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 there is no evidence that dynastic politicians improve the welfare of citizens (Braganca, Ferraz and Ríos 2015) and the persistence of dynasts in power may simply lead to distortions in the accumulation of rents among their family members (Folke, Persson and Rickne 2015). 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 (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009, Van Coppenolle 2013, Smith 2012, Geys and Smith 2015). Among developing countries, for example, we find that 22 percent of national legislators in India are dynastic (Chandra Forthcoming). 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 dynasts account for 20 percent of legislators (Asako et al. 2015). 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. 2015), 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, however, 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 enjoyed a larger personal vote. In terms of the strategies parties adopted to cope with dynasts, my analysis focuses on the two major parties of the period and shows that Liberal dynastic candidates were less likely to run for office in districts

where parties reported the presence of local organizations.[1] I also find that Liberal 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. Among Conservatives, I find that party strength does predict the incidence of candidates with a dynastic background running for office. In addition, dynastic legislators in this party were less likely to dissent from the party line. The historical background of the period suggests that patterns observed among Conservatives are due in part to the absence of an intra-party conflict during the period. 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 the existing literature that explains the variation in the incidence of dynastic politicians. Existing studies have examined how the role of the party finance, the electoral system, a party's desire to promote loyalty, links to society, and nomination procedures affect the incidence of dynasties. For example, Bohlken and Chandra (2014) find that parties are more likely to renominate dynastic legislators and suggest that a party's need to promote loyalty accounts for this finding. Smith (2012) shows that candidate-oriented electoral systems and a decentralized nomination procedure are associated with a higher incidence of dynastic politicians. Finally, Chhibber (2011) argues that a centralized party finance and weak party links with outside organizations are more likely to translate into dynastic succession in the party leadership.

Instead, my approach focuses on the organizational strength of parties, which has long being recognized as a key feature of modern political parties (Ostrogorski 1902, Panebianco

[1]The paper closest to my approach is Berlinski, Dewan and Van Coppenolle (2014) However, their study focuses on the impact of franchise expansion following the Second Reform Act on the incidence of *elected* politicians with an aristocratic or dynastic background. As I explain below, my approach focuses on the impact of party organizations on the incidence of dynastic *candidates*, and my analysis differentiates outcomes by the party affiliation of candidates.

1988, Aldrich 1995, Tavits 2013). Focusing on this dimension and relying on the analytical approach I propose, allows us to explain the geographical, cross-national, and temporal distribution of dynasties. Existing approaches are limited in explaining the variation across these dimensions when the electoral system (or the nomination procedure of a party) within a given country remains fixed, but the geographic and temporal distribution of dynastic politicians does not.

This paper also makes empirical contributions by providing a direct measure of party organizational strength. I rely on 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 low level of geographical aggregation independent from electoral outcomes and candidate characteristics. This contrasts with 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 Jensenius and Suryanarayan (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).

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)[2], obtain higher votes shares, and are more likely to win office (Asako et al. 2015, Feinstein 2010). This advantage may stem from their family name, having a more established network of operatives, and/or their pecuniary resources.[3]

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 (2009*b*) 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

[2]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.

[3]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. 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.

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 to their candidates. By party organizational strength, I specifically refer to one of the three dimensions considered in Tavits (2013): the extent of a party's local branches.[4] 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 of a loss in parliamentary discipline to ensure an electoral victory.[5]

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,

[4]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.

[5]The prediction of my theory does not rely on whether candidates have agency or mobility. Appendix A demonstrates that giving candidates bargaining power or mobility does not change the theory's main prediction. In addition, Figure 7 in the Supplementary Appendix shows that on average in a given election year about 20 percent of dynastic MPs in Victorian Britain represented a constituency not served by them or a member of their family in the past.

my contribution is to show that parties do not have to converge on high valence politicians. This simply follows from the fact that parties do not necessarily invest in local organization in the same 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.

My account shows that 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 is 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).[6] 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).[7]

[6] As discussed in Section Appendix C, 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.

[7] As an example of the importance of resources, one can refer to James Lowther, a conservative MP, who,

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 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.[8] 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)

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)

[8]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.).

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 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 Conservaties 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).[9]

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

[9]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)

(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, Devonshires, and Bedfords, as examples of families who owned 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.[10] 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."

[10] Hanham (1959, p. 354) cites the example of the *British Quarterly Review*, a Nonconformist publication, making this complaint.

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 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. Fi-

nally, in the last quarter of the of 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 to test 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 (e.g., father, uncle, grandfather, in-law, brother, cousin) served in

the House of Commons before he was elected.[11] [12]

The left panel of Figure 1 in the Supplementary Appendix 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 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. Figure 2 in the Supplementary Appendix 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.

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

[11] I focus only the House of Commons because it is the main elected assembly in Britain. This focus allows me to be consistent with previous studies on political dynasties (Dal Bo, Dal Bo and Snyder 2009, Querubin 2010, Van Coppenolle 2013).

[12] 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.

this 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 (Conservative Central 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 availability of these surveys represents an improvement to measure party strength. Existing studies rely on measures that are endogenous to party strength and candidate characteristics, making it difficult to disentangle selection from incentive effects. Keefer and Khemani (2009), for example, 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.

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.[13] Similarly, for the Liberals I coded a binary indicator for whether a given constituency was affiliated to the NLF in 1880. [14][15] Finally, given the geographic scope

[13]I opted dichotomizing the variable because there are relatively few observations with two or more organizations in the sample.

[14]The NLF proceeding lists 33 affiliates in towns that were not enfranchised. Out of these 33 affiliates 16 were in the vicinity of 4 borough constituencies that were Liberal affiliates as of 1880 (Birmingham, Bath, Dudley, and Walsall). I do not have coordinates to map the remaining ones in their corresponding counties. As a robustness check the analysis in the next section considers the impact of party organization on the demand for dynasts in the sample that includes only boroughs.

[15]The measure of constituency affiliation to the NLF is comparable to the presence of at least one association for the Conservatives. In his history of the National Liberal Federation, Spence Watson (1907, p. 3-5) notes that all Liberal associations established under a popular basis (i.e. with an organizational capacity for canvassing) were invited to the inaugural conference. A total of 95 association attended the event, including two from Scotland (there is no indication that at least one of the invited associations did not attend the event). The National Liberal Association proceedings of 1880 lists a total of 99 affiliated associations across

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%.

