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WHO CROWNS THE KING WITH NO KINGDOM?
Examining the procedures by which non-reigning monarchs are deemed legitimate or illegitimate in Europe

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Abstract. European societies have recently evolved from monarchies (often autocratic) into democracies. Broadly speaking, monarchies were underpinned by centralised power dynamics, widespread religious belief, and mostly-localised worldviews. Democracies, however, are underpinned by de-centralised power dynamics, widespread secularism, and a globalised political sphere. Monarchs themselves, and the dynasties from which they emerge, have survived this change: deposed and non-reigning monarchs can retain their sovereignty, with some unique rights and powers, in perpetuity. This has led to the strange, and under-studied, phenomenon of kings without kingdoms. While these royal dynasties themselves persist, the various official bodies that formed the *truth regime* responsible for their sensible administration have not. The result is a *power-knowledge* vacuum into which private individuals have stepped. After a brief introduction, which provides relevant background information, this article will examine the situation through two case studies and a technical section which contextualises it within the framework of Foucauldian epistemology. We will identify a number of problems with the present situation, and conclude by suggesting some solutions to them.

Keywords*: Dethroned, Aragon, Paterno, Gayre, Sovereignty, Royalty.*

1. Introduction

The following paper discusses the understudied phenomena of non-reigning monarchs, and how their claims should be regulated in the modern age. In this first section, I will provide the necessary background to understand the position of non-reigning monarchs in international law; explain the Foucauldian concept of the *truth regime*, and how it can be used to understand the shift between "monarchical" and

"post-monarchical" eras; explain how the traditional institutions that regulated royalty and nobility have been replaced by private, unqualified, individuals; and present evidence of non-reigning monarchs' continued relevance to modern society. In the second and third sections of this paper, I will present two case studies that draw from both medieval and modern history to demonstrate the dangers of leaving the regulation of claims to non-reigning sovereignty to private, unqualified, individuals. In the fourth section, I present a technical discussion of epistemological theory that draws on the work of Michel Foucault to investigate how we should approach claims to non-reigning sovereignty. And in the fifth, and final, section, I will offer a conclusion: concrete suggestions towards a framework for the evaluation of claims to non-reigning sovereignty.

1.1. Non-reigning monarchs under international law

It has long been theorised (e.g: Reuterskiold, 1896 / 1927, p. 47) that, under certain conditions, dethroned monarchs (and their lawful heirs, in perpetuity) are able to retain their positions as subjects of international law. Providing these conditions are met, historically legitimate claims to sovereignty over any given territory are also legally legitimate (that is, *de jure* even if not *de facto*). What are these conditions? Simply to make some form of public declaration against the prescription of their sovereign rights – to not concede, and give up the claim in question. For example, a non-reigning monarch who "unwilling to give up the sovereignty, claims the title and royal insignia, although he does not possess the kingdom" (Wolff, 1764 / 1934, p.364), fulfils such an obligation thereby. These titles and insignia can include noble titles (Count of Paris, Archduke of Austria, etc., and, by extension, territorial designations [which are often also last names] such de France, di Savoia, etc.) and coats of arms (Grotius, 1625 / 2005, pp. 484 - 485).

The non-reigning monarch's sovereign status allows for the exercising of somewhat truncated royal powers (recognised as legitimate under international law) such as: "to grant and confirm coats of arms, to bestow titles drawn from places over which their ancestors had exercised their sovereign powers, and also the right to found, re-establish, reform and exercise the Grand Magistracy of the Orders of Knighthood conferred by their family." (De Becker, 2011, p. 949). How many such non-reigning monarchs currently exist across Europe? There are (at least) four legitimate claimants to the throne of France; there is (at least) one legitimate claimant to the throne of Italy and multiple legitimate claimants to the throne of Sicily; there are two legitimate claimants to the throne of Georgia, etc. These dynasties remain culturally and legally relevant on the continent and in the wider world today… yet they are almost totally ignored by academia.

1.2 The truth regime of the post-monarchical age

What do we mean when we categorise this age as a "post-monarchical" one? We do not mean that it is an age defined by the absence of kings and queens — as we saw in 1.1, these dynasties can linger on for many centuries even when deposed. And, in any case, a number of countries chose to retain or regain their kings and queens into modernity on a constitutional basis (such as Great Britain, Spain, and Monaco). Nor is it, necessarily, an age when monarchs are deemed irrelevant. Rather, a post-monarchical age, for the purposes of this article, is an age where the *truth regime* within which absolute monarchies traditionally flourished is no longer in operation.

In an interview, "The Political Function of the Intellectual" philosopher, historian, and political theorist Michel Foucault explains the concept of the truth regime as a "system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and functioning of statements." This system consists of five sections: the "types of discourse [society] harbours and causes to function as true"; the mechanics and contexts within which one can distinguish true statements from false ones; the method of sanctioning true and false statements; the "techniques and procedures which are valorised for obtaining truth"; and the status or position of those who are "charged with saying what counts as true" (Foucault, 1977, pg. 112 – 114).

The truth regime which sustained monarchies in the Age of Absolutism, usually thought to begin with the reign of Louis XIV (1643-1715) and end with the French Revolution (1789), was underpinned by religious and social legitimacy in the form of church support for the divine right of kings, and the social contract between the monarch and their subjects. In an increasingly secular Europe, the continued decline of religious belief (Dogan, 2002, p. 127-149) has undercut the former, while the rise of democratic referenda has rewritten the latter. Our truth regime(s) are no longer modelled on the myths of the ancient world, but on modern "myths" of our own: egalitarianism, capitalism, meritocracy, democracy, globalisation, etc. A profoundly different worldview has arisen from this evolution.

1.3 Enter the kingmakers

In monarchical ages, royal and noble claims have usually been strictly regulated. Examples of the institutions which carried out this regulation abound in history, such as Sicily's Royal Commission for Titles of the Nobility and its Italian successor (following the country's unification), the Consulta Araldica. Such institutions were often synonymous with countries' heraldic authorities (indeed, Consulta Araldica translated into English becomes "Heraldic Council" or "College of Arms") due to the close relationship between heraldry, royalty, and nobility across much of Europe.

These bodies were responsible for assessing claims to titles, pedigrees, and coats of arms and pronouncing them true or false. They clearly, then, occupied an important part of the truth regime's structure as set out by Foucault in 1.2. And it is not surprising that such a position became necessary: royals - even foreign royals, pretenders, and those far down the line of succession - were important figures with special privileges and abilities, and were often diplomatically useful (or, in some instances, dangerous). Likewise, regulating the nobility was a large and daunting, but nonetheless vital, task: depending on the country, nobles had a wide range of allowances and responsibilities, ranging from tax-exemptions to seats in parliament.

In a post-monarchical age, however, these bodies are rarely, if ever, maintained. In some cases, they are succeeded by private institutions that aim to continue their work, but do so without an official mandate. While these institutions (if they continue to exist at all) are shorn of authority and resources, the things they were created to regulate usually persist. In France and Italy, noble titles still exist. In Germany, noble titles have been incorporated into the family name. These names and titles, though they carry no special privilege or political recognition, are real – so much so that they sometimes become the subject of legal action. Likewise, heraldry, genealogy, and related subjects remain extant. And, as described previously, royals do not become common by dent of simple dethronement.

The situation, then, is one where what was regulated loses importance in the eyes of the current political regime, even if it continues to exist. As a result, that which once regulated it is diminished in turn – and perhaps extinguished. This creates a *power-knowledge* vacuum – a missing link in the structure of the truth regime – that deals authoritatively with questions like: "which of these three men is the rightful heir to the throne of X?" and "under the nobiliary law of Y, who should inherit noble title A?". Into this void spring the kingmakers: private individuals acting on their own authority to proclaim who is legitimate and who is illegitimate. In doing so, they pick up the dwindling threads of royal history and weave them into tapestries which do not, always, resemble historical reality.

1.4 The continuing relevance of monarchs, reigning or otherwise

Before continuing any further down this line of enquiry, we must justify it with an answer to the following question: are dethroned monarchs and their attendant sub-cultures relevant enough, in the modern age, to warrant such consideration?

The dissolution or diminishment of organisations responsible for the regulation of the royalty and nobility would be utterly inconsequential were it of commensurate scope with the dissolution or diminishment of that which they regulated. But there is little parity between the fortunes of the regulated and the regulators in a post-monarchical

age. To strip these regulatory bodies of authority is to diminish them completely, and put them on a footing with any other private organisation; whereas monarchs retain significant powers and status that set them apart from other people[1].

Three non-controversial examples of monarchical privilege retained post-dethronement, which are protected under international law (refer to 1.1) are: the ability to grant coats of arms; the ability to grant noble titles; and the ability to operate orders of chivalry (thereby conferring knighthoods). An obvious question arises: can't any private citizen do the same thing? The answer, of course, is yes – although, if undertaken by a private citizen, the last two of these actions will not have legal validity. The importance of this fact varies depending on local law and particular circumstances. In Italy, for example, using an illegitimate "noble" title, which has been granted by anyone other than a legitimate *fons honorum* (fount of honour – usually a monarch, dethroned or otherwise) can have serious legal repercussions (Juchter van Bergen Quast, 2018, online). The same is true in a number of other jurisdictions.

Legal legitimacy aside, it is clear that orders of knighthood, though rarely a subject of academic or political attention, remain influential in the post-monarchical age. There are no official figures on how many orders of chivalry exist, or how many knights and dames they include worldwide. But it is clear that both numbers are significant. The Wikipedia article for Orders of Chivalry (which is notably incomplete) lists a plethora of such bodies[2]. And, while few of these organisations make membership numbers public, the few that do give some indication of knighthood's enduring popularity: the Sovereign Military Order of Malta (SMOM) counts 13,500 "Knights, Dames, and Chaplains" amongst its membership[3]. The Order of the Knights of Rizal has more-than 25,000 members[4]. In a Facebook post dated October 12, 2020, the Federation of Royal Brotherhoods of the Order of Saint Michael of the Wing announced that it had invested more-than 2,500 members. Furthermore, while the majority of orders do not deign to share their membership rosters with the public, a cursory glance at those that do will reveal that many knights and dames are extremely influential people: academics, politicians, and members of the nobility and royalty taken from all around the world[5].

The last point to make about chivalric orders is that, taken together, they have significant financial means. The Military Order of the Collar of Saint Agatha, for

1 We suggest that this is because monarchs are subjects of international law, while the institutions that regulate them are subject to national law. Hence, new regimes are in some ways constrained in the effect they can have on a dethroned monarch's status, but are not constrained in the effect they can have on the institutions responsible for regulating royalty and nobility.

2 Online: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Order_of_chivalry#Monarchical_orders

3 Online: https://www.orderofmalta.int/sovereign-order-of-malta/frequently-asked-questions/

4 Online: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knights_of_Rizal

5 For example, see "recent recipients" of the Royal Order of Saint Francis I online: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Order_of_Francis_I#:~:text=The%20Royal%20Order%20of%20Francis,King%20of%20Piedmonte%20and%20Sardinia

example, contributed €130,050 to a wide range of charitable causes in 2019[6]. In the same year, the American Delegation of Savoy Orders donated $100,000 to Caterina's Club, a charity that provides "meals, housing and job training for disadvantaged children and families"[7]. In the summer of 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic, the Sacred Military Constantinian Order of Saint George contributed €232,368 to Italian Hospitals and Health Institutions[8]. The Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem (often described as a "pseudo-order" but in fact legitimised by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1807 – see Juchter van Bergen Quast, 2017, online) has given well in excess of $1,000,000 to charitable causes annually for at least the last four years[9]. It is no less true for being trite to say that while these sums, individually, may not be world-changing, they certainly can be life-changing for their recipients. Additionally, across all such orders, it is highly likely that these funds taken together represent a non-negligible capital flow each year – although exactly how non-negligible is impossible to gauge.

Finally, we move from the socio-legal and the socio-economic towards the socio-political. The simple fact is that a significant percentage of the European population remains monarchist – many tens of millions of people[10]. This sizeable minority may not be in a position to dictate forms of governance, but it is certainly large enough to remain socially, culturally, and politically important.

The powers retained by dethroned monarchs, the funds they raise and allocate to causes of their choosing, and the support they continue to receive from a large segment of the population, continues to make them important figures in the post-monarchical age. Yet, despite this importance, private individuals with no relevant credentials, training, or authority, have, on a number of occasions, managed to fabricate legitimacy for illegitimate dynasties and impugn the legitimacy of legitimate ones.

2. A Case Study: The Paterno Castello claim to the Crown of Aragon

The Paterno Castello family's claim to the Crown of Aragon originates at the Compromise of Caspe (1412), when the House of Barcelona's rulership came to an abrupt end. Martin the Humane died in 1410, leaving no heir and multiple aspiring kings.

6 Online: https://storage.googleapis.com/wzukusers/user-33514107/documents/5c1625a1414a4621a028571b7e61737b/Global%20report%202019%20English.pdf

7 Online: https://www.prweb.com/releases/savoy_foundation_raises_thousands_for_caterinas_club/prweb16385484.htm

8 Online: https://www.constantinian.org.uk/covid-19-appeal-e232368-donated-by-the-constantinian-order-to-italian-hospitals-health-institutions/

9 Online: https://www.osmth.org/vision-projects

10 See, for example, some relevant polling data online: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monarchism#Support_for_the_restoration_of_monarchy

At the Compromise of Caspe, the Crown of Aragon was given to Ferdinand of Antequera, a member of the House of Trastamara, and nephew of King Martin through the female line. James II of Urgell, another pretender, was passed over. However, James was King Martin's closest living relative through the male line, and a member of the House of Barcelona. According to the law of royal succession laid down in the Will of James I of Aragon, the Conqueror, this made James II of Urgell the rightful successor (for a translation of the Will, see Leach, online). James and his followers rose up, but were defeated. James II died, imprisoned, twenty years later, at which point his claim to the Crown of Aragon (still following the succession laws laid down in the Will of James I) passed to the next most-senior male member of the House of Barcelona, etc. etc…. eventually, this claim devolved to the House of Ayberbe d'Aragon, a cadet branch of the House of Barcelona that had settled in Sicily centuries earlier. At the death-without-heir of Giuseppe d'Ayerbe d'Aragon, last Prince of Cassano[11] the claim passed to the next most senior cadet branch of the House of Barcelona: the House of Paterno.

The House of Paterno is descended from John (Giovanni) "the Elder" Paterno – a vicar general of Sicily who lived in the kingdom during the reign of Martin the Humane, and was a favourite of the king (Paterno Castello di Carcaci, 1936, pp. 11 – 16). We know that John was a member of a cadet branch of the House of Barcelona: his coat of arms was identical to that of the House of Barcelona, with the addition of a bendlet azure, which is a notable mark of cadency (Parker, 1894, p. 55). It is inconceivable that John would have usurped these arms, as King Martin (the head of the House of Barcelona) would have had ample opportunity to witness John using them (in their official capacities as king and vicar general), and would undoubtedly have acted against so gross a violation of the law of arms.

Additionally, a genealogy showing the line from the House of Barcelona (through the younger of two sons from James I's third marriage to Theresa Gil de Vidaure) to John the Elder is given in Imhof's 1702 treatise "Corpus Historiae Genealogicae Italia et Hispaniae…" and in Gaspare Scioppio's 1628 "De Aragoniae Regum Origine, Posteritate…". A further genealogy exits in the state archives of Madrid that demonstrates that the House of Paterno descends from the House of Paternoy, a family that "flourished" in Aragon between 1300 and 1600, and which "laid claim to descent from the reigning house and knew that one of its members, in the second half of the Fourteenth Century, had travelled to Sicily and had there established his family" (Paterno di Sessa & Paterno Castello di Carcaci, 1913, p. 8).

The House of Paterno's descent from James I is widely accepted. It was accepted by the Royal Commission for Titles of the Nobility in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. It was accepted by the Consulta Araldica (a government body belonging to the Ministry of the

11 More can be read about the Ayberbe family online: https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=it&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nobili-napoletani.it%2FAyerbo.htm&prev=search

Interior, which was responsible for the regulation of the nobility in the Kingdom of Italy). Indeed, in the Consulta Araldica's 1920 – 1922 edition of the Libro d'Oro (the Kingdom of Italy's official nobility register), we read that the Paterno family "descends from the Infant don Pedro of Aragon, count of Ayerbe and of Zenia, son of King Jayme the Conqueror and of donna Teresa de Vidaure, his third wife" (Collegio Araldico, 1921, p. 510). It has, lastly, been accepted by the Italian courts, which have declared the Paterno Castello claim to the throne of Aragon legitimate on multiple occasions (the Court of Bari in 1952[12], the Court of Pistoia in 1964[13], the International Court of Arbitration in Ragusa in 2003[14], etc.).

In 1853, following the death of Giuseppe, Prince of Cassano, a council consisting of the heads of each branch of the Paterno family met to decide which of them should inherit the claim to the Crown of Aragon, and how that claim should descend through the family. They picked the direct ancestor of the current claimant, and all the other branches of the family signed their rights away in a family pact[15], an action for which there is ample precedence (for example, the Habsburg "Mutual Pact of Succession" of 1703, the Nassau Family Pact of 1783, the Habsburg family pact of 1864, etc.).

The story above is a truncated one, but it serves to explain on what grounds the Paterno Castello family claim to be descendants of the House of Barcelona, and also on what grounds they have a claim to the Crown of Aragon.

2.1 Criticisms of the Paterno Castello family's claim to the Crown of Aragon

Two substantive critiques of the Paterno Castello's claim to the Crown of Aragon have been put forth. These are sections in Robert Gayre's self-published and long out of print "The Knightly Twilight A Glimpse At The Chivalric And Nobiliary Underworld" and an entry in "World Orders of Knighthood and Merit" by Guy Stair Sainty (a tome published by Burke's, which he also co-edited). What follows is a comprehensive assessment of these criticisms.

2.2 The Knightly Twilight

On legitimation…

Gayre opens his criticism by claiming that the son of James I and Teresa from whom the House of Paterno descends was not in line to the throne: "[…] certain observations

12 Online: https://real-aragon.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/pdf/barijudgement_en.pdf
13 Online: https://real-aragon.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/pdf/pistoiajudgement_en.pdf
14 Online: https://real-aragon.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/pdf/ragusajudgement_en.pdf
15 Online: https://real-aragon.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/pdf/familypact_en.pdf

should be made which, in our opinion, destroy completely these historical claims. The Papal legitimation which is brought forward to allow the desired descent was, in itself, insufficient to transfer any title to the Crown of Aragon." (Gayre, 1973, pp. 27 – 28).

This claim, that papal legitimation is insufficient to place a formerly illegitimate child into the line of royal succession, is simply wrong. McDougall, in "Royal Bastards, The Birth of Illegitimacy, 800 – 1230" writes: "[…] secular powers outside of England generally proved quite willing to accept legitimation by subsequent marriage as an appropriate practise for succession, and appropriately governed by the Church" (McDougall, 2016, chapter 8).

It is also clear from the Will of James I that the king legitimised both James of Xerica and Peter of Ayerbe himself. On this subject, McDougall tells us: "Innocent III, in his decretal denying the request of William of Montpellier for legitimation of his children, had recognised the right not only of a pope but also a king to legitimate, and even his own natural children." (McDougall, 2017, chapter 8).

In "Dissolving Royal Marriages: A Documentary History, 860-1600" d'Avray writes that James I's "[…] marriage to Teresa would have been valid in canon law, even without a formal ceremony" (d'Avray, 2014, p. 112). In a chapter devoted to the subject of this marriage, d'Avray provides a translation of Pope Clement IV's letter to James I, replying to the latter's request for a dissolution of his marriage to Teresa. In this document, Clement leaves no doubt that he considered the marriage (and, therefore, its issue) legitimate:

"For you should not have believed that we would be willing to dissolve a true marriage and become polluted by sharing through consent in an illicit union. We believe indeed that you were aware, previously, that when you espoused the noble woman Teresa through words in the future tense, as is stated in your letter, even though it was not a true marriage, it was however initiated in such a way as to become, once carnal union had followed, a true and consummated marriage. How could the vicar of God put asunder those whom God has joined together?" (d'Avray, 2014, p. 113).

On primogeniture..

Gayre continues: "Furthermore, as Aragon did not have the Salic law, the descent of crown could pass through a female line. Consequently, even if the legitimation had put Don Pedro Sancho into the line of succession, that succession would have gone through a female line on the extinction of the male descent – and so the house of Paterno would have been out of succession in any case." (Gayre, 1973 p. 28).

Here again, Gayre is simply in ignorance of historical fact. While it is true that the Salic law did not hold in Aragon, the law of succession laid out in the Will of James I clearly

stipulated that women should be passed over in favour of his male line descendants – no matter how remote. This practise, "testamentary disposition" or the altering of the mode of succession by a monarch in his or her will, is believed by many to have been customary in Aragon. Giesey notes:

"French writers of the 15th and 16th centuries were of the opinion that the royal succession in Aragon was susceptible to testamentary dispositions; e.g., Jean de Terre Rouge, in his tractate on the French succession written in 1418 / 1419 (Tract. I. Art. 1, concl. Vii; ed. As appendix to Hotman, Disputatio de Controversia Successionis [Basel, 1585], p. 78), said that he had seen publica instrumenta to this effect, and Charles Du Moulin in the mid-16th century refers to the right of the king of Aragon to manipulate the succession and even to deny the right of the primogenit (see Juristic Basis, p. 27)." (Giesey, 1968, p. 189).

The view that James I's testamentary disposition should have continued to hold fast at the Compromise of Caspe – as it had since his death, and in light of the fact that Martin the Humane made no testamentary disposition of his own to supersede it – is central to the Paterno Castello claim. Consequently, Gayre's suggestion that the claim should proceed down the female line at the death of the last Prince of Cassano displays an ignorance over what is actually being claimed. James II's pretence was predicated on adherence to succession by male primogeniture, as laid out in the Will of James I, since Ferdinand was actually more closely related to Martin the Humane (but through the female line). So, if James II's claim were inheritable through a female line (in preference to a more distant male one), he could never have made it in the first place.

From the Compromise of Caspe until 1853, the Paterno Castello claim to the Crown of Aragon followed male primogeniture. It is only upon the signing of the family pact that this mode of succession is officially altered, when it opts to select a head of the house via family council, and replace "male descendants" with "all descendants". This brought the Paterno Castello's dynastic succession in-line with the norms of their native Sicily: "Don Mario and all his descendants as the Head of the House, of the Knights of the Collar of Paterno and of all the royal claims which belong to them by descent and by Divine grace"[16].

On other issues…

These two arguments against the Paterno Castello claim are the only ones Gayre produces. However, he goes on to make a number of claims about tangential subjects, which are also addressed by Stair Sainty, and form the basis of the latter's critique. They will, therefore, be dealt with below.

16 Ibid.

2.3 World Orders of Knighthood and Merit

On the MOC…

Guy Stair Sainty's treatment of the Paterno Castello claim to the Crown of Aragon is largely presented in reference to one of its dynastic orders of chivalry: the Military Order of the Collar of Saint Agatha of Paterno (MOC) – this is unsurprising, given the subject matter of the book it appears in. To begin with, Stair Sainty reiterates Gayre's belief (Gayre, 1973, p. 28) that the order's recreation was later than claimed: "[The MOC…] has emerged in the post-Second World War era, founded by Don Francesco Maria Paterno Castello, a cadet member of the ancient Sicilian noble family of Paterno Castello, Dukes of Carcaci" (Stair Sainty, 2006, p. 2002).

However (despite Gayre's assertion otherwise, 1973, p. 28), the MOC was recognised as a legitimate order by decree of King Francesco II of Sicily in 1860[17], which seems to put lie to the suggestion it did not, at that time, exist. More recently, in 2002, the relevance of this document has been attested to in the many judicial rulings in the Paterno Castello's favour, and its authenticity has been confirmed by officials of the City of Padova[18]. Stair Sainty's claim that "this 'recognition' was at a local administrative level and was not made in an act signed by the king" is plainly wrong, as the existence of the original decree demonstrates. It must also be added that the MOC is mentioned in a number of other historical documents from this period (some of which are reproduced in the online archives of the Paterno Castello website[19]).

Another claim that Stair Sainty repeats from Gayre is this: "Successive heads of the Paterno and Paterno Castello family have refused to have anything to do with this body and the founder's uncle, Fra Ernesto Paterno Castello, Lieutenant of the Grand Magistery of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta in the 1950s, likewise denounced it" (Stair Sainty, 2006, p. 2002).

Neither Gayre nor Stair Sainty provide a source, or any evidence, for the claim that "successive heads" of the Paterno and Paterno Castello family denounced the MOC (or the claim to the Crown of Aragon – it is not entirely clear in the case of either author whether the alleged denunciation is limited to the MOC or the wider dynastic claim upon which it is predicated). Gayre does type the text of a letter "verbatim" which he claims to have received "officially on the Order of Malta's paper" from Ernesto Paterno Castello (Gayre, 1973, pp. 30-32), but offers no evidence of the letter's existence (unlike the other documents he refers to in *The Knightly Twilight*, which are reproduced as images). The present author has searched historical records and online resources owned by other branches of the Paterno and Paterno Castello families, and

17 Online: https://real-aragon.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/pdf/gaetadecree_en.pdf
18 Online: https://real-aragon.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/pdf/padovaverification.pdf
19 Online: https://real-aragon.org/wp/archive/

found no evidence of denunciation. This, of course, does not guarantee that such denunciation is fictional – but in any such situation, *the burden of proof falls upon those making a positive claim* (in this case, the claim of denunciation, rather than the claim of the absence of denunciation). Neither author fulfils such a burden.

However, even if this burden of proof had been fulfilled, it is not clear how it would impact the Paterno Castello claims to the Crown of Aragon, as neither author bothers to make a case for what such denunciations might imply. Historical legitimacy is not decided by a straw poll of family members. To make an argument like this – that is, to present an allegedly authoritative third-party opinion as 'proof' of "X" (where "X" is a conclusion), rather than relying on rational argumentation, or empirical evidence – is to make a classic logical fallacy: The *argumentum ad verecundiam* (argument from authority).

On the Italian courts…

Once more in agreement with Gayre (1973, p. 28), Stair Sainty writes: "Since the Constitution of the Italian Republic prohibits the recognition of titles of nobility, no declaration by an Italian court can have any bearing on such matters as they are not competent to determine matters of nobiliary succession." When Stair Sainty references "such matters" he means the upholding of "the dynastic rights" of the Aragonese claimant (Stair Sainty, 2006, p. 2004).

This attempt to declare decisions over the Paterno Castello's claim to the Crown of Aragon *ultra vires* does not stand up to scrutiny. The cases in question did not (at least, not exclusively) make a ruling on the various noble titles held or awarded by the Paterno Castello family: *they made a ruling on the sovereign status of the Aragonese claimant*. Royalty and nobility are inextricably linked, but they are not the same thing. The status accorded to a non-reigning monarch is recognised under international law, and this is the basis on which the Paterno Castello claim has been evaluated by the Italian courts. As a result, Stair Sainty's suggestion is a *Straw man* – even if the non-recognition of noble titles were a barrier to certain court rulings (it is not), it would not affect the rulings under discussion here. Because while noble titles do not have legal recognition nationally, royal status does have legal recognition internationally, and it is this royal status that was the subject of the court decisions in question.

It must also be added that courts are frequently required to make such rulings. One well-known and high-profile example is the Savoyard case in 2010. In that case, the courts found in favour of Vittorio Emanuele, Prince of Naples, who asserted that his cousin, the Duke of Aosta, was trying to usurp him as head of House of Savoy. It is simply impractical for the courts to ignore such cases, as they often concern historically important, and potentially lucrative, assets (such as last names, coats of

arms, sovereign rights, and orders of chivalry). As a result of this decision, the Prince of Naples retains ownership of what would otherwise be disputed intellectual property. Unquestionably, then, such court decisions do have a substantial and measurable impact on "such matters".

On the succession from Ayerbe…

The next substantive criticism that Stair Sainty makes concerns the transmission of the claim to the Crown of Aragon to the Paterno Castello family: "This statement also pretends that the claim to the throne of the Balearic Islands passed from the House of Aragon to the Ayerbe family, although the latter never claimed it, and from thence to the Paterno family" (Stair Sainty, 2006, p. 2004).

For the sake of clarity, the Crown of Aragon is regarded as a "composite monarchy" or confederation of individual kingdoms under one absolute ruler. Hence, a claim to the Crown of Aragon includes in-and-of itself a claim to the throne of the Balearic Islands. So, it was never necessary for the Ayerbe family (or the Paterno, for that matter) to claim the throne of the Balearic Islands – it is historical fact that such a claim is implicit in the claim to the Crown of Aragon (despite the fact that various territories had their own kings, they still ultimately "belonged" to the Crown of Aragon, and its holder).

It is, however, pertinent to ask whether the Ayerbe family maintained their pretence to the Crown of Aragon – and, if not, whether it could pass to the Paterno family. There are two views on how long a royal claim such as the one under discussion lasts: on one view, it can be lost simply by neglect (i.e.: not maintaining the claim); on the other, it must be stamped out entirely (or renounced). If we adhere to the latter view, then there was clearly no requirement for any action on the part of the Ayerbe family. This view is described by the term "debellatio" and, in reference to dynastic claims, it suggests that the claim persists until the extinction of all claimants, or renunciation of the claim by all living claimants.

Yet, if we adhere to the former view, then it is possible that a claim made today could become dependent upon historical maintenance of the claim by former claimants (in this case by the Ayerbe family). With this in mind, we should ask: how does international law define a "maintained" claim? In 1.1 we presented opinions suggesting that continued use of royal titles and insignia, including last names and coats of arms, were sufficient to maintain a claim. Hence, the Ayerbe (and, for that matter, Paterno Castello) family's continued use of the House of Barcelona's (also the Crown of Aragon's) arms would have been sufficient to maintain its claim to the Crown of Aragon, as would the decision to append "d'Aragona" to their last name – an indication of their royal status, equivalent to the House of France's use of "de France" or the House of Savoy's use of "di Savoia".

Of course, there are non-royal families named "de France" and "di Savoia" (and even "d'Aragona") – but this fact has no bearing on the implications of a rightful pretender appending such a territorial designation to their own name. It is *prima facie* the case that, when used as a last name, a territorial designation such as "de France" means something different if used by a fisherman than it does if used by a prince. In the first case, it implies a person belonging to a country, in the second, a country belonging to a person (in which case the term 'territorial domination' might be more appropriate than the more widely-used 'territorial designation'). In light of this context, the most sensible and compelling interpretation of the Ayerbe's adoption of "d'Aragona" is to regard it as an action made explicitly against prescription.

On the headship of the House…

Stair Sainty continues to write (as did Gayre before him) that Don Roberto Paterno Castello (former claimant, and father of the current claimant) made his claim: "ignoring the fact that his grandfather, through whom he makes these preposterous claims, was the fifth, and not the eldest son of the head of the Carcaci branch of the family. The Paterno Castello di Carcaci line is a cadet of the Paterno family, whose head by primogeniture descent is presently the Duke of Roccaromana […] As a junior member of a junior branch of the family D. Roberto has no right to claim any prerogative pertaining to its chief" (Stair Sainty, 2006, p. 2004).

It is not true that the Paterno Castello claim to the Crown of Aragon is made in ignorance of the fact that it was vested in the son of a younger son of the Duke of Carcaci following the death of the last Prince of Cassano. This matter is explicitly dealt with in the Paterno family pact of 1853. Stair Sainty may be unaware of the fact that the title Duke of Roocaromana only entered the Paterno family when Don Giovan Battista, Marquis of Toscano, married Donna Teresa Maria Annunziata Caracciolo, 5th Duchess of Roccaromana, in 1867[20]. Hence, at the time the family pact was signed, this line of the family would not have been known as the Dukes of Roccaromana, but rather the Marquises of Toscano. And we can see that this branch, along with all the other branches of the Paterno family, renounced their claim in favour of the present claimant's direct ancestor, Don Mario. As we have already mentioned in 2, there is ample precedence for the use of such pacts.

2.4 A conclusion on the Aragonese pretender

The Paterno Castello family's claim to the Crown of Aragon is predicated on widely accepted historical facts and legal precedents (the position of non-reigning monarchs

20 The family in question has published its lineage – and, hence, shown this marriage – online: https://www.roccaromana.org/LineaRoccaromana.aspx

in international law, the family's descent from James I, the validity of family pacts as a legal device in the matter of royal succession, etc.). Additionally, they have supplied a voluminous amount of documentary evidence that has been assessed by expert witnesses on multiple occasions and pronounced relevant and authentic. This evidence is easy to find – much of it (along with translations) is available on the family's website. As a result of these facts and evidence, the Italian courts have ruled in the fmaily's favour on numerous occasions.

Against this persuasive body of evidence and legal rulings, there are only two published criticisms – one, self-published, the other published by a private company that is notorious for its lack of rigour and frequent peddling of misinformation[21]. These criticisms are hidden from scrutiny, as they are not easily obtained by the general public: *The Knightly Twilight* has been out of print for many years and is hard to find; *World Orders* is currently retailing for $1,499.99 on Amazon.com. Both of these sources are riddled with factual errors that should have been caught and eliminated in the editorial process: Gayre, for example, did not even understand the line of succession lain out in the Will of James I, as his suggestion that James II's claim could have passed to a female line shows; Stair Sainty's failure to address the 2002 authentication of Francesco II's 1860 decree in favour of the Paterno Castello family is all the more surprising for the fact that *World Orders* was not published until 2006. Both criticisms, additionally, make liberal use of logical fallacies – most frequently *argumentum ad verecundiam* (argument from authority) and *argumentum ad hominem* (argument against the person). Finally, and perhaps most damningly, neither Gayre nor Stair Sainty make any attempt to provide proof of their assertions – the reader is simply expected to take them at face value.

3. Another case study: the further adventures of Robert Gayre

The life of Robert Gayre offers a clear example of the dangers posed by private, self-proclaimed "kingmakers". It is possible (though by no means certain) that his erroneous criticism of the Paterno Castello claim to the Crown of Aragon was the result of simple incompetence, rather than dishonesty – but his wider exploits in the world of royalty, nobility, and chivalry were unquestionably characterised by fraud and self-interest.

Gayre's intention to deceive was present from his earliest forays into genealogy. He concocted a male-line pedigree for himself, published by Burke in 1952, 2001, and 2003, that professional genealogist Anthony J. Camp, MBE, found "seriously flawed". The abbreviated version of this story is that Gayre (born as George Gair to confectioner Robert William Gair and his wife Clara Gair [nee Hart]) pretended to be the grandson

21 See, for example, this humorous assessment of Burke's low standards: https://www.baronage.co.uk/bphtm-01/essay-7.html

of somewhat-famous painter William Gillies Gair, and thereby the great grandson of Alexander Gair, from whom he claimed a descent of arms and position in the untitled nobility of Great Britain. Needless to say, this is all utterly fictitious. Gayre was, in fact, a commoner (Camp, 2017, pp. 324 – 328).

Later, Gayre joined the Order of Saint Lazarus, widely regarded as an illegitimate pseudo-order (one branch of this order has found a temporal protector in the House of France since 2014, potentially legitimising it). Gayre founded the International Commission on Orders of Chivalry (ICOC) "as a ploy to justify the existence…" of this order (Algrant, online). ICOC was, and still is, "non-governmental and private […] supposedly a supervisory body but mired in controversy in its support for questionable orders" (Camp, 2017, pp. 324 – 328). One such order – undoubtedly the most notorious (and owing its success in large part to Gayre and the ICOC) was the Niadh Nask. We will come to this "order" in a moment – but first, a few concluding remarks about Gayre…

The attack on the Paterno Castello family and the championing of the Niadh Nask number amongst Gayre's most striking acts of public misinformation. One was designed to bring down a legitimate royal claim, the other to elevate a fraudulent one. However, these spectacular episodes of poor scholarship must be viewed in the wider context of Gayre's dishonesty and eccentricity. In addition to genealogical and chivalric fakery, Gayre headed an apparently ancient "clan" Gayre of which there was no record prior to Gayre creating it. He purchased the Scottish feudal barony of Lochore, but insisted on referring to himself as the Baron of Lochoreshire (the wider area within which Lochore was situated)[22]. And he was notorious for being "prickly and litigious" with those who took issue with his claims (Camp, 2017, pp. 324 – 328). Incredibly, these character flaws were not Gayre's least attractive qualities… he was, in addition, an inveterate racist and a fascist[23].

In the 1980s, Terence Francis MacCarthy's entirely made-up "order of Gaelic nobility" and "non-chivalric knighthood" the Niadh Nask was recognised by Gayre's ICOC (Algrant, online). MacCarthy, like Gayre, was a fraud who relied on fake genealogical evidence to claim a number of positions to which he was not entitled (Murphy, online, p. 3). These included the Irish chieftainship title of the MacCarthy Mor and the royal title of Prince of Desmond (along with a claim to sovereignty – the right to award noble titles and orders of chivalry). MacCarthy joined the ICOC and soon became close to Gayre – Gayre was MacCarthy's "constable" in the Niadh Nask (Velde, online) and McCarthy joined Gayre in the Order of Lazarus. By 1996, MacCarthy was serving as

22 Although not a reputable scholarly source, Wikipedia carries a well-sourced and informative (if very brief) biography of Gayre that sheds light on these, and other, elements of his life: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Gayre

23 See, for example, Jackson, 2005, pg. 149 – although evidence abounds elsewhere too, not least in Gayre's own, voluminous, published works. We will not dwell on the subject here, as despite, arguably, being more important than the topic under discussion, it is nonetheless tangential to this paper.

ICOC's vice president, and when Gayre died later that year, he took on the role of president.

Irish Genealogist Sean Murphy was perhaps the person most to thank for exposing MacCarthy in the late 1990s (the episode is recounted in his 2004 book "Twilight of the Chiefs: The Mac Carthy Mor Hoax"). Thanks to the efforts of Murphy and others, Terrence MacCarthy was exposed in The Sunday Times, 1999. He shortly thereafter vacated his "titles" and disappeared into obscurity.

3.1 Gayre and MacCarthy's lasting impact

While MacCarthy's fraudulent empire is no longer in existence, the damage it did – both in terms of funds misappropriated and reputations ruined – lingers on. According to Murphy "the total revenues raised by the MacCarthy Mor enterprise may have been in the region of $1,000,000" (Murphy, online). And he also notes: "the affair had […] serious consequences, not least in terms of the reputational damage to Irish heraldry and genealogy and in particular to the office of the Chief Herald of Ireland."

And while the Paterno Castello family's claim may have been declared legitimate by the courts, the MOC occasionally features in lists of "illegitimate orders" (and other media) online. These lists tend to have a standard format: they never elucidate their methods for determining illegitimacy, they only ever list names (never any further details), and they never have any "official" bearing – that is, they are not in any wider sense lists of "illegitimate" orders – rather, they are simply lists of orders *that the list-maker in question* does not recognise as legitimate. Of course, the question of the research these lists are based upon is moot: as established in the first section of this article, without "official" authorities to turn to, such research can only come from kingmakers like Gayre and Stair Sainty, and private institutions like the ICOC. Here is one example of such a list:

The *National Association of Members of the National Order of Merit* hosts a page on its website called "illegitimate decorations"[24]. The MOC is listed under "S" for Saint Agatha, along with other legitimate orders: the Orders of Saint Vladimir and Saint Anna (Russian dynastic orders belonging to Grand Duchess Maria Vladimirovna) and the Order of Saint Nicolas (which perhaps refers to the Order of Saint Nicholas the Wonderworker, once more belonging to Grand Duchess Maria, or perhaps refers to a lay order of the Melkite Greek Catholic Eparchy of Newton). Under "J" we find the unquestionably legitimate Order of the Knights of Jose Rizal – the sole order of knighthood of the Philippines, whose constitution is recognised by the Philippine Republic. Under "pseudo-orders from Malta" we find the Order of Saint John, which

24 Online: https://section02.anmonm.com/L-Ordre-National-du-Merite-ONM/Historique/Les-decorations/Decorations-illegitimes

could refer to either of two protestant orders belonging to the Alliance of the Orders of Saint John of Jerusalem. The orders that make up this Alliance, along with the Sovereign Military Order of Malta (SMOM), are usually regarded as the only legitimate orders of Saint John of Jerusalem. This treatment is non-exhaustive – there are likely more legitimate orders on the list in question, but as its lack of credibility has already been established, we need not waste time and space researching the entire document here.

It is clear such lists should not be taken seriously, but it is not clear whether or not anyone does take them seriously. Similar examples abound online. For example, the fourth listing on Google for "Military Order of the Collar of Saint Agatha of Paterno" is an entry on *enacademic.com* (an online encyclopaedia) which states "the authenticity of the order is disputed, e.g. by Guy Stair Sainty" in the first paragraph[25]. The second paragraph is a lengthy quote from Stair Sainty's now defunct website (where he first published his critique from 2.3) claiming the order "emerged in the post-war era" and that "successive heads of the Paterno and Paterno Castello family have refused to have anything to do with this body." As shown in 2.3, these claims do not stand up to scrutiny – however, *enacademic* leaves them unchallenged. Under a heading labelled "further reading", both of the books discussed in 2 are listed. Do these and other unexamined reiterations of the flawed critiques featured in 2 damage the MOC's wider reputation? Do they impact on the willingness of readers to make charitable donations? We simply have no way of knowing.

There are a number of "kingmakers" still in operation (some of whom, it should be stressed, operate ethically and produce high quality research). The ICOC continues to operate, allegedly in a reformed state following MacCarthy's resignation – although it continues to assess the legitimacy of orders based on Gayre's questionable criteria (Cox, online). There are also numerous other organisations in operation that assess royal and noble claims. For example: the Augustan Society, the International Commission on Nobility and Royalty, the International Commission & Association on Nobility, and the Royal Association[26]. Many such organisations can be connected, in some way, to Gayre and MacCarthy, and they run the gamut from serious attempts at honest scholarship to obvious fraud.

4. Truth and post truth regimes

The overarching question that this paper poses is: "in our present and evolving regime of truth, who or what should fill the power-knowledge void which has emerged

25 Online: https://enacademic.com/dic.nsf/enwiki/1852404

26 This list is far from exhaustive – it includes only the relevant bodies that appear on page one of a Google search for "Association of royalty and nobility." The author is aware of many similar bodies, and no doubt remains unaware of many more.

following the dissolution of official regulators of royalty and nobility in former monarchies across Europe?" It is important to note that the values determining this "who or what" are necessarily defined by the wider truth regime in question: that is, we must refer to the constitution of this epistemological structure as determinative of the conditions which our answer must fulfil. Consequently, our next step must be to analyse the present truth regime within which we live.

A number of commentators characterise the present truth regime as a *post*-truth regime (e.g.: Halevi, 2017, pp. 28 – 41; Harsin, 2015, pp. 1 – 7; Krasmann, 2018, pp. 690 – 710) – often with the explicit stipulation that this regime is operational at the global level. That is to say two things. First, a global society has emerged which is proliferated and "lived-in" through newly emerging (often digital) channels such as social media, search engines, the ready availability of international 24-hour news programs, cheap and easily available air travel, etc. And second, that this society (remembering that Foucault suggests *all* societies have their truth regime) has replaced the traditional conception of truth with a *post-modern* conception of truth.

Post-modernity is difficult to characterise: many allegedly typical post-modernists, like Foucault, did not refer to themselves as such. And many of them had deep and fundamental philosophical disagreements. Consider, for an example of this last point, Foucault and Derrida (Baker, 2018, pp. 100 – 124). Despite these difficulties, it is clear what we *mean* when we say "post-truth": we refer to a truth premised on contingency – historical, social, cultural, and political. This is not, necessarily, equivalent to the epistemological position of *hard relativism* (that all truth is relative, and objective truth does not exist). But it does suggest an element of subjectivity – a lack of firm criteria by which to judge competing truth claims.

Krasmann notes that post-truth regimes "confuse the distinction between true and false" (2019, p. 690). Halevi says that "truth" in such a regime "loses any elevated status as an absolute reference, a moral imperative […] which it had possessed" (2017, p. 35). Harsin writes: "today, in France as in the United States and many other countries, we are witnessing a breakdown of fiduciary status in truth-telling and confirmation/judgment and coordination of apparatuses in a so-called regime (witness climate change denial, among countless others)" (2015, p. 3). It is notable that each of these quotes implies a firm belief that Truth – that is, truth with a capital T, a non-contingent truth that exists beyond or apart-from post-truth, still exists. And it is also notable that each quote reflects a belief that this Truth is, ultimately, accessible.

For example: a distinction that cannot be made cannot be confused. Therefore, it must be possible to make such a distinction "between true and false" (Krasmann, 2019, p. 690). The notion of a reference contains the notion of accessibility within it – something that cannot be accessed can never be a reference, as the definition of reference is something to which we refer. To call something a "reference" is, in fact, to

make a statement about its accessibility (Halevi, 2017, p.35). And we can only judge the breakdown in truth telling apparatuses if we retain access (however diminished) to that by which these apparatuses can be evaluated. In other words, to use "climate change denial" as an example of untruth masquerading as truth implies the continued ability to distinguish between these two categories (Harsin, 2015, p. 3). A post-truth regime, then, has more to do with *restricting access to the truth*, or muddying the popular conception of what *constitutes* truth, than it does the actual elimination of truth.

This sketch of the current global post-truth regime is really one of multiple competing truth regimes jostling to analyse a plethora of competing claims. This multitude of regimes sits within one, global, regime of post-truth. In other words, truth is local, and post-truth is global. Truth is always produced within local truth regimes, which may not agree with each other – historians in France and England, for example, may disagree over Napoleon's biography (or Churchill's). And regimes are not necessarily local only to geography (or to geography at all): a regime can be local to any number of "societies": an academic subject, such as science; a culture, such as Native American; a period, such as the Renaissance, etc. What makes the global regime a *post*-truth one is that it has no way to weigh the value of local truth regimes against one another. This is to say there is no global meta-epistemological superstructure that orders local epistemological structures into hierarchies with "most truthful" at the top and "least truthful" at the bottom. The moment such a structure is conceived of – that is, the moment we develop a truly "global" system for the production and analysis of competing truth claims, something that relies on no particular subject of study, country or culture of origin, period of history, etc. – it disappears, and becomes, instead, a local truth regime.

To illustrate this last point, let us consider two *local* truth regimes – that of modern astrophysics and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (commonly called the Mormons). The current consensus amongst astrophysicists when it comes to the origin of the universe is the Big Bang theory. In layman's terms, this posits that all matter and energy was once condensed in a very small and infinitely hot mass, and a huge explosion (the titular "Big Bang") sent it expanding in all directions, creating the universe as we know it today. Mormon cosmology, however, states that there was a pre-existence "in which human spirits were literal children of heavenly parents" and the earth was created as a place within which to carry out God's "plan of salvation"[27].

A global post-truth regime has no way to distinguish which of these competing truth claims regarding the origin of the universe is true. Within the truth regime of modern astrophysics, we find an ordered set of propositions, structures, and offices that can

27 I have borrowed these brief retellings from Wikipedia. Big Bang: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Big_Bang; Mormon Cosmology: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mormon_cosmology#:~:text=According%20to%20Mormon%20scripture%2C%20the,nearest%20the%20throne%20of%20God.

distinguish true from false (these are a particular subset of the laws of science, and include things like falsifiability, frameworks within which to examine empirical evidence, scientific institutions like university departments, etc.). And within the Mormon Cosmology truth regime we also find an ordered set of propositions, structures, and offices that can distinguish true from false (these are a particular subset of religious law, and include things like the importance of revelation, the infallibility of defined literatures, and religious institutions like churches and bible schools). If our global post-truth regime uses the tools of science to judge the Mormon creation story, then it is no longer a global meta-structure – it is, rather, the continuation of a local truth regime (modern astrophysics) into a global space. The converse is also true: to judge astrophysical theory with recourse to Mormon Cosmology is to elevate a local truth regime into a global space.

Any individual can, of course, decide that one regime is true and the other is false. Or that both are true; or false. But to evaluate Mormon Cosmology within the epistemological framework of modern astrophysics is simply to evaluate it as a scientific claim (which it is not), thereby prioritising the mode of enquiry characteristic of "science" over and above that of religion. And, of course, vice versa. All the values by which we can analyse claims are local – scientific, religious, legal, artistic, Russian, or anarchist. There is no overarching set of epistemological values that floats, unmoored, above all others. This is because a global truth regime cannot found itself purely on self-justification. For example, we may decide that science presents a "truer" picture of the world than the alternatives, and thereby come to consider it more than "just another" local truth regime, making it the global one instead (this is a fallacy known as *scientism*). However, on deeper reflection we soon see that we need an epistemological framework within which to decide that science offers a "truer" picture of the world than the alternatives – and that, in fact, we have unconsciously used the scientific truth regime to make such a judgement. Hence, our reasoning has become circular: we have begun with a conception of truth based in science, and used it to justify the globalisation of the scientific truth regime. But what justifies our pre-existing (scientific) conception of truth?

All truth regimes, then, although equally concerned with "truth", are qualitatively different. Therefore, they are in a certain sense speaking at cross purposes. For another example, we can consider this question: what is a cherry blossom? The following answers might both be true: a biological structure to facilitate the reproduction of a certain strain of the *Prunus* genus; a poignant symbol of the fragility of our fleeting lives. In this example, there is no way for art to judge scientific classification, and there is no way for science to judge cultural meaning. *All truth regimes are local*. There are no available criteria by which we can reduce the various truth regimes until we are left with One Great Truth Regime that applies to everything in existence. Globalisation has forced the irreducible into one another's company.

4.1 Most things are local – including claims to royalty and nobility

Climate denial is almost certainly false. Climate change is almost certainly True. Not with a small t, but with a Big T – it is *unambiguously true*. The reason we can say this with confidence is that the claim "climate change exists" is an epistemologically local claim. It is not something for poets or priests to prove – it is explicitly a scientific claim, and, therefore, it can be authoritatively dealt with by the scientific truth regime. By the same token, we do not need to seek scientific consensus as to whether Nabokov's *Lolita* is a masterpiece. That is a question for the arts. It would be a step too far to claim that these truth regimes have *nothing* to say to one another, or that people cannot become comfortable in more than one truth regime at a time. But the basic point is this: the majority of claims are local. They "belong" to a single truth regime, and can be evaluated entirely within it. Where Truth breaks down is the evaluation of one truth regime against another, the global. But at a local level, within local epistemological structures, concrete claims can be evaluated and declared to be either true or false.

When it comes to the type of claim that this article examines – claims to royal status – what local truth regimes should govern our analyses? There are two types of truth implicated in a claim to royalty: the historical and the legal. Consequently, the appropriate truth regimes within which one should analyse claims to royalty are the ones that deal with these two subjects. Bearing this in mind makes the creation of concrete recommendations considerably easier.

5. Conclusion: some concrete recommendations for aspiring kingmakers

It is not the intention of this article to suggest that "kingmaking" cease altogether. Many of the arguments made in earlier sections of this paper (1) demonstrate a continued need for such research to fill the power-knowledge vacuum left in the wake of monarchical truth regimes. Rather, this article aims to demonstrate how poorly this need is being attended to; contextualise real, historical, examples within a suitable epistemological framework; and extrapolate from this framework some tentative suggestions as to how royal claims can be dealt with more appropriately, and how greater consensus can be attained over which current claimants should be accorded sovereign status (and the legal powers commensurate thereby). This last goal is what we will address in our conclusion.

A claim to royal status is always, in fact, a bundle of smaller claims that can be divided into two categories: historical and legal.

The type of claims we might categorise as historical include claims to certain genealogies (that a claimant really is a legitimate descendent of such-and-such a royal

house), claims to certain events (that so-and-so line of the family really did abdicate their place in royal succession), and broader historical claims (such as regional succession laws during a specified period, