)
Borough					0.158 (0.132)	0.132 (0.133)
Intercept	-4.365*** (0.078)	-4.182*** (0.086)	-4.327*** (0.091)	-4.256*** (0.093)	-4.377*** (0.139)	-4.281*** (0.194)
Parliament RE	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Observations	692	692	692	692	692	692

*Note:*

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 7: Probability of Dissent (Liberal MPs). The table reports maximum likelihood estimates from a binomial regression for the relationship between the dynastic status of Liberal MPs and their probability of voting against the party whip in partisan divisions. The estimates shows that dynastic MPs are more likely to vote against their non-dynastic counterparts. The magnitude of the estimates is stronger for patron-backed MPs. That is, the probability of dissent is higher among those liberal MPs backed by a patron. These results are robust to controlling for the presence of a local organization in a given constituency, the type of constituency an MP represents (borough or county), and the inclusion of parliament random effects.

divisions. In addition, there is no evidence that for Conservative MPs the presence of a patron magnified their tendency to conform with (or dissent from) the party whip (Column 4-6). Also, in contrast to the sample for Liberals, the point estimates for the local organization coefficient is positive (although not statistically significant), suggesting that MPs backed by party organizations were more likely to dissent from the party line – a finding in line with the results discussed in Cox (1987, Ch. 5).

	<i>Probability of Vote Against Party Line</i>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dynastic	-0.743*** (0.198)	-0.712*** (0.200)	-0.682*** (0.200)	-0.678*** (0.211)	-0.582*** (0.217)	-0.508** (0.216)
Organization (C)		0.146 (0.110)	0.086 (0.113)	0.087 (0.113)	0.029 (0.118)	0.038 (0.116)
Patron (C)			-0.687** (0.338)	-0.670 (0.432)	-0.732* (0.433)	-0.661 (0.432)
Dynastic * Patron (C)				-0.042 (0.681)	-0.110 (0.682)	-0.252 (0.682)
Borough					0.386** (0.193)	0.452** (0.194)
Intercept	-4.695*** (0.107)	-4.804*** (0.138)	-4.694*** (0.144)	-4.695*** (0.147)	-4.860*** (0.173)	-4.897*** (0.550)
Parliament RE	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Observations	675	675	675	675	675	675

*Note:* \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 8: Probability of Dissent (Conservative MPs). The table reports maximum likelihood estimates from a binomial regression for the relationship between the dynastic status of Conservative MPs and their probability of voting against the party whip in partisan divisions. The estimates shows that dynastic MPs are less likely to vote against their non-dynastic counterparts. This result is robust to controlling for the presence of a patron, a local organization constituency, the type of constituency an MP represents (borough or county), and the inclusion of parliament random effects.

To give a sense of the magnitude of the results reported in Tables 7 and 8, Figure 6 plots the difference in the predicted probability of dissent (and 95 percent confidence in-

tervals) between dynasts (and patron-backed dynasts) and their non-dynastic co-partisans for each party. The figure shows that Liberal dynastic MPs were about a half a percentage point more likely to dissent from the party whip relative to their non-dynastic counterparts. The magnitude of this difference is significantly larger among patron-backed dynasts. This group reports a 4 percentage-point higher probability of dissent relative to their non-dynastic counterparts. The magnitude of these estimates are larger than the ones reported in other contexts. For example, Tavits (2009, p. 807) finds that the higher propensity among “mavericks” (defined as legislators who had served in local office prior to holding a seat in parliament) to dissent from the party majority ranged from one-third of to one percentage point. Among Conservatives, the magnitude of the estimates indicate that they were about half a percentage points less likely to dissent from the party line. Finally, for Conservative dynasts, being backed by a patron does not appear to affect their propensity to conform with the party line.

### 7.3 Who Controlled the Party Agenda?

Why were dynastic legislators in the Liberal party more likely to vote against the party line when compared to their non-dynastic counterparts? Why was the relationship between the dynastic status of MPs and dissent rates reversed among Conservatives? I argue that the observed patterns of dissent among Liberals are the result of a change in the balance of power within the party that took place following the Second Reform Act. For Conservatives, the party’s traditional bases of power, and the absence of a change in the leadership, explains the observed differences in dissent rates.

The Whigs (a faction in which aristocratic landowners were prominent) had traditionally controlled the Liberal party, but their influence decreased over time. For instance, Bulmer-Thomas (1965, p. 107) notes that “in 1832 there was a large Whig party with some Liberals