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 patrons's identity and partisanship, and the identity of the patron's relatives who held a seat in the House of Commons.[16] Using this information I coded two binary variables (one for each party) indicating whether a constituency was under the influence of a patron. Approximately 13% and 8% of constituencies were under the influence of a Conservative and Liberal patron, respectively.

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 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

England, Scotland, and Wales. This number is very close to the total number of invited associations, which suggests that it is possible that very few associations, if any, declined to join the federation.

[16]The list is found in Appendix III of (Hanham 1959).

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

I now provide evidence that dynastic politicians had an electoral advantage over their non-dynastic counterparts. First I show that members of political dynasties were more likely to be elected without facing electoral competition. I then show that in the races in which dynastic candidates faced electoral competition they were also able to capture a higher proportion of the party vote.

Figure 1 displays the main findings regarding the ability of dynastic politicians to deter political competition in Victorian Britain. The left panel of Figure 1 plots the proportion of MPs elected without facing opposition by their dynastic status. As noted in Eggers and Spirling (2014), the series show a secular decline in the proportion of uncontested races throughout the period. Here I add that dynastic MPs were 10 percentage points more likely to be elected unopposed in relation to their non-dynastic counterparts. The right panel shows that the difference in unopposed rates is statistically significant and remained virtually constant across most of the century.

Figure 3 of the Supplementary Appendix shows that the gap in the proportion of contested races between dynastic and non-dynastic politicians in driven by pattern of electoral competition in the boroughs. In addition, in Table 1 in the Supplementary Appendix I show that the presence of patrons (a proxy for the amount of resources that a dynastic politicians

had at their disposal) is strongly correlated with the probability of a dynastic candidate elected without opposition, and in Figure 4 that patrons were 61 to 72% of the time related to the dynastic politicians running in the constituencies they controlled. Together, these findings suggest that dynastic candidates used their resources to deter political competition.

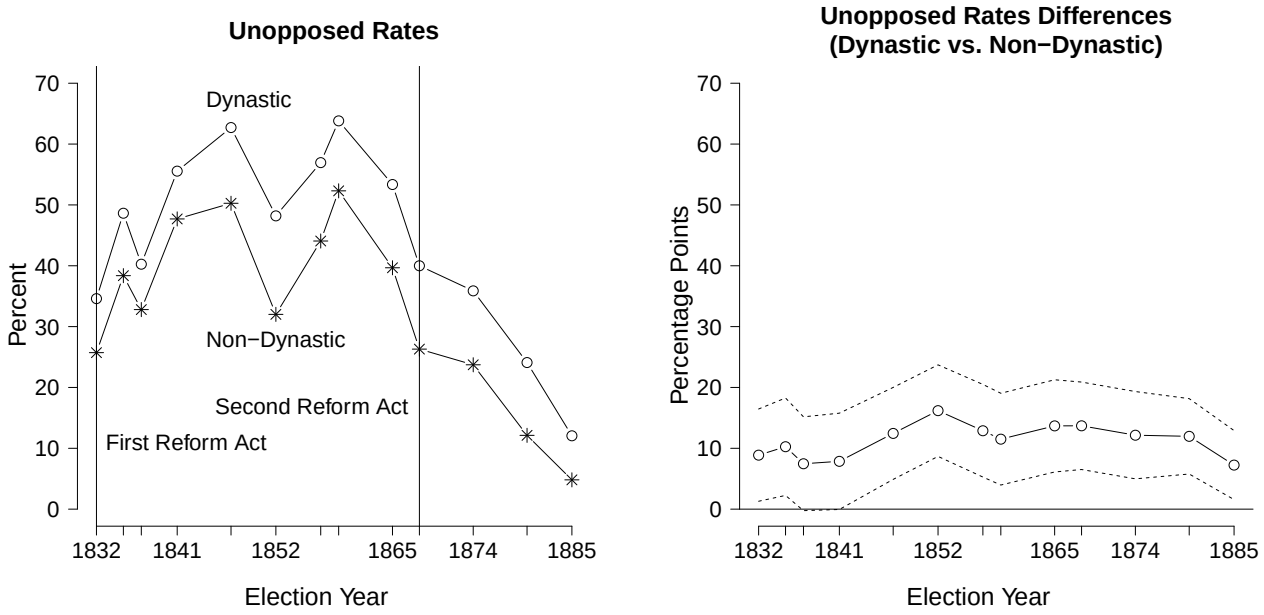

Figure 1: **Dynastic Politicians and Deterrence of Electoral Competition (1832-1885).** The left panel plots the percent of MPs elected without facing opponents by dynastic status over the course of the 19th century. The right panel reports the differences in unopposed rates between dynastic and non-dynastic MPs.

I also provide evidence that dynastic politicians enjoyed an electoral advantage when they faced electoral competition. To show this, I focus on races in two-member constituencies in the three general elections following the Second Reform Act (i.e., 1868, 1874 and 1880). From this set, I analyze those in which more than one candidate ran for office under the same party banner and at least one of them was dynastic. Focusing on this set of races allows me to make comparisons between candidates within parties. In the analysis that follows I show that dynastic candidates captured a higher proportion of the party vote.

My analysis begins by examining differences in party votes share between dynastic and

non-dynastic candidates within parties. As an alternative, I fit OLS regressions to predict a candidate's party vote share as a function of his dynastic background, incumbency status, the number of terms he served in office prior to a given race, party affiliation, the type of constituency in which a race takes place, presence of a conservative or liberal patron in the constituency, electoral size, and year fixed effects. As discussed in section 4, I am not able to ascertain the dynastic background of candidates who were never elected to office (these are dropped from the analysis). Thus, I repeat the analysis relying on the sample of races where the dynastic status of every candidate is known.[17]

Figure 2 reports point estimates (and 95% confidence intervals) of the impact of dynastic status of candidates on the proportion of party vote they capture.[18] The solid and dashed lines report estimates based on the full and restricted samples respectively. The estimates show that dynastic candidates tended to capture an additional 1-2 percentage points of the party vote share in relation to their non-dynastic counterparts. This finding is robust across all specifications and the two samples considered in the analysis.[19] One can interpret this finding as the size of the personal vote of dynastic candidates. The size of the personal vote reported here is strikingly similar to the one estimated for members of the House of Representatives in the United States around the same period (Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart 2000).

