

Exploring the Influence Factors of the Monarch's Personality on the King and Parliament

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Abstract. The monarch's personality was a pivotal factor in the dynamic between the king and Parliament from 1603 to 1702, the contributions of many Historians such as John Morrill and Mark Kish Lansky are particularly noteworthy. In the context of 17th century England, where the relationship between the king and Parliament evolved from collaboration to confrontation, this study delves into the role of monarchical personalities. The research focuses on the Stuart monarchs and Oliver Cromwell, examining their personalities as pivotal factors in political decision-making and power struggles. Utilizing historical analysis, the study employs a multidisciplinary approach, considering political, economic, and religious perspectives to assess the influence of personality on political development. The findings reveal that each monarch's personality significantly impacted parliamentary relations. However, the research concludes that these personalities were shaped by the interaction between the monarch, Parliament, and the populace. The dynamic balance of political power was influenced not only by individual traits but also by a complex interplay of social structure, economic interests, legal traditions, and the international environment.

Keywords: Monarch personality, Stuart Britain, relations between King & Parliament s.

1. Introduction

The monarch's personality was a pivotal factor in the dynamic between the king and Parliament from 1603 to 1702, the contributions of many Historians such as John Morrill and Mark Kish Lansky are particularly noteworthy [1]. Morrill's in-depth research into the Stuart dynasty is lauded for its psychological insights, shedding light on how the monarch's character could significantly influence political landscapes [2]. His work bridges the gap between personal idiosyncrasies and political strategies, highlighting the monarch as a human agent whose actions could be both unpredictable and irrational, transcending mere structural or cultural explanations. On the other hand, Kish Lansky's extensive analysis of early modern British history offers a broader lens through which to view the complex interplay between the monarch and Parliament [3]. His emphasis on political structure and cultural backdrop provides essential context for understanding the constraints and opportunities available to the monarch. While Kish Lansky's approach is comprehensive, it may not fully encapsulate the nuanced role of personal charisma and behavior in shaping political decisions. While both Morrill's and Kish Lansky's perspectives are valuable, both psychological and structural approaches are necessary for a thorough understanding of this period. However, due to the nature of this course work, this writing is not without limitations. Time constraints and the availability of sources inevitably affected the scope and depth of the study. These limitations highlight the challenges of fully understanding the impact of monarchical personality on political affairs within the allotted time frame. In light of these challenges, a cursory review of the insights of Morrill's psychological approach, which appears to address the issues at hand more directly, and Kish Lansky's broader structural analysis are presented. This combined approach is essential to a more accurate and detailed portrait of the period under study. It is through this dual perspective that we can appreciate the multifaceted influence of monarchical personality as well as structural and cultural forces. Finally, while Morrill's psychological insights may help to provide a more targeted understanding of the role of monarchs, combining Morrill's and Kish Lansky's methodologies is essential for a comprehensive historical analysis. Such an approach not only acknowledges the individual influence of monarchs

but also places their actions in a broader historical context, thereby providing a richer and more nuanced reading of the period.

The Stuart Dynasty's reign from 1603 to 1702 marked a transformative era in British history, characterized by both continuity and change in the king-parliament relationship. Initially, the monarchy consolidated power, exemplified by Charles I's rule, but this shifted as parliamentary power grew, leading to conflicts like the Civil War and the eventual establishment of a constitutional monarchy post-1688 [4]. Economic development and the rise of the bourgeoisie strengthened Parliament's role, while the king's tax demands for war and luxury fuelled tensions. Religious and diplomatic issues, particularly the monarchs' Catholic leanings, clashed with the Protestant Parliament, creating significant strife. Continuity lies in the monarchy's influence over religion, economy, and politics, but change is evident in the shift from absolute to constitutional rule. Morrill's psychological analysis resonates most with this dynamic, highlighting how the monarch's personality could shape the state's trajectory, contrasting with Kish Lansky's structural focus that underplays the personal dimension in political decision-making.

2. Political

Between 1603 and 1702, the monarch's personality did become a dominant factor in the relationship between the king and Parliament to a large extent, especially within the framework of class rule. As Eric Hobsbawm puts it in *Nations and Nationalism*, '... the citizens of a nation... live together within national borders and are governed by the same government... the leaders of the government are the cornerstone of this definition, with the right to interpret and use religion, economics, and politics....' As the embodiment of the will of the state, the monarch's personality profoundly influenced the country's religion, economy, and politics, such as James I's role in 'Great Contract' and how Cromwell 'the king without a titled king' reshaped England [5, 6].