## Difference in Probability of Dissent

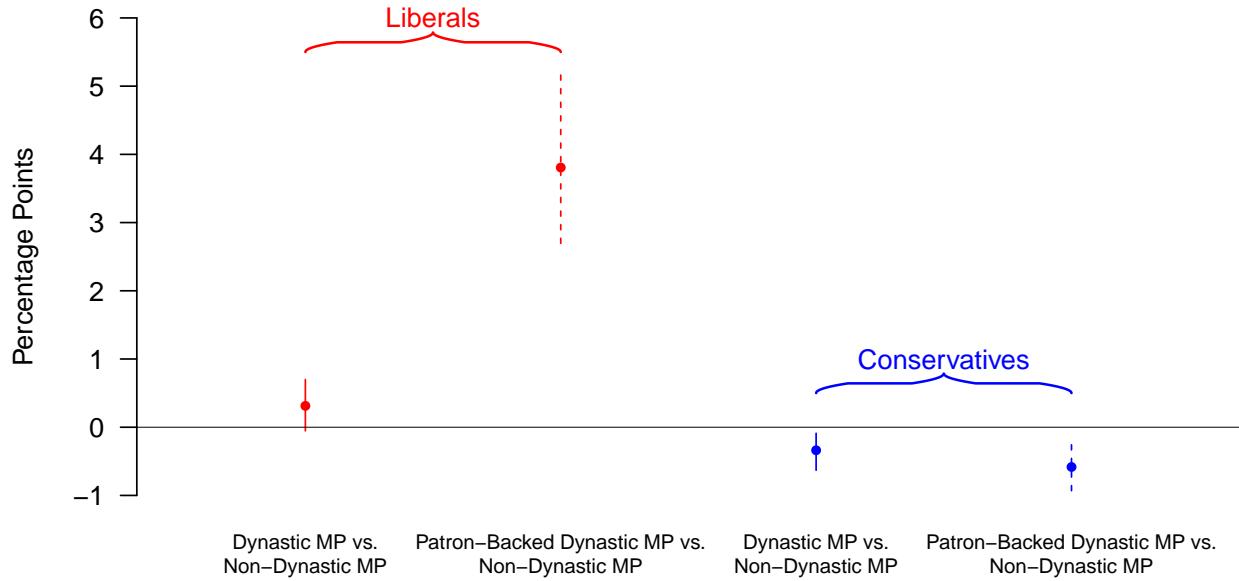


Figure 5: Predicted Differences in Probability of Dissent. The figure displays the estimated differences (and 95 percent confidence intervals) between the probability of dissent of dynastic MPs and their non-dynastic counterparts, and between patron-backed dynastic MPs and non-dynastic ones across the Liberal and Conservative parties (based on the regression results reported in Column 5 of Tables 7 and 8). The figure shows that among Liberals, dynastic MPs were about half a percentage point more likely to vote against their party whip relative to their non-dynastic counterparts. The magnitude of this difference is 4 percentage points among patron-backed MPs. Among conservatives, the figures shows dynastic MPs were about half a percentage point less likely to vote agains their non-dynastic counterparts. The magnitude of the estimate is similar for the patron-backed dynastic subgroup.

in it; in 1867 there was a Liberal party with Whigs in it.” The end of the Whig dominance came with the Second Reform Act. The expansion of the franchise altered the balance of power in the party by strengthening the radical wing, a faction that espoused a more leftist agenda. Gladstone’s choice of W. E. Forster (an un-aristocratic M.P.) as minister of education reflected the new status quo, and signaled that “government by the Whig families was not to be revived” (Trevelyan 1937, p. 348-349).

The background of Conservatives was less diverse and their traditional base of power was found in the counties and rural boroughs (Jenkins 1996, p. 66). In addition, no change in the balance of power in the Conservative party took place after the expansion of the franchise. As Bulmer-Thomas (1965, p. 104) notes, the Conservatives remained the party of the land. There were no clear factional disputes within the party, and the party's agenda remained under the control of landed aristocrats. Indeed, in 1881 Lord Salisbury took over the party's leadership, and in the years following his premiership, the Conservative party was referred informally as "Hotel Cecil" (Cecil was Lord Salisbury's last name before taking the title) for the prominence that his relatives enjoyed within the party (Bulmer-Thomas 1965, p. 168).

Figure 6 plots differences in the probability of dissent (and 95 percent confidence intervals) between dynastic and non-dynastic MPs by political party across time. The patterns displayed in the figure are consistent with my argument. After the Second Reform Act in 1867 we observe that the difference in probability of dissent became positive for Liberals, suggesting that Whig families - from which dynastic politicians were drawn - lost power against radicals. In contrast, we observe that across the entire period there were no significant differences in the dissent rates between dynasts and non-dynasts in the Conservative party. This suggests that among Conservatives, control for the party's agenda control was never at stake.

The evidence presented in this section shows that, at least for the Liberal party, the trade-off involved in relying on dynastic politicians was particularly stark; they provided the resources necessary to win elections in places where the party lacked organizations, but this came at the cost of less unity in important divisions in parliament. This dynamic undermined the brand of the Liberal party, which was necessary to woo the newly enfranchised urban working class.