Why did dynastic candidates capture a higher fraction of the party vote in two-member constituencies? I argue that this had to do with the prevailing electoral rules at the time and

[17]Figure 5 in the Supplementary Appendix shows that constituencies corresponding to the races in the restricted sample are relatively similar in relation to those dropped from the sample in terms of income reported in the 1880, population, and magnitude of expansion of the franchise following the Second Reform Act. For the Liberal party, the two samples are also similar in terms of organizational strength across parties and the presence of patrons. For Conservatives, the restricted sample tends to include constituencies with a higher share of patrons (for Conservatives) and lower organizational strength (for Liberals).

[18]Table 2 in the Supplementary Appendix reports all regression details.

[19]In addition, Figure 6 in the Appendix reports the results of a sensitivity analysis that shows that over 70 percent of the candidates with a missing background would have to be dynastic to make the personal vote advantage of dynastic politicians disappear.

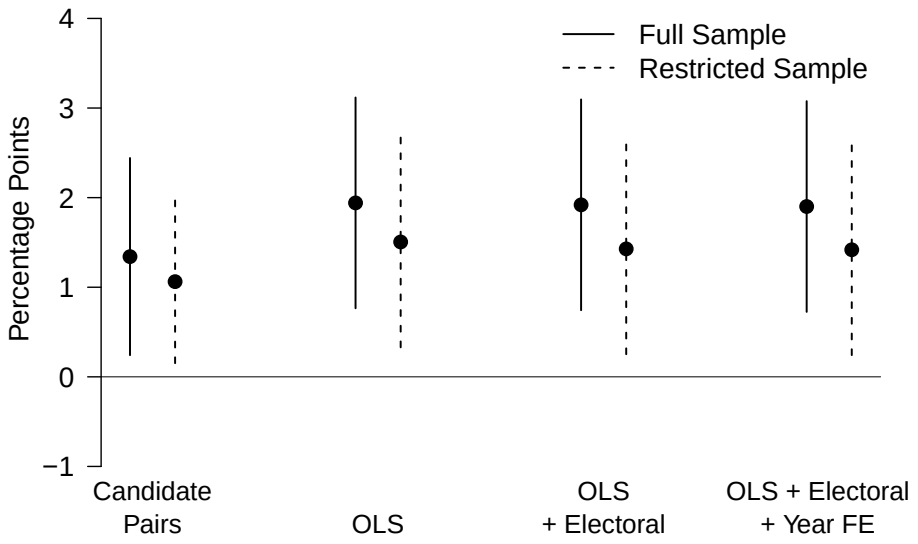

Figure 2: **Personal Vote of Dynastic Candidates.** The figure reports point estimates and 95% confidence interval for the difference in party vote share between dynastic and non-dynastic candidates in electoral races in two-member districts. The estimate show that dynastic candidates were able to capture an additional 1-2 percentage points of the party vote. This finding is robust across all specifications.

the personal-resource advantage of dynastic candidates. Registered electors in two-member constituencies had two votes. Electors could either give their votes to the candidates of the same party, split them among the candidates of two different parties, or plump (i.e., use only one vote for any of the candidates on the ballot) (Cox 1987, p. 95). This rule ensured that partisanship alone would not guarantee electoral success and gave an advantage to candidates with the ability to cultivate their personal vote.

Dynastic politicians were in a better position to cultivate a personal following. A voter deciding to give his vote either to a Conservative non-dynast or a dynast may have opted for the latter simply because of his higher name recognition. Dynastic politicians were also more likely to come from wealthy land-owning families. This privileged position may have allowed them better access to resources that they could use for patronage, a common practice in

Victorian Britain to secure victory at the polls (O'Leary 1962, Kam 2009*a*). To support this claim, in Table 7 of the Supplementary Appendix I focus on amendments to the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1885 and show that, irrespective of their partisan affiliation, dynastic legislators were more likely to oppose (support) provisions restricting (protecting) patronage.

6 Party Strength and Political Dynasties

In this section I examine the relationship between organizational strength and the incidence of dynastic candidates. The analysis shows that Liberal dynastic candidates were less likely to run for office in constituencies reporting the presence of a local party association – a finding that is consistent with the claim that parties relied on the electoral advantage of dynasts to make up for their organizational weakness. I also show that party associations predict the incidence of dynasts only after the Second Reform Act, which suggests that local organizations are not endogenous to the presence of dynasts. Among Conservatives, party organizational strength is not correlated with dynastic candidates running for a seat in parliament. As I discuss in the next section, this may have to do with the lack of intra-elite conflict in the Conservative party.

6.1 The Origins of Party Organization in Victorian Britain

The foregoing analysis focuses on the period after the Second Reform Act because this period marks the birth of mass parties in Britain (Ostrogorski 1902, McKenzie 1951, Bulmer-Thomas 1965). As previously noted, the reform doubled the electorate in boroughs and increased it by half in counties. This shock gave parties a 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 explores the significant variation in the presence of local organizations across the Liberal and Conservative parties. The maps display the presence of party organizations using the indicator variables described in section 4. The panel on the left maps the distribution of constituencies affiliated to the NLF. Counties (boroughs) with a black (red) dot were affiliated to the NLF. The difference in organizational presence between counties and boroughs is quite pronounced among Liberals, as they virtually had no organizations in rural constituencies. The panel on the right maps the distribution of Conservative associations. Counties (boroughs) with a black (red) dot reported the presence of at least one association. The map shows that although Conservative organizations were also less prevalent in counties, they were fairly scattered across the country.

Figure 4 shows that party organizations trace their origins to the absence of patrons and the expansion of the franchise following the Second Reform Act.[20] The left panel shows OLS estimates of the relationship between the presence of a patron and the probability of observing a party local organization for the Liberal and Conservative parties, respectively. Constituencies reporting the presence of a Liberal patron were 22 percentage points less likely to be affiliated to the NLF in 1880. Similarly, constituencies with an established Conservative patron were 35 percentage points less likely to report the presence of a Conservative party association in 1874.

The right panel in Figure 4 shows a positive relationship between the magnitude of the expansion of the franchise following the Reform Act of 1867 and the probability that a constituency reports across a local organization across the Conservative and Liberal parties.

[20]Table 3 reports OLS regression estimates and sample characteristics.