The character of the monarch played a crucial role in the interaction between the king and Parliament between 1603 and 1702, as exemplified by the failure of the Great Compact under James I. In 1610, Robert Cecil proposed the Great Compact, which was intended to raise royal revenue and pay off debts by giving away feudal rights in exchange for an annual grant. However, the proposal was rejected by both James I and Parliament. James I's resistance to giving up feudal rights and his dissatisfaction with the proposed amount reveal his personal financial views and preferences. The controlling and profligate nature of James I's personality was the main reason for the failure of the Great Compact. His rejection of the terms of the contract shows how his personal priorities and financial management style shaped his dealings with Parliament. The initial opposition of the House of Commons and their subsequent withdrawal from the Compact also reflected their concerns about the king's personality and his pursuit of financial autonomy, which they saw as a threat to their influence. This incident fully demonstrates that the monarch's character may have played a decisive role in shaping the relationship between the royal family and parliament, and left a profound imprint on major decisions and governance directions during this period.

Furthermore, Source A sheds further light on the fact that the 'personality of the monarch was the dominant factor in relations between King & Parliament 1603-1702 Source A presents James I's view on the divine right of kings, asserting that the monarchy is the supreme authority on earth, likening the king's power to that of God. James I claims that kings have the power to create and destroy, judge, and are accountable only to God. He compares the king's power to that of a father over his family and the head over the body. James I emphasizes that kings are bound by their laws and must govern according to them. James I's speech to Parliament in 1609 reflects his belief in the divine right of kings and his assertion of absolute power. This belief aligns with historical evidence of James I's actions during his reign, such as his attempts to consolidate power and his resistance to Parliament's influence. However, James I's actions also indicate a willingness to negotiate and compromise, as evidenced by the Great Contract and his efforts to secure financial support from Parliament. Source A should be critically analyzed for bias, as it is a speech by James I himself, and for reliability, as it

may reflect his personal views rather than objective historical facts. The author's motivations are clear, as James I is attempting to justify his authority and assert his divine right to rule. The sanctimonious tone of the speech suggests bias in favor of the monarchy and against any challenges to the king's authority. Source A is valuable in providing insight into James I's perspective on the monarchy and his relationship with Parliament. It sheds light on the king's belief in his divine right to rule and his desire to maintain absolute power. However, it should be used cautiously as it reflects James I's personal views and may not accurately represent the broader historical context or the opinions of other historical figures. James I's belief in the divine right of kings and his assertion of absolute power represents a continuity in the concept of monarchy and the relationship between the king and Parliament. However, his willingness to negotiate and compromise with Parliament indicates a change in the dynamic between the monarchy and Parliament. This change is evident in James I's attempts to secure financial support from Parliament and his acceptance of some limitations on his power. Compared to historians like John Morrill and Mark Kish Lansky, Source A aligns more closely with the perspective of Kish Lansky, who emphasizes the impact of political structure and cultural background on the relationship between the monarch and Parliament. Morrill's psychological analysis of monarchic behavior may not fully capture the perspective presented in Source A. Source A is a valuable primary source that provides insight into James I's perspective on the monarchy and his relationship with Parliament. However, it should be used cautiously due to its bias and the potential for historical inaccuracies. The source sheds light on the dominant role of the monarch's personality in the relationship between the king and Parliament during this period, but it should be supplemented with other sources to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topic.

James I's son Charles I inherited his father's absolutist style, the 'Petition of Right' (1628) [7]. His personality led to further infringements on the rights of Parliament, making it more difficult for Parliament to limit the power of the monarch [8]. Charles I's personality, especially his firm belief in the divine right of kings, led to his conflicts with Parliament. For example, the arrest of five members in 1642 showed his intolerance of supposed dissenting voices, Charles enacted the arrest largely out of misinformation that Henrietta Maria was supposedly about to be impeached, maybe due to the fact many of Charles supported already been impeached and arrested, Charles acted impulsively out of one piece of evidence which was a direct manifestation of his personality and intensified the confrontation with Parliament. His escape to Scotland after the first civil war reflected his misjudgment of the political situation, which was a product of his personality. His reckless personality itself arguably triggered the civil war. His uncompromising negotiating style and attitude towards the peace treaty further contributed to the Second Civil War and his execution.