**Difference in Probability of Dissent 1857–1885  
(Dynastic vs. Non-Dynastic MPs)**

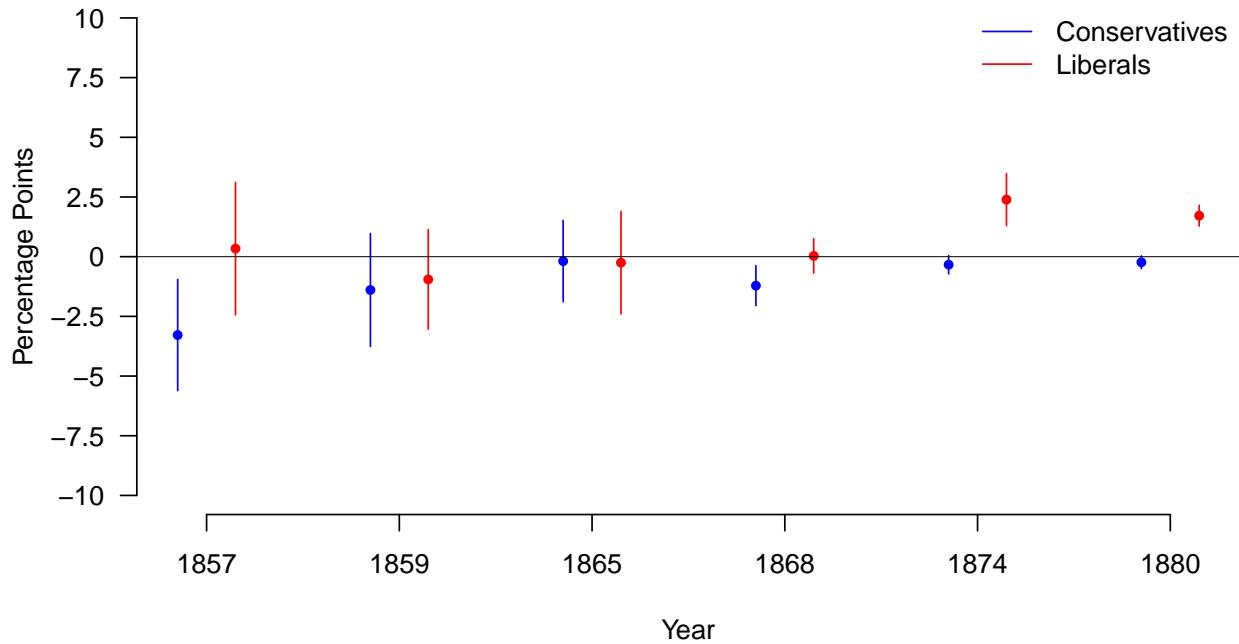


Figure 6: Predicted Differences in Probability of Dissent between Dynastic and Non-Dynastic MPs 1857-1885. The figure plots difference in predicted probabilities of dissent (and 95 percent confidence intervals) between dynastic and non-dynastic MPs in the years 1857-1885 for the two major parties in Victorian Britain. The figure shows that up until 1868 there was no difference in the rates of dissent between the two legislator types for either party. However, after that year we see the path of the two parties diverge. Among Liberals, dynastic MPs are more likely to dissent from the party line relative to their non-dynastic co-partisans. This is consistent with the fact old Whig families - from which dynasts came from - lost control of the party agenda following the Second Reform Act. Among Conservatives, the differences are negative and small, suggesting that, if anything, dynastic MPs were more likely to conform with the party line. This reflects the fact that Conservatives remained the party of the landed aristocracy.

## 8 Conclusion

This paper introduced a theory of dynastic candidates in a democracy. It argues that the key distinguishing feature of dynastic politicians is their advantage in electoral resources. However, because they may provide less party discipline, political parties only rely on them

to run in districts where they are weak.

The paper tests this theory in the context of Victorian Britain and finds the following main results. First, throughout most of the period of interest, dynastic MPs were more likely to represent counties than boroughs. This happened because in counties elections were more expensive and landowners controlled the vote of their tenants, giving them the opportunity to select their preferred candidates for office (their family members among them). Similarly, throughout the general elections covering the years 1832-1885, dynastic MPs were more likely to have been elected without facing any opposition, and when they faced electoral competition, they captured a higher proportion of the party vote.

Second, in the aftermath of the Second Reform Act, dynastic candidates were less likely to run in constituencies where the party under which they ran had a local organization. This happened because in the presence of organization the resources of dynastic politicians become unnecessary to win office; at the same time, although dynastic politicians may want to run for office in a district where the party is organized, they cannot mount a credible threat to the party, and so the party opts for non-dynastic candidates.

Third, an analysis of roll calls in the post 1868 period shows that dynastic MPs were more likely to dissent from the party line. This pattern was particularly strong for the Liberal party. This suggests that the dynastic trade-off was particularly stark for this party, as relying on this type of politician could have given them an electoral advantage in the constituencies where they ran, but eroded the overall party brand.

These findings have important implications for our understanding of the development of political parties and the persistence of political dynasties in a democracy. Together, the results suggest that dynasties will persist and survive electoral reforms (Querubin 2011) as long as parties fail to become institutionalized. In addition, this paper shows that in a context of overall party weakness, and contrary to the financial (Perez-Gonzalez 2006), the academic marketplace (Durante, Labartino and Perotti 2011), and existing findings for the

US Congress (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009), political dynasties serve a function (make up for the electoral deficiencies of parties), and are not simply the result of nepotism.

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## Appendix A: Candidate Bargaining Power and Mobility

This section discusses how endowing candidates with bargaining power and agency regarding whether to accept a party's nomination decisions does not affect the main prediction of my theory 2. The discussion also shows that my prediction does not change even when allowing for candidate mobility.

### Candidate Bargaining Power

The theory I introduced in section 2 does not endow candidates with agency over whether to accept the party's nomination decision. However, introducing this additional element to the theory does not change its main prediction. To see why this is the case, suppose that candidates have bargaining power in relation to the party leadership. Candidates may find desirable to run under a party banner not only because of a party's electoral resources, but also because doing so may allow them to have access to coveted positions in parliament, or extract higher rents. However, assume that a candidate's bargaining power depends on the electoral resources at his disposal and the local organizational strength of a party. In particular, suppose that given their electoral advantage, dynastic politicians have a higher bargaining power in relation to their non-dynastic counterparts, and that the bargaining power of candidates decreases when local party organizations are present in a constituency. Given these assumptions, let's consider the type of candidate nominations in equilibrium under two scenarios: when local organizations are present and when local organizations are absent.

**Case 1: Outcome under Local Organizations** Suppose that there is a local organization present in a constituency, and suppose that the party decides to give the party ticket nomination to a non-dynastic candidate. In this scenario, the dynastic candidate can either choose to accept the party's decision or choose to run as an independent. If he chooses to run as an independent, his electoral prospects may not be very high as the party has a strong organization to fight off candidates running with their own resources in an electoral race. When this happens, dynastic candidates risk losing an election and incurring some cost for having participated in the race. As a result, it may be in his advantage to accept the party's nomination of the non-dynastic candidate and not run for office.

**Case 2: Outcome under No Local Organizations** Now suppose that the party lacks local organization in a given constituency, and that it still decides to give the nomination to a non-dynastic candidate. In this scenario, the dynastic candidate can either choose to accept the party's decision, or choose to run as an independent. If he chooses to run as an independent, he has good electoral prospects as the party's candidate lacks organization and resources of his own to beat the dynastic politician. In this scenario, the party then is better off choosing the dynastic politician to run under the party banner.

Together, these two cases show that the theory still predicts that dynastic candidates will be more likely to run in constituencies where parties are organizationally weak even after allowing for candidate agency to decide whether to accept a party's nomination decision.

## Candidate Mobility

Note also that the theoretical framework discussed so far does not rely on candidates being mobile. The discussion only requires that in a given constituency there is a supply of dynastic candidates. Under this assumption, when a party does not grant the nomination to a dynastic candidate implies that in the current period the dynastic politician will be out of office. It is possible that in a future election he may be called to run for office again.

If we allow for some candidate mobility, the theory's main prediction does not change. To see why this is the case, suppose that some dynastic candidates have the ability to compete in different constituencies (this could happen, if for example, they have a national brand that allows them to be recognized in constituencies different from the ones from where their relatives originally ran for office). Now consider a simple case in which there are two constituencies: one where there is a party organization and another where none exists. The party has now to consider the nominations across these two constituencies. In this scenario, it is easy to see, by the discussion above, that in equilibrium the dynastic candidate will run in the constituency where the party is weak and the non-dynastic candidate in the constituency where the party has an organizational presence.

## Appendix B: Additional Figures

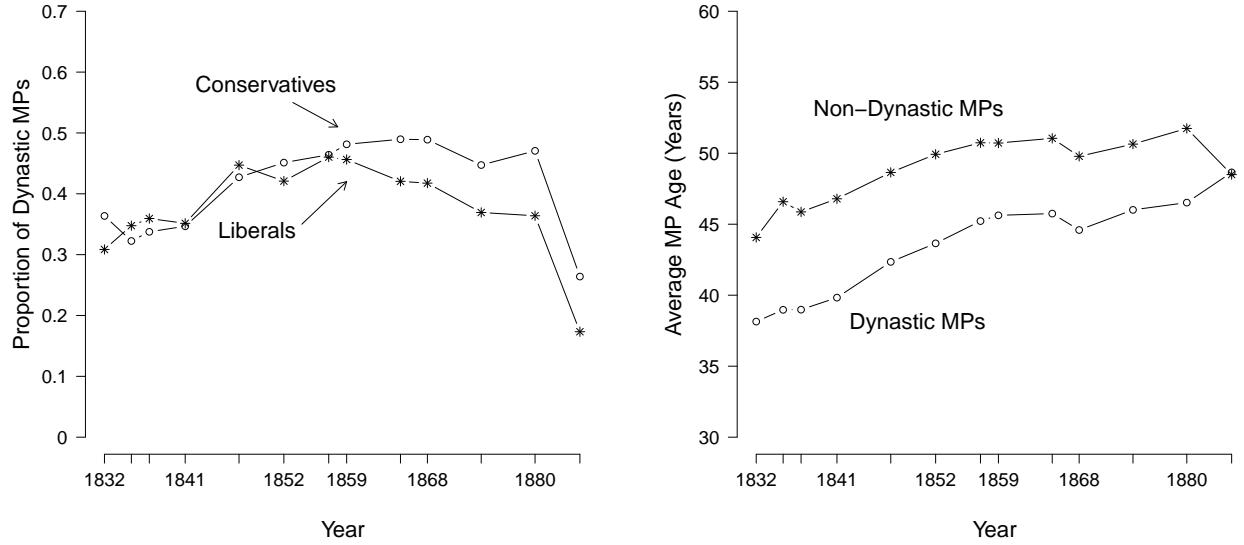


Figure 7: Proportion of Dynastic MPs by Party and Average Age of Dynastic and Non-Dynastic MPs (1832-1885). The left panel displays the share of dynastic MPs for the Conservative and Liberal Parties. The figures shows that in the period 1832-1852, the share of dynastic MPs increased from about 30 to 45 percent. Also, during this period the share of dynastic MPs across parties was fairly similar. After 1859, the share of dynastic MPs falls among Liberals to reach a low close to 18 percent in 1885. Among Conservatives, the incidence of dynastic MPs remained relatively constant until 1885, when the share of MPs of this kind declined to 28, a historic low for the party. The right panel plots the average age of MPs by dynastic background for the entire period. The figure shows that dynastic MPs were on average about 5 to 6 years younger, though the difference disappeared by the end of the period.

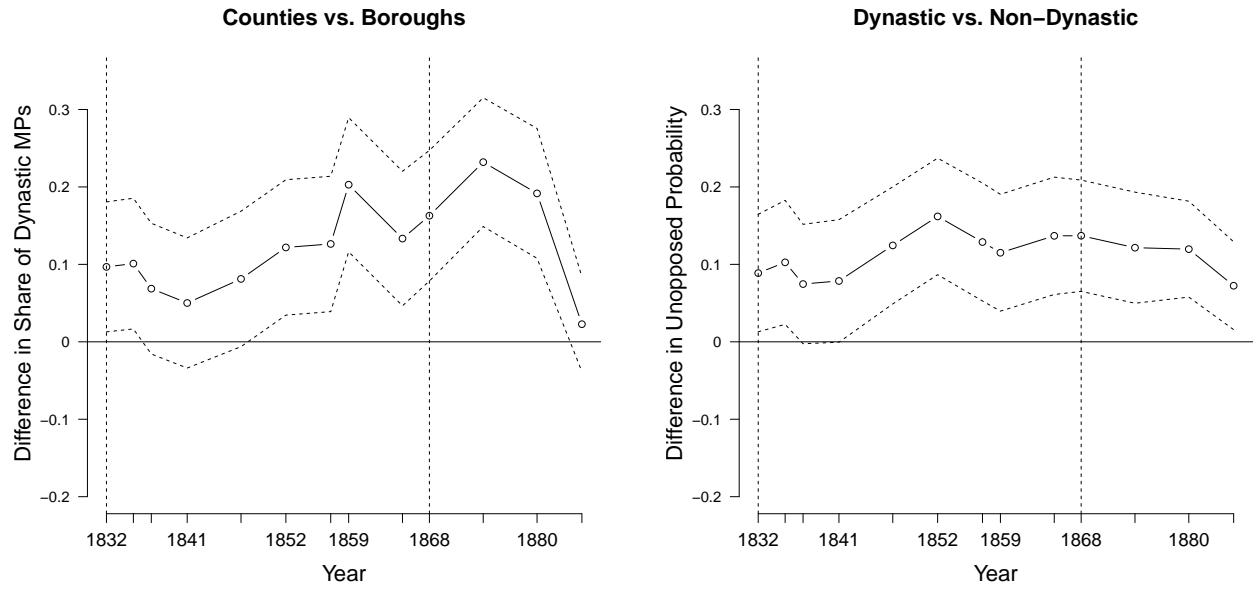


Figure 8: Differences in probability of Dynastic MPs by Constituency Type and Unopposed Rates for Dynastic and Non-Dynastic MPs 1832-1885. Panel 8a plots the differences in share of dynastic MPs between counties and boroughs in the period 1832-1885. The panel shows that the difference increased until about 1885, when the difference between the two constituency types virtually disappeared. Panel 8b plots the difference in probability of returning a dynastic and non-dynastic MP to parliament without any opposition throughout the same period. The figure shows dynastic MPs were about 10 percentage points more likely to run unopposed relative to their non-dynastic peers, and that this difference remained relatively constant during the period of interest.