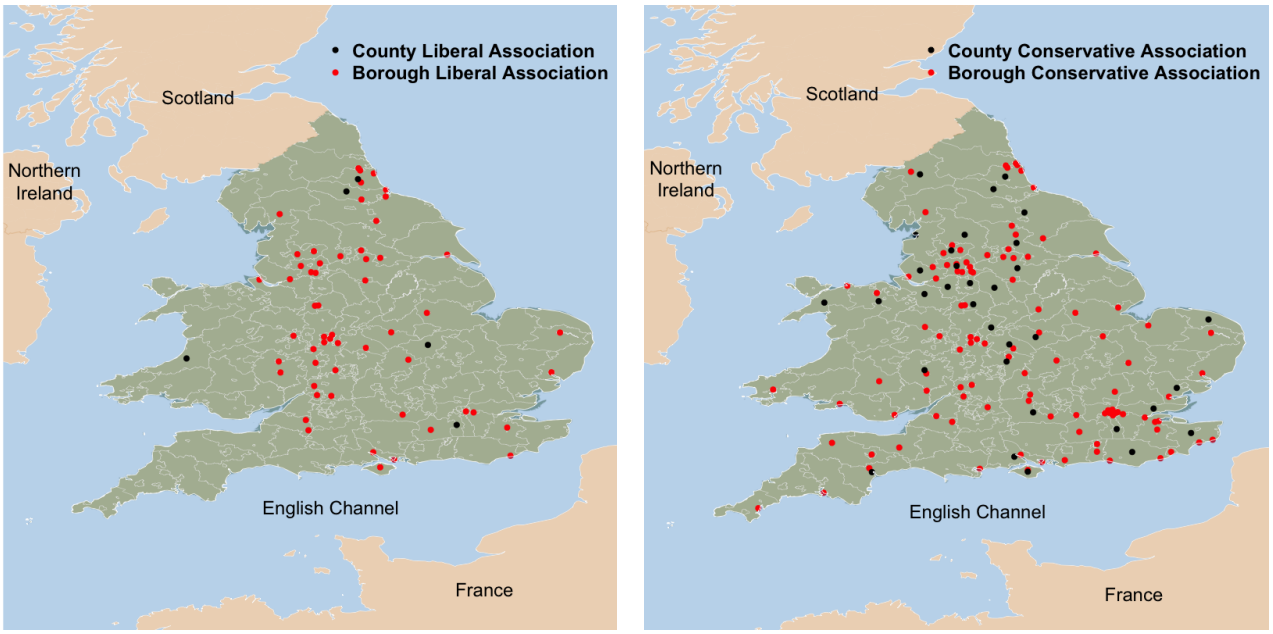

Figure 3: **Organizational Strength of the Liberal and Conservative Parties in England and Wales (Selected Years).** The left panel displays the distribution of constituencies affiliated to the National Liberal Federation across Britain in 1880. Counties with a black dot report the presence of at least one association. Similarly, boroughs with a red dot report the presence of at least one association. The right panel of Figure 3 displays the distribution of Conservative associations across constituencies in England and Wales in 1874.

The estimates from this analysis imply that a constituency doubling its electorate size was about 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, perhaps 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.

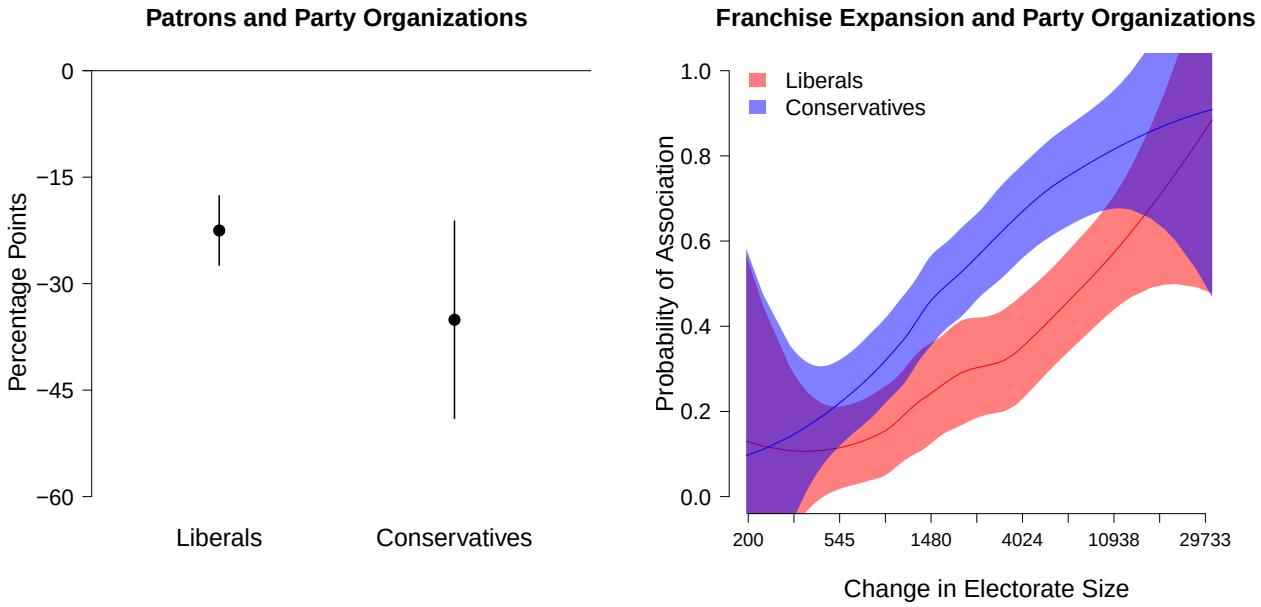

Figure 4: **Endogenous Party Organizations.** The left panel reports OLS estimates of the relationship between the presence of a patron and the probability that parties report the presence of local organizations. Constituencies reporting the presence of a Conservative or a Liberal patron are 37 and 22 percentage points less likely to report the presence of a local organization respectively. The right panel plots the predicted probability (and 95% confidence intervals) of constituencies reporting the presence of a local organization against between the log of the change in electorate size following the Second Reform Act. The panel shows a positive correlation between the two variables. In particular, a constituency doubling its electorate size is 45 percentage points more likely to report the presence of an organization.

6.2 Party Strength and the Incidence of Dynasts

To examine the relationship between party strength and the demand for dynastic politicians, I fit a binomial regression where the outcome is the number of dynastic candidates running for office and the main predictor is a binary indicator for the presence of a local organization.[21] My theory predicts that the local organizational presence of parties should be negatively correlated with the probability of a dynastic candidate running for office, indicating that

[21]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. All standard errors in the regressions reported in this section account for overdispersion.

they run only in places where parties are weak.