In contrast, Cromwell's personality was in stark contrast to Charles I, and his zealous leadership style and military talent had a decisive impact on the outcome of the civil war [9]. The example of the Irish wars, Cromwell was a Puritan, and his religious beliefs had a profound impact on his political decisions. He believed that his actions were God's will, which led him to take a series of harsh measures in the war, including brutal military actions against Irish Catholics. Cromwell showed outstanding military ability, and the New Model Army he commanded won a decisive victory in the English Civil War. This military talent led him to take a tougher approach to dealing with Ireland. Cromwell's leadership style was autocratic, and he often made decisions on his own without considering parliament or public opinion. In the Irish War, he took radical measures, including executing defeated troops and imposing severe punishments on civilians, which intensified the resistance of the Irish people. Cromwell's character and decision-making did have a significant impact on the Anglo-Irish War. In the short term, his religious beliefs, military talents, and leadership style led to the cruelty and protracted nature of the war and caused profound harm to the Irish people. In the long term, this may be why Ireland has never been able to integrate into the British cultural circle. The adherence to the Catholic faith and absolutist tendencies of monarchs after Cromwell, such as James II, led to his conflict with Parliament and the people and eventually triggered the Glorious Revolution of 1688 [10]. This revolution marked the peak of the influence of the monarch's

personality, and the establishment of a constitutional monarchy limited the abuse of monarchical power.

Benedict Anderson proposed in *"Imagined Communities"* that "... the monarch... character - that is, something that emanates from the state and serves the interests of the state as its supreme goal." [11]. The Stuart monarchs before Cromwell all represented the state. This quadrant reached its peak during Cromwell's reign. Who would not admit that Cromwell represented England at that time? Who dared not to admit it? In general, between 1603 and 1702, the monarch's personality was indeed the dominant factor in the relationship between the king and Parliament. From James I to James II, the personality traits of the monarchs largely determined how they interacted with Parliament, affecting the country's religious, economic, and political trends, and ultimately leading to the establishment of a constitutional monarchy.

3. Economy

The monarch's personality was a major factor in the relationship between the king and Parliament between 1603 and 1702, as evidenced by James I's extravagance, and was a major source of tension between him and Parliament. James I's extravagance is well documented in the historical record, which details his excessive spending on his court, patronage, and his penchant for lavish living. For example, his reliance on the controversial sale of monopolies to raise funds, and his claim to a "right of provision," which allowed the crown to seize goods at below-market prices, both demonstrated his extravagant nature and disregard for financial prudence. These actions led to several clashes with Parliament, most notably the "Disordered Parliament" of 1614, in which MPs refused to provide the king with additional funds due to his financial mismanagement and corruption. James I's extravagant behavior and the financial strain it placed on the kingdom were at the heart of the monarch's deteriorating relationship with Parliament. His need for large amounts of money to support his lavish lifestyle often led to his demands for increased taxes, which Parliament was increasingly unwilling to grant without sacrificing its authority. The king's insistence on maintaining extravagant spending, with no regard for the economic burden on his subjects or the constitutional role of Parliament, created a series of conflicts. Evidence of James I's extravagant behavior and its impact on parliamentary relations shows how the monarch's characteristics dominated and shaped the political landscape of the time.

The monarch's character was a major influence on the relationship between the king and Parliament from 1603 to 1702, which was particularly evident in the collapse of Charles I's personal rule when the end of the forced borrowing and shipping charges system became the fuse of the civil war. Charles, I attempted to implement personal rule between 1629 and 1640, during which he raised funds through forced borrowing and shipping charges to bypass Parliament's financial control. But these measures eventually triggered widespread resistance, forcing Charles I to reconvene Parliament in 1640. Due to strong popular resistance, the forced borrowing system failed and the shipping charges system was abolished in 1641, marking the collapse of Charles I's personal rule and laying the groundwork for the subsequent English Civil War. Charles I's character, especially his pursuit of absolute power and contempt for Parliament, was a key factor in the collapse of his rule. His attempt to raise funds through extra-parliamentary means not only violated Parliament's financial power but also increased the burden on the people and caused widespread dissatisfaction. The implementation and ultimate failure of these measures fully illustrate the impact of Charles I's character on the relationship between the king and Parliament. The outbreak of the civil war was the result of policy mistakes and popular resistance caused by the monarch's character, which confirms that the monarch's character was indeed the main factor in the relationship between the king and Parliament between 1603 and 1702.

Cromwell's bankruptcy experience and his economic solutions, as well as the promulgation of the Breda Declaration, further demonstrated that "the character of the monarch was the main factor in the relationship between the king and the parliament from 1603 to 1702". Oliver Cromwell faced serious

financial difficulties during his tenure as the leader of the Republic, and this bankruptcy experience prompted him to take a series of economic measures to stabilize the government's finances. Under his leadership, the Breda Declaration was passed in 1660, paving the way for the restoration of Charles II, and also reflected Cromwell's strategy for solving economic problems and his compromise with political realities. Cromwell's character and his approach to economic problems had a profound impact on the relationship between the king and the parliament. His bankruptcy experience made him realize the importance of financial stability to the operation of the government, which was reflected in the economic measures he took. The promulgation of the Breda Declaration, although Cromwell's compromise with political realities, also reflected his understanding of the relationship between the monarch and the parliament. These actions of Cromwell show that even the leaders of the Republic period, their personality traits and strategies for solving economic problems are key factors in shaping political relations. The character of the 'monarch' (absolute leader) was therefore the dominant factor in the relationship between the king and Parliament from 1603 to 1702, both in monarchy and republic.

It was particularly evident in the transformation of the military-fiscal state under William and Mary, especially the creation of the Bank of England. The establishment of the Bank of England (1694) under the joint rule of William and Mary marked a major transformation of the state's financial and military power. This move was made with the direct support of William III, who recognized the need for a more stable and reliable financial system to support his military operations and the economic needs of the country. The creation of the Bank of England not only provided the government with the necessary war funds, but also established Parliament's authority in financial affairs through parliamentary authorization. William III's personality, especially his pragmatic attitude towards military and financial issues, had an important impact on the relationship between the king and Parliament. His reign was characterized by more cooperation than confrontation between the monarch and Parliament, which was reflected in the establishment of the Bank of England. William III's willingness to consult with Parliament and accept its supervision was in stark contrast to the arbitrary dictatorship of his predecessor, Charles I. William's open attitude and respect for the power of Parliament not only facilitated the transformation of the military-fiscal state, but also strengthened the role of Parliament in state governance, thus proving that the monarch's personality was a key factor in shaping the relationship between the king and Parliament between 1603 and 1702.

4. Religion

The personality of the monarch was a major factor in the relationship between the king and Parliament from 1603 to 1702, which was fully reflected in James I's behavior and policies, including his publication of the Book of Sport (anti-Puritan), anti-Catholic actions, and the introduction of the 90 Pluralism Acts in the first Parliament. At the same time, the impact of his marriage choices on international politics cannot be ignored. During the reign of James I, his personality was reflected in his writings and policies. The publication of the Book of Sport showed his opposition to the Puritans, while the anti-Catholic laws he implemented at home reflected his adherence to religious orthodoxy. In addition, his 90 Pluralism Acts were introduced in the first Parliament of 1604, an attempt to fill the treasury with increased taxes, a move that triggered a fierce conflict with Parliament. At the same time, his marriage strategies, such as marrying his daughter Elizabeth to Frederick V, Elector of the Palatinate, eventually led to intervention in the Thirty Years' War. James I's personality, especially his views on religion and politics, profoundly influenced his way of ruling and his interaction with Parliament. His anti-Puritan stance and hostility towards Catholicism, as well as his attempt to solve financial problems by increasing taxes, exacerbated the conflict with Parliament. In addition, his marriage strategy not only reflected his personality but also directly affected England's international stance, especially in the Thirty Years' War. These events show that James I's personal beliefs and decisions largely shaped the relationship between the king and Parliament, confirming that the monarch's personality was the main factor in the relationship between the king and Parliament during this period from 1603 to 1702.

Charles I's marriage choices and his religious policies are examples of factors that played a key role in triggering the English Civil War. Charles I's marriage to Henrietta Maria, a French Catholic, as well as his support for Laudism and promotion of the new prayer book were all personality-driven decisions. These decisions exacerbated religious tensions in the country and triggered strong opposition from Puritans and other religious dissidents. Charles I's sympathy for Catholicism and his tough stance on religious issues made religious disputes a core issue in the deterioration of relations between the king and Parliament and ultimately became an important cause of the civil war. Charles I's personality, especially his stubbornness and preferences on religious issues, profoundly influenced his way of ruling and his interaction with Parliament. His marriage choices and support for Laudism showed his preference for Catholic tendencies, which caused widespread concern and dissatisfaction in Protestant-dominated England. The promotion of the new prayer book further intensified religious conflicts and made the contradictions between Parliament and the king increasingly irreconcilable. These religious disputes were not only a reflection of Charles I's personality traits, but also one of the main factors leading to the outbreak of the civil war. The personality and religious policies of Charles I thus clearly show that the monarch's personality was the dominant factor in the relationship between the king and Parliament during the period 1603-1702.

The monarch's personality affected Parliament, which was particularly evident in Cromwell's Puritanism and his contradictory behavior, which contrasted with previous leaders or monarchs in domestic and foreign policies and reflected his main character trait - indecision. Oliver Cromwell was a staunch Puritan, and his religious beliefs had a profound impact on domestic policies. However, he showed strange contradictions in his handling of religious dissidents at home, such as the cases of Nayler and Biddle. Nayler was severely punished by Cromwell for claiming to be a Christian, while Biddle was imprisoned for raising religious doubts. In foreign policy, Cromwell also showed inconsistency and indecision in his suppression of Ireland, intervention in the Netherlands, Western designs, and diplomacy with France, which were not always consistent with his Puritan principles. Cromwell's personality, especially his indecision, played a major role in his way of ruling and his relationship with Parliament. His Puritan beliefs should have guided his decision-making, but in practice, he often showed contradictions and uncertainty in his handling of religious dissidents and international affairs. This contradiction not only caused dissatisfaction at home but also led to policy confusion internationally. This character trait of Cromwell was in sharp contrast to the firm stance of previous monarchs such as Charles I, proving that the monarch's personality was the main factor in the relationship between the king and Parliament between 1603 and 1702. Cromwell's indecisiveness not only affected the effectiveness of his rule but also revealed the decisive role of the monarch's personality in political decision-making.

It is also fully reflected in the conflict between Charles II and James II and the Immortal Seven. During the reigns of Charles II and James II, their personality traits and behavior patterns clashed violently with the Immortal Seven. Although Charles II restored the parliamentary system on the surface, his unruly private life and sympathy for Catholicism led to tensions between him and the parliament. James II publicly declared himself a Catholic and tried to promote the Catholic revival, which directly triggered the Immortal Seven to invite William III to invade England, which eventually led to the Glorious Revolution. The personalities of Charles II and James II, especially their attitudes towards the concepts of religion and power, were the key to the breakdown of their relationship with the parliament. Both Charles II's secret Catholic tendencies and James II's open support for Catholicism formed a sharp opposition to the Protestant-dominated parliament in England. The Immortal Seven were panicked by James II's anti-Catholic policies and eventually took extreme measures to invite foreign monarchs to invade, which was largely a reaction to the personalities of the two monarchs. These events show that the monarch's personality had a decisive influence on the relationship between the king and Parliament between 1603 and 1702 and was a major factor in the political turmoil of this period.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study show that the monarch's personality was indeed the main factor affecting the relationship between the king and parliament between 1603 and 1702. By analyzing the personality traits of each monarch and their impact on political decision-making, it is further concluded that the monarch's personality played a decisive role in shaping the country's religious, economic, and political trends, and ultimately led to the establishment of a constitutional monarchy.

This study provides many valuable references for future research in this direction, mainly affecting our understanding of political relations during the monarchy period. Future research should focus more on the interaction between the monarch's personality and the political structure and cultural background, and how these factors jointly affect the direction of national governance and decision-making processes. In addition, exploring the role of monarch's personality in historical development is also of great practical significance for understanding modern political leadership and its impact on the direction of national development.

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