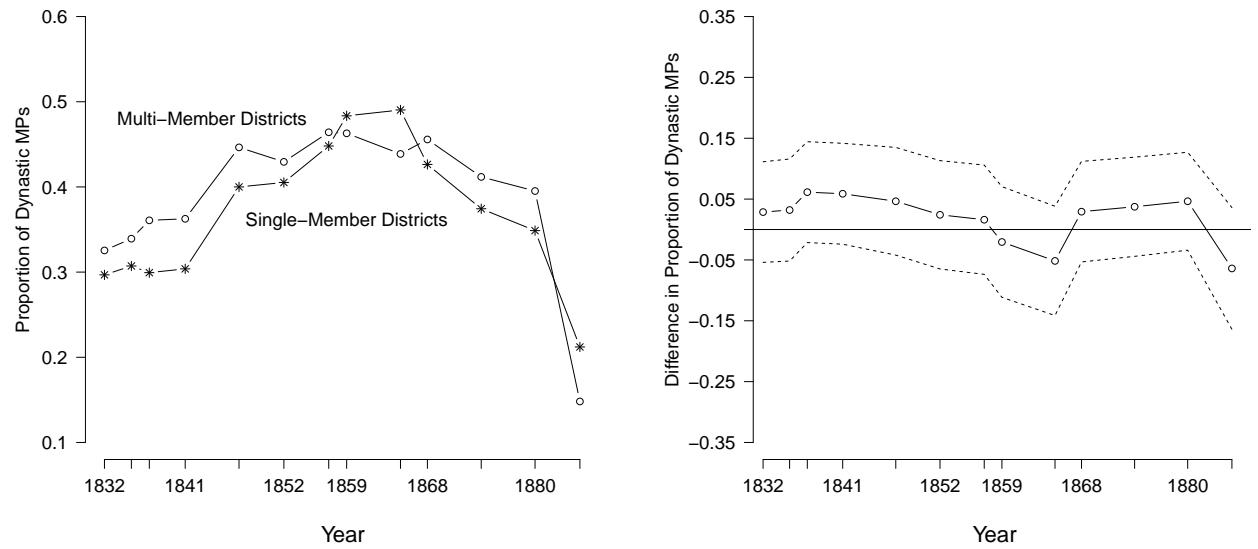


Figure 9: Proportion (and Differences in Proportions) of Dynamic MPs by District Magnitude. The left panel plots the proportion of dynamic MP in Single-Member (SMD) and Multi-Member (MMD) Districts. The figure shows that the share of dynamic MPs was fairly similar across the two types of districts. Indeed, the right panel plots the differences in proportions across the two district types (along 95% confidence intervals) and shows across the entire period these were not significantly different from zero.

## Appendix C: Robustness on Party Strength

	Probability of Dynastic Candidate			
	<i>Conservatives</i>		<i>Liberals</i>	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Organization	-0.070 (0.092)	-0.052 (0.091)	-0.089 (0.094)	-0.191* (0.101)
Patron	0.225 (0.147)	0.219 (0.148)	0.300 (0.214)	0.161 (0.176)
Total Seats	-0.035 (0.072)	-0.113* (0.067)	0.039 (0.077)	0.162 (0.103)
Log(Population <sub>71</sub> )	0.076 (0.055)	0.121*** (0.045)	-0.016 (0.056)	-0.010 (0.068)
Log( $\Delta$ Elec. <sub>68–65</sub> )	-0.077* (0.043)	-0.091** (0.042)	-0.023 (0.044)	-0.032 (0.045)
Intercept	0.036 (0.431)	-0.171 (0.437)	0.564 (0.441)	0.447 (0.506)
Observations	106	88	106	91
Log Likelihood	-46.837	-41.425	-53.270	-44.157

*Note:* \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 9: Party Strength and Dynastic Candidates (Robustness Check). The table reports binomial regression estimates for the relationship between party strength and the probability of a dynastic Conservative (or Liberal) dynastic candidate running for office in the sample of constituencies that did not experience boundary, or magnitude changes, following the Second Reform Act. The results show that in this restricted sample, the point estimate for organization is negative, indicating that dynastic candidates are less likely to run in constituencies where parties report the presence of local organizations. However, given the reduced sample size, the estimates are not statistically significant in 3 out of 4 specifications. Columns (1) and (3) report estimates for the sample including races where the dynastic background all candidates was not known. Columns (2) and (4) report the results for the sample where the dynastic background of all contesting candidates was known.

## Appendix D: Patrons and Dynastic MPs

	Political Party	
	Liberals	Conservatives
Proportion of MPs Related to Constituency Patrons	0.61	0.73

Table 10: Patrons and Dynastic MPs (1868-1885). The table reports the proportion of dynastic MPs related to Patrons by political party in the years 1868-1885. The share of all dynastic MPs related to patrons in their constituency is 61 percent. Among Conservatives the proportion of MPs related to patrons is 73 percent.

## Appendix E: Political Dynasties and Patronage

As argued and shown in this paper, dynastic politicians enjoy an advantage in personal resources. Further, in the particular time period I examine, politicians had to spend significant amounts of resources to win and stay in office. The implication of the advantage assumption in the British context is that dynastic MPs should oppose any measure that poses a threat to the use of patronage and resources in order to win elections. To examine this claim, this section focuses on the Corruption and Illegal Practices Act of 1883. The debate in parliament surrounding this legislation offers a unique opportunity to examine the claim of interest. The purpose of the legislation was to curb excessive spending in electoral races, provide a clear definition on corrupt and illegal practices, and impose heavy penalties for incurring in them (O’Leary 1962, p. 160). Therefore, one can learn about the means that dynastic politicians used to attain office by looking at how legislators of this type voted on specific provisions of the bill. This section focuses on four relevant amendments and provides evidence that independent of party affiliations, dynastic MPs were less likely to support clauses that would reduce the barriers to entry to electoral races and curb the use of patronage to secure the vote of constituents.

The impetus for the enactment of the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1883 were the record number of electoral petitions (42) and the exorbitant level spending observed in the 1880 general election. This bill is considered as landmark in the British case since as Rix (2008, p. 66) notes, it “(...) not only provoked debates about corruption but also raised wider questions such as the composition of the Commons, the relationship between MPs and constituents and the role of party organisation.” The analysis in this section focuses on the votes on specific amendments that can allow us to learn about how dynastic politicians relate to constituents, the source of their advantage, and whether they were less disciplined partisans in parliament.

To carry out this task, I selected four relevant amendments that were voted in the process of passing the legislation. Each of them was selected based on whether the substance of the amendment led to a clear prediction regarding the vote of dynastic MPs irrespective of their political affiliation. Table 11 provides the key characteristics of the four selected amendments analyzed in this section along with the predicted position of dynastic MPs. The first column provides the main goal of a given amendment. The second column provides the specific provision that was put to a vote, and the third column includes the position we would expect dynasts to take in relation to a given amendment.

The first row reports the information on the proposal that sought to reduce the barriers to entry to running for a seat in parliament. Under the status quo, candidates were required to pay the expenses incurred by the returning officer (the official in charge of the poll) (Pinto-Duschinsky 1981, p.16). The amendment was aimed at ending this practice by relying on local taxes to defray these costs. This measure would have effectively reduced one of the barriers that potential candidates faced to enter a race. As such, the prediction is that

Type	Amendment Content	Prediction
Reduce Barriers to Entry	Include “That it be an Instruction to the Committee that they have power to insert a new Clause in the Bill charging the returning officer’s expenses at Parliamentary Elections upon the rates in boroughs and counties.”	Dynastic MPs Oppose
Restrict Conveyances	Include “No person shall lend a carriage or horse to any candidate, election committee, or agent, or to any other person for the purpose of conveying voters to or from the poll, and every person lending or borrowing a carriage or horse for the conveyance of voters to or from the poll shall be guilty of an illegal practice.”	Dynastic MPs Oppose
Forbid Public Houses	Include “or any premises where any intoxicating liquor is sold”	Dynastic MPs Oppose
Allow Entertainment	Include “Nothing in this section shall prohibit any entertainment given by any person, in the nature of ordinary hospitality, which is not inconsistent with his usual mode of living, and which in any case is not of a corrupt nature or given with a corrupt motive.”	Dynastic MPs Support

Table 11: Predicted Position of Dynastic MPs on Selected Amendments to the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1883. The table displays the purpose, content, and predicted position of Dynastic MPs across four selected amendment to this legislation. For instance, the first row displays information on a bill that had the goal of reducing the barriers a candidate faced when deciding to run in a given race. In particular, the amendment sought to transfer the payment of a returning officer’s expenses (defrayed by candidates under the status quo) to the public purse. Given the advantage in resources that dynastic politicians enjoy, the prediction is that they should be more likely to oppose including the clause in the act.

dynastic MPs, all else equal, should oppose this amendment.

Another controversial issue in passing this legislation was that of paid conveyances (transportation of voters to the polls). This practice was considered a source of corruption, but several members of parliament considered that restricting this practice would also disenfranchise many voters (Rix 2008, p. 74). In particular, observers at the time considered that Conservative candidates had an advantage along this dimension, but banning the practices of conveyances would also affect the turnout of individuals belonging to the working class and out-voters (Rix 2008, p. 72-74). Thus, if dynastic politicians had an advantage in personal resources that could be used to transport voters to the polls, they should have been more likely to oppose the amendment banning this practice.

The third provision discussed in the process leading to the approval of this reform was that of prohibiting the use of public houses to carry out business related to elections. According to Sir Henry James, the attorney general at the time, the rationale for introducing this clause to the bill was to prevent treating (i.e., offering food or drink in order to influence an individual's vote), as in past election petitions this practice had been identified taking place in public houses and hotels (Hans vol. 269, 03 July 1883, 196). Therefore, if dynastic politicians relied on patronage to win elections, and one of the ways of doing so was purchasing votes in public houses, they should be more likely to oppose the proposed clause.

Finally, the fourth amendment analyzed in this section deals with the entertainment of constituents and potential supporters. As it has been noted, one of the main goals of the legislation was to define illegal and corrupt practices in elections. The entertainment of voters was one the practices discussed when debating the legislation. One proposal aimed at limiting the restrictions on existing practices. In particular, the amendment analyzed in this section had the purpose of protecting the entertainment of constituents. The amendment specifically sought to protect any entertainment that was "consistent with a person mode of living". As such, the proposed clause would permit wealthy patrons entertain potential supporters without fear of being penalized. And again, dynasts, owing to their resources have an advantage along this dimension and the way they maintained support among the electorate, should be more likely to support the inclusion of the proposed clause.

To test these predictions, I fit a linear probability model, where the outcome of interest is a binary indicator for whether a given MP is in favor of a specific amendment and zero otherwise. As predictors, I include binary indicators for the dynastic background of MPs and the party they represent in parliament (Conservative, Liberal, Liberal/Labour, Home Rule, and Home Rule Parnellites). Table 12 reports the estimates from fitting this model. The results show a clear partisan divide in the vote for each of the amendments. For instance, relative to Conservative MPs, Liberals were more likely to support reducing barriers to entry in electoral races, restricting the practice of conveyances, forbidding the use of public houses to carry out electoral business, and less willing to make legal the entertainment of electors.

However, consistent with the predictions laid out in Table 11, the results show that independent of partisan affiliation, dynastic MPs were less likely to support reducing barriers to entry for candidates running for office (Column 1), restricting the practice of conveyances (Column 2), prohibiting the use of public houses to carry out business related to election

(Column 3), and more likely to vote in favor of protecting the practice of entertaining constituents. Further, with the exception of the result for the amendment aimed a restricting conveyances, all point estimates are statistically significant. This evidence is consistent with a picture where dynastic politicians vote against rules that would erode their personal advantage.

	Pr(Aye)			
	Reduce Barriers	Restrict Conveyances	Forbid Public Houses	Allow Entertainment
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dynastic	-0.084** (0.041)	-0.032 (0.045)	-0.093** (0.043)	0.072* (0.044)
Home Rule	0.711*** (0.085)	0.095 (0.120)	0.426*** (0.126)	-0.518*** (0.129)
Home Rule (P)	0.887*** (0.099)	0.493*** (0.184)	-0.127 (0.184)	0.054 (0.083)
Liberal	0.311*** (0.042)	0.282*** (0.047)	0.701*** (0.045)	-0.848*** (0.047)
Liberal/Lab.	0.952*** (0.247)	0.985*** (0.258)	0.850*** (0.258)	-0.827*** (0.217)
Intercept	0.048 (0.036)	0.015 (0.042)	0.150*** (0.041)	0.827*** (0.045)
Observations	313	278	295	114
R <sup>2</sup>	0.367	0.163	0.487	0.795

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 12: Dynastic MP support for selected amendments to the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1883. The table reports the point estimates for the difference in support among Dynastic and Non-Dynastic MPs (under a linear probability) across four selected amendments to the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1883. The results shows that independent of partisan affiliations, dynastic MPs were less likely to support measures that curbed patronage and corruption (reducing barriers to entry, restricting conveyances, and banning the use of public houses to carry out business) but more likely to support the one that protected such practices (i.e., allowing for the entertainment of constituents). With the exception of the conveyances amendment, the difference in support/rejection between dynastic and non-dynastic MPs across the selected amendments is statistically significant.

I also examine whether dynastic politicians were more likely to vote against their party across each of these four key amendments. To do so, I restrict the sample to members of parliament affiliated with either of the two main parties (Conservatives and Liberals). Based

on this sample, I fit a linear probability model where the outcome of interest is again MP support for each of the selected amendments. The predictors now include a dummy for whether an individual is a member of the liberal party, whether he is a dynastic politician, and the interaction between the two. The main parameters of interest are the coefficient on the dummy indicating whether an MP is a dynastic politician, and the coefficient of the interaction between the liberal and dynastic status of legislators. The first captures the propensity of Conservative dynastic MPs to vote along party lines; the sum of this parameter along with the one for the interaction report the same quantity of interest for Liberal dynastic MPs.

Table 13 reports the results from fitting this model. Columns (1)-(4) show that there are clear differences only in the proposed amendment to reduce barriers to entry in electoral races and the amendment aimed at protecting the practice of entertainment. In the first case, Liberal dynastic MP were about 16 percentage points less likely to vote for the measure aimed at charging a returning officer's expenses to the public coffers. In the second case we instead find that conservative dynastic MPs were about 12 percentage points more likely to vote for a measure protecting the practice of entertainment relative to their non-dynastic colleagues.

Together, the evidence in this section suggests that dynastic politicians had an advantage in personal resources, and that this advantage manifested itself in the form of patronage towards electors and officials (paying expenses of returning officers, conveying electors to the polls, treating them in public houses, and entertaining them). As a result, when the momentous Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1883 was discussed, they supported any measure that could protect their electoral advantage.

Further, the evidence suggests that dynastic politicians were a vestige of the past and antithetical to the development of the British party system. One of the key insights in Cox (1987) is that in the context of larger franchises resulting from different reforms, representatives could no longer rely on influence in order to win elections. Instead, politicians turned to voting with their party in order to signal policy positions and thereby win the support of voters. But the evidence offered in this section suggests that dynastic politicians remained attached to patronage.

	Pr(Aye)			
	Reduce Barriers	Restrict Conveyances	Forbid Public Houses	Allow Entertainment
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Dynastic	-0.014 (0.059)	0.000 (0.073)	-0.057 (0.070)	0.129* (0.069)
Liberal	0.379*** (0.054)	0.306*** (0.060)	0.720*** (0.060)	-0.800*** (0.054)
Liberal * Dynastic	-0.161* (0.083)	-0.061 (0.094)	-0.038 (0.089)	-0.129 (0.084)
Intercept	0.014 (0.041)	-0.000 (0.050)	0.132*** (0.049)	0.800*** (0.048)
Observations	278	262	280	101
R <sup>2</sup>	0.204	0.134	0.488	0.823

Note:

\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table 13: Difference in support rates between Dynastic and Non-Dynastic MPs conditional on party affiliation (Conservative or Liberal) for selected amendments to the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1883. The table reports the estimates for the difference in support rates between Conservative Dynastic and Non-Dynastic MPs and Liberal Dynastic and Non-Dynastic MPs for each of four selected amendments under a linear probability model. The main quantities of interest are the estimate for the coefficient of the Dynastic variable and the sum of this coefficient and the sum of the one for the interaction between the Liberal and Dynastic variables. The first quantity represents how likely were dynastic Conservative MPs to support an amendment in relation to their Conservative non-dynastic peers. The second quantity reports the same measure for Liberal MPs. The table shows that there are only significant differences in the reduction in barriers to entry and the allowing entertainment amendments. In the first case, dynastic Liberal MPs were less likely to vote for the amendment relative to their non-dynastic colleagues. In the second case, Conservative dynastic MPs were more likely to vote for the amendment in relation to their Conservative non-dynastic peers.