As additional controls, I included in the regressions district magnitude (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 change in the size of the electorate following the Second Reform Act [22] (since constituencies with larger franchise may have induced politicians 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). 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 also report results when relying on the restricted sample where the background of all candidates is known.

Table 1 reports regression estimates for Liberals. The table 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)-(5) 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 (6)-(10) report estimates relying on the sample where I was able to ascertain the dynastic background of all Liberal candidates. Across all specifications the point estimate for the party strength coefficient is negative, but statistically significant in the restricted sample. The estimates from Table 1 imply that dynastic candidates were 22 percentage points less

[22] Some constituencies do not have information available on the number of electors in the 1868 election. These observations were dropped from the analysis.

likely to run in constituencies affiliated to the NLF (the 95% confidence interval for the point prediction is [10, 34]). Since Liberal organizations are virtually absent in counties, Table 4 in the Supplementary Appendix repeats the analysis for Liberals relying on the sample that includes only borough and the main results remain unchanged.

Table 2 reports regression estimates for the Conservative party. The table shows that the presence of a local party organization is negatively correlated with the probability 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. However, none of the estimates for the impact of party strength is statistically significant. Columns (1)-(5) 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 (6)-(10) report the estimates relying on the sample where I was able to ascertain the dynastic background of all Conservative candidates.

For Conservatives, it is puzzling that organizational strength does predict the incidence of dynastic candidates. In the next section, I offer an explanation as to why this is the case. As a preview, I note that during the period I examine there was no internal conflict within the party. As a result, Conservative leaders may not have feared the independence of dynasts when making their nomination decisions. Thus, the absence of conflict may had made the incentive that organizational strength imposes on a party's candidate choice less pressing.

I also carry out a placebo test to further address concerns about the endogenous relationship between party organizations and the incidence of dynastic candidates. If the argument I advance is correct, we should expect the presence of organizations to have a negative effect on the incidence of dynastic only after the expansion of the franchise following the Second Reform Act of 1867. As noted above, the reform gave an incentive to parties to invest in organizations, and only when these organizations appeared in the post-1867, they should have had a negative impact on the demand for dynastic parties across parties. Instead, if

	Liberal Dynastic Candidate									
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Organization	−0.749**	−0.519	−0.584	−0.505	−0.556	−0.960***	−0.769**	−0.849**	−0.768*	−0.781*
	(0.355)	(0.365)	(0.370)	(0.389)	(0.393)	(0.372)	(0.381)	(0.390)	(0.409)	(0.402)
Borough	−0.058	−0.160	−0.038	−0.177	−0.351	−0.422	−0.484	−0.373	−0.535	−0.667
	(0.303)	(0.312)	(0.327)	(0.435)	(0.429)	(0.340)	(0.347)	(0.361)	(0.471)	(0.459)
Patron (L)		1.572***	1.597***	1.559***	1.482***		1.210**	1.219**	1.106**	1.064**
		(0.469)	(0.472)	(0.517)	(0.480)		(0.491)	(0.493)	(0.528)	(0.503)
Total Seats			0.341	0.452	0.388			0.350	0.668*	0.464
			(0.260)	(0.321)	(0.315)			(0.300)	(0.386)	(0.363)
Log(Population$_{71}$)				−0.050	−0.095				−0.090	−0.173
				(0.239)	(0.174)				(0.249)	(0.177)
Log(Δ Elec.$_{68-65}$)				−0.075					−0.123	
				(0.161)					(0.175)	
Δ Electorate$_{68-65}$ (Share Electorate$_{65}$)					0.132					0.081
					(0.498)					(0.523)
Intercept	−0.660***	−0.797***	−1.478**	−0.581	−0.267	−0.009	−0.143	−0.826	0.434	1.086
	(0.247)	(0.256)	(0.583)	(2.034)	(1.789)	(0.286)	(0.294)	(0.657)	(2.088)	(1.828)
Observations	273	273	273	239	243	215	215	215	192	196
Log Likelihood	−207.062	−198.083	−196.790	−173.738	−177.619	−169.008	−164.139	−163.105	−145.434	−150.300
Akaike Inf. Crit.	420.124	404.165	403.580	361.475	369.238	344.016	336.278	336.210	304.869	314.600
Note:										*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 1: **Party Strength and the Probability of Liberal Dynastic Candidates.** The table reports binomial regression estimates for the relationship between Liberal party strength (Organization) and the probability of a dynastic politician running for office in the 1880 general election. Columns (1)-(5) report results based on the full sample of races. The estimates show that the presence of local party organizations is negatively correlated with the probability of dynastic candidates running for office. This finding is robust to controlling for the type of constituency candidate where candidates run, the presence of patrons, district magnitude, and the change in the size of the electorate following the Second Reform Act measured in the log scale or as a share of the number of total electors prior to the reform. Columns (6)-(10) shows that the main finding is robust to the sample of races where the dynastic status of all candidates is known.

	Conservative Dynastic Candidate									
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Organization	−0.444	−0.200	−0.182	0.073	0.166	−0.458	−0.223	−0.191	0.041	0.147
	(0.275)	(0.289)	(0.294)	(0.359)	(0.345)	(0.293)	(0.308)	(0.312)	(0.384)	(0.367)
Borough	−1.218***	−1.288***	−1.333***	−1.865***	−1.754***	−1.010***	−1.094***	−1.167***	−1.343**	−1.539***
	(0.273)	(0.283)	(0.313)	(0.569)	(0.542)	(0.291)	(0.301)	(0.329)	(0.587)	(0.549)
Patron (C)		1.527***	1.506***	1.050*	1.248***		1.355***	1.319***	0.937*	1.133**
		(0.430)	(0.434)	(0.558)	(0.447)		(0.439)	(0.442)	(0.565)	(0.461)
Total Seats			−0.102	0.434	0.145			−0.177	0.148	0.071
			(0.293)	(0.398)	(0.351)			(0.312)	(0.429)	(0.378)
Log(Population$_{71}$)				−0.236	−0.450*				−0.003	−0.380
				(0.318)	(0.248)				(0.348)	(0.263)
Log(Δ Elec.$_{68-65}$)				−0.254					−0.266	
				(0.169)					(0.186)	
Δ Electorate$_{68-65}$ (Share Electorate$_{65}$)					−0.334					−0.222
					(0.475)					(0.505)
Intercept	0.238	−0.035	0.168	3.467	4.709*	0.345	0.080	0.433	1.439	4.169
	(0.213)	(0.229)	(0.630)	(2.924)	(2.575)	(0.225)	(0.242)	(0.667)	(3.125)	(2.702)
Observations	271	271	271	214	238	215	215	215	165	189
Log Likelihood	−203.697	−193.566	−193.476	−139.733	−166.716	−174.595	−166.892	−166.647	−121.750	−144.017
Akaike Inf. Crit.	413.394	395.133	396.952	293.467	347.433	355.190	341.785	343.294	257.501	302.035

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

Table 2: **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. Columns (1)-(5) report results based on the full sample of races. Columns (6)-(10) report estimates for the sample of races where the dynastic status of all candidates is known. The table shows that the presence of local party organizations is negatively correlated with the probability of dynastic candidates running for office. The estimate is not robust to controlling for the presence of a local patron or the change in the size of the electorate following the enfranchisement associated with the Second Reform Act (measured in the log scale or as a share of the number of total electors prior to the reform). This has to do with the fact that organization, presence of patrons, and franchise expansion are highly correlated, making it difficult to disentangle the independent effect of each variable.

organizations are simply endogenous to the type of candidates running for office, they should be correlated with the presence of dynasts prior to the 1867.

To assess these claim, I fit a set of binomial regressions across several specifications for the following election years: 1859, 1865, 1868, 1874, and 1880. As in the previous analyses constituencies are the unit of analysis, with the total number dynastic candidates running for office as the outcome, and a binary indicator for the presence of local organization as the main predictor. I fit these regressions for both the Liberal and Conservative parties separately.

The estimates in Figure 5 are consistent with the claim that party organizations have a negative impact on the incidence of dynastic candidates and not the other way around. The panels plot point estimates and 95% confidence intervals of the difference in the probability of a dynastic candidate running for office between constituencies with and without local organizational presence across parties (top panel for for Liberals and bottom panel for Conservatives).

The panel on the top of Figure 5 shows that among Liberals the presence of organizations is associated with 13-20 percentage-point decline in the probability of a dynastic candidate running for office. The negative relationship between organizational presence and party organization becomes statistically significant only after the expansion of the franchise in 1867.[23] The bottom panel shows that party organizations are associated with a decline in the probability of a dynastic candidates ranging from 7 to 13 percentage points in the elections of 1874, the year that coincides with the publication of the private survey of local Conservative organizations, and after. However, as before, the estimates for Conservatives are not statistically significant.

[23]One reason for the negative relationship between affiliation to the NLF, measured in 1880 and used in my analysis as a proxy for the organizational strength of Liberals, and the incidence of dynastic candidates is that the existence of many (if not all) Liberal local associations predated the formation of the National Liberal Federation (Herrick 1945).

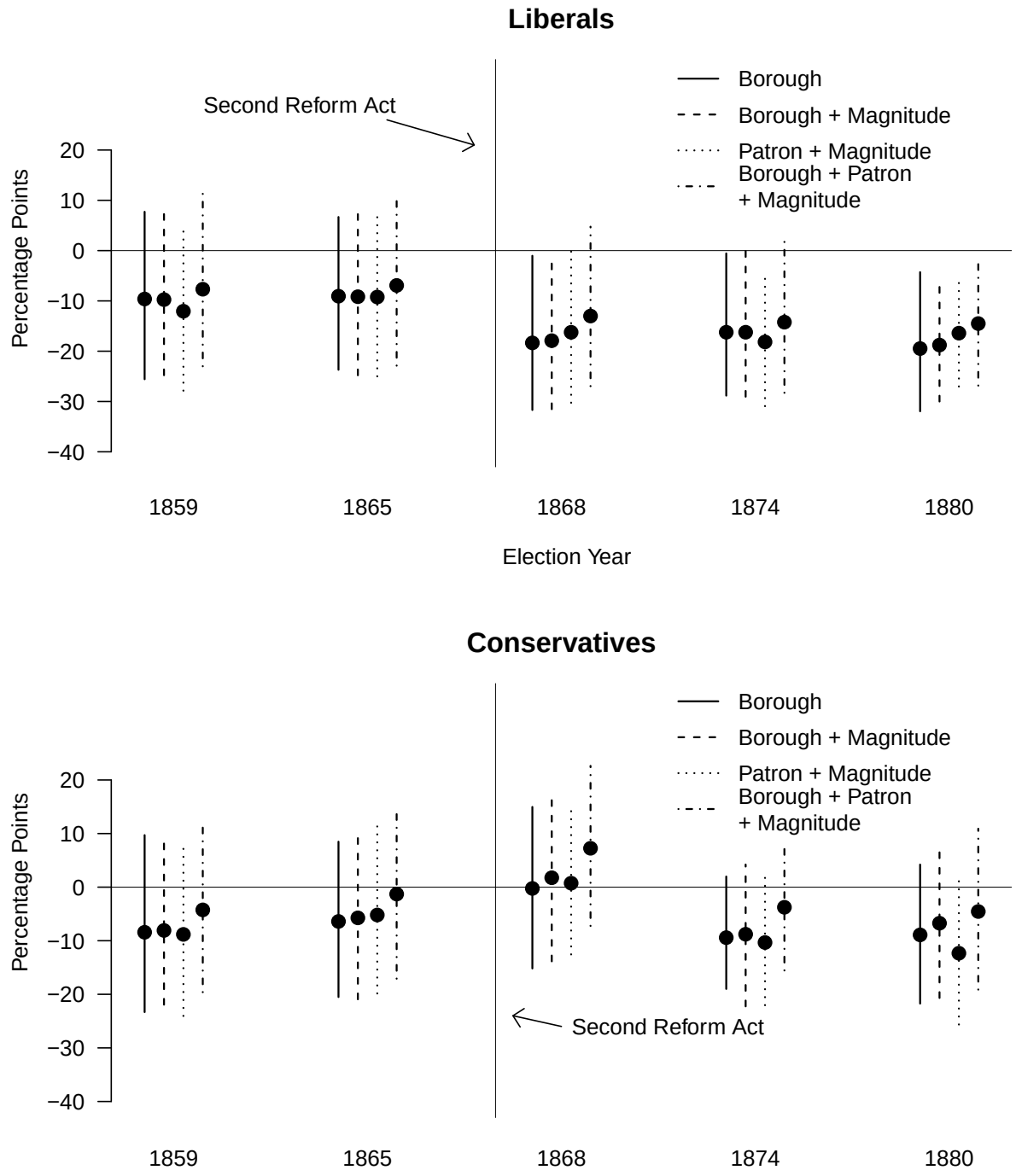

Figure 5: **Placebo Test for Impact of Party Organizational Strength on Dynastic Incidence.** The figure plots differences in the predicted probability (and 95% confidence interval) of a dynastic candidate running for office between constituencies with and without local organizational presence across five general elections (top panel for Liberals and bottom panel for Conservatives). The figure shows that local organizations have a negative impact only in the period following the Second Reform Act of 1867. This suggests that organizational presence has a negative impact on dynasts and not the other way around.

The results presented in this section for the Liberal party 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.

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

(the officer in charge of instructing members how to vote) of the two major parties acted as the teller (i.e., the individual in charge of tallying party votes in a given division).

Focusing on partisan divisions has two 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, partisan divisions were more likely to have commanded the electorate's attention, thereby increasing the importance of maintaining party unity for leaders. The second consideration 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).[24] 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.[25] The final data comprises 865 unique MPs and a total of 1,372 votes.

[24]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)

[25]Following Eggers and Spirling (Forthcoming) and Kam (2009*b*), I treat missing votes a simple absences,

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 a set of binomial regressions (with a logistic link function) where the outcome is the number of times a legislator voted against the whip in the sample of partisan divisions.[26] The main predictor in these regressions is a binary indicator taking the value of one if an MP is dynastic and zero otherwise. As additional controls I include binary indicators for 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, and for the type of constituency an MP represents. The regressions also include an interaction between the dynastic and patron variables (to test whether dynasts backed by a strong relative report a higher rate of dissent), and parliament random effects.[27] I fit these regression for the Conservative and Liberal parties separately.

Table 3 reports the binomial regression results for Liberals. The estimate for the dynastic status of MPs is positive and statistically significant across all specifications. This indicates 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

as it is impossible to determine whether the missing votes were purposeful or not.

[26] I fit binomial regression to account for the fact that not all MPs have the same number of votes. As in the previous section, all regression account for overdispersion.

[27] The estimates reported in Tables 3 and 4 do not account for repeated observations. 61% and 54% of MPs in the Liberal and Conservative samples, respectively, voted in only one parliament. This makes it difficult to identify legislator random effects.

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).

	Probability of Vote Against Party Line					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dynastic	0.634***	0.543***	0.377***	0.232*	0.253**	0.240*
	(0.131)	(0.133)	(0.138)	(0.157)	(0.158)	(0.129)
Organization (L)		−0.545***	−0.347**	−0.373***	−0.412***	−0.408***
		(0.170)	(0.176)	(0.177)	(0.180)	(0.147)
Patron (L)			1.033***	0.428	0.420	0.420
			(0.161)	(0.362)	(0.362)	(0.295)
Dynastic * Patron (L)				0.802**	0.797**	0.796**
				(0.402)	(0.402)	(0.328)
Borough					0.175	0.150
					(0.162)	(0.133)
Intercept	−4.382***	−4.207***	−4.352***	−4.283***	−4.416***	−4.322***
	(0.095)	(0.105)	(0.112)	(0.114)	(0.170)	(0.193)
Parliament RE	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Observations	698	698	698	698	698	698

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

Table 3: **Dynastic Status and Probability of Dissent among Liberals.** 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.

One concern with the results for Liberals is that the dynastic background may simply be a confounder for the ideology of legislators. To address this concern, I gathered information on the faction to which legislators identified within the party as recorded in Stenton (1976) and Stenton and Lees (1978). Using this information, I created an indicator variable taking the value of one if a legislator identified himself as a whig, liberal-conservative, moderate liberal, or independent liberal, and zero otherwise. The purpose of this indicator is to identify

legislators who may have been more conservative within the Liberal party. Table 5 shows that even after accounting for a legislator's faction, the dynastic background of politicians still predicts higher dissent rates. Further, the table shows that belonging to a faction was not sufficient to display higher propensity to dissent, since the coefficient for whig is only significant when interacted with the dynastic background of an MP.

Table 4 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 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).[28]

To give a sense of the magnitude of the results reported in Tables 3 and 4, Figure 7 plots the difference in the predicted probability of dissent (and 95 percent confidence intervals) 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

[28]The findings reported in Table 4 are substantially similar when restricting the sample to legislators that represented only boroughs.

	Probability of Vote Against Party Line					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dynastic	-0.747^{***}	-0.716^{***}	-0.685^{***}	-0.679^{***}	-0.582^{***}	-0.508^{**}
	(0.243)	(0.245)	(0.245)	(0.258)	(0.265)	(0.215)
Organization (C)		0.145	0.085	0.086	0.029	0.037
		(0.135)	(0.138)	(0.138)	(0.144)	(0.115)
Patron (C)			-0.695^{**}	-0.671	-0.733^{*}	-0.662
			(0.414)	(0.529)	(0.531)	(0.430)
Dynastic * Patron (C)				-0.062	-0.126	-0.269
				(0.834)	(0.835)	(0.678)
Borough					0.388^{**}	0.453^{**}
					(0.236)	(0.192)
Intercept	-4.695^{***}	-4.804^{***}	-4.692^{***}	-4.695^{***}	-4.860^{***}	-4.897^{***}
	(0.131)	(0.169)	(0.177)	(0.179)	(0.212)	(0.550)
Parliament RE	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Observations	678	678	678	678	678	678

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

Table 4: **Dynastic Status and Probability of Dissent among Conservatives.** 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.

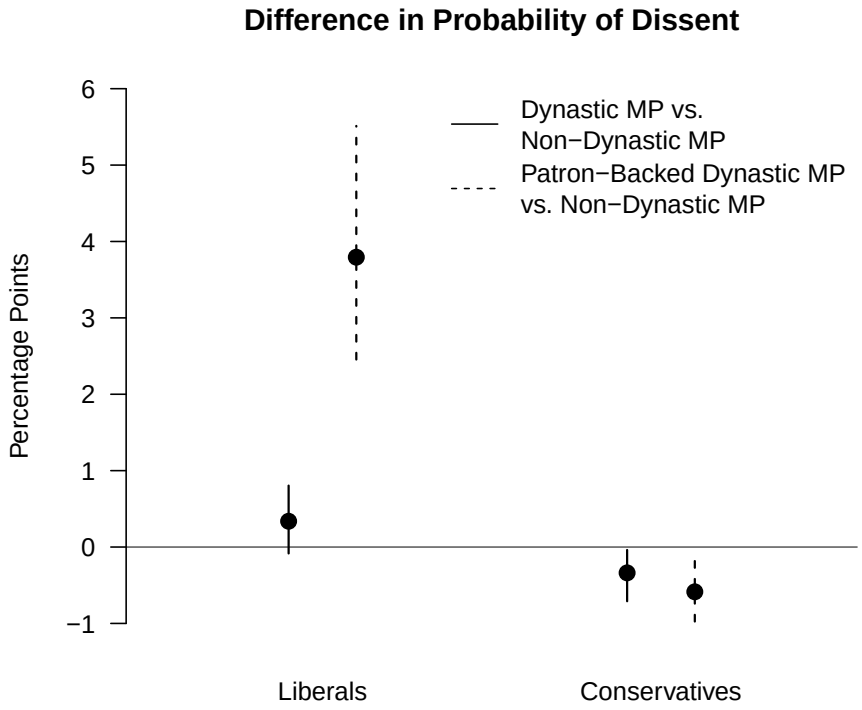

Figure 6: **Predicted Differences in Probability of Dissent.** The figure displays the estimated differences (and 95 percent confidence intervals) between the probability of dissent of dynastic MPs and their non-dynastic counterparts, and between patron-backed dynastic MPs and non-dynastic ones across 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.

"mavericks" (defined a 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 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).

To provide further evidence regarding the change in the party leadership and its impact on the dissenting behavior of legislators, I examine differences in dissent rates between dynastic and non-dynastic MPs across the five parliaments elected in the years 1859-1880. Following the historical context described above, we should expect the dissenting behaviour of dynastic and non-dynastic legislators to diverge after 1867 only among Liberals, since this party is the only that experienced a change in its leadership.

Figure 7 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 the logic outlined in the previous paragraph. After the Second Reform Act of 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 the five parliaments in the period spanning the years 1859-1880 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.[29]

The evidence presented in this section shows that, at least for the Liberal party, the

[29]As further evidence of the decline of the power of dynasts within the Liberal party, Figure 1 in the Supplementary Appendix shows that, relative to the Conservative party experienced, Liberals experience a significant decline in the proportion of dynastic MPs in the post-1867 period.

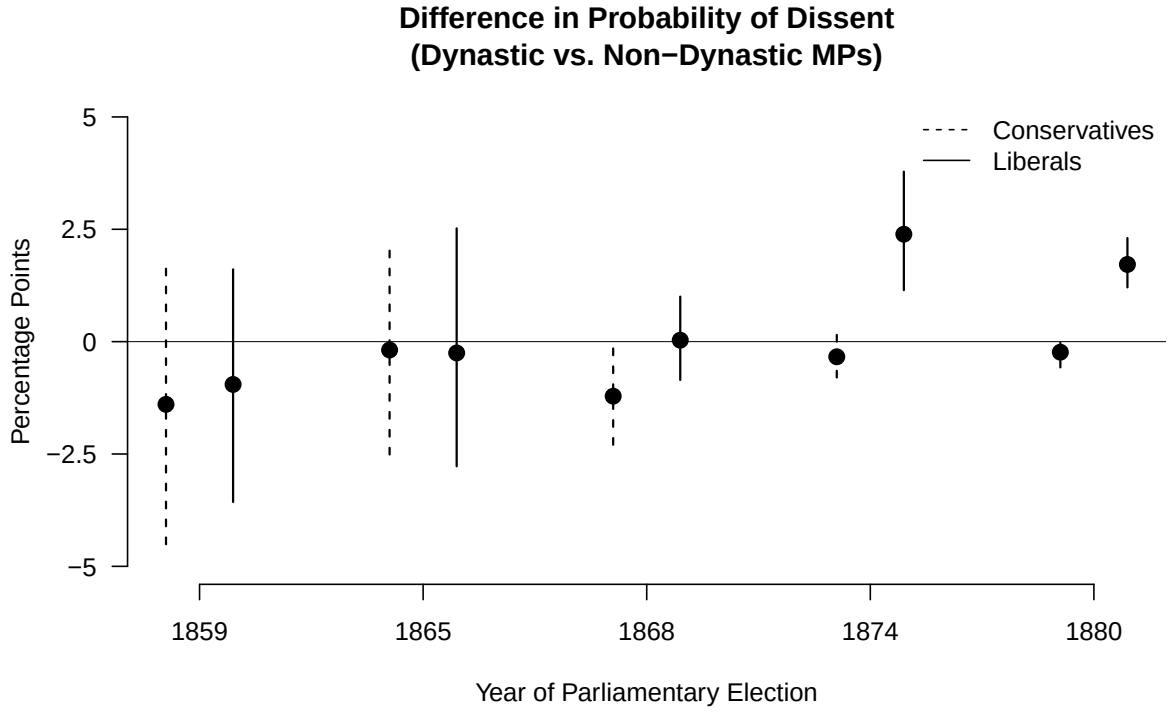

Figure 7: **Predicted Differences in Probability of Dissent between Dynastic and Non-Dynastic MPs by Party Affiliation (1859-1885).** The figure plots difference in predicted probabilities of dissent (and 95 percent confidence intervals) between dynastic and non-dynastic MPs in the years 1859-1885 for 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 - with only dynastic MPs in the Liberal party more likely to dissent from the party line relative to their non-dynastic counterparts.

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.

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 the general elections covering the years 1832-1885, dynastic MPs were more likely to have been elected without facing any opposition, and when facing electoral competition, they captured a higher proportion of the party vote. Second, in the aftermath of the Second Reform Act, Liberal dynastic candidates were less likely to run in constituencies where a local organization was present. This happened because the presence of organizations makes the resources of dynastic politicians less valuable 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 Liberal dynastic MPs were more likely to dissent from the party line. 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.

Among Conservatives, party strength is not predictive of the incidence of dynastic candidates. Also, dynastic MPs do not exhibit significantly different behavior in parliament relative to their non-dynastic counterparts. I argue, and the historical record suggests, that this is because of the absence of intra-elite conflict in the party.

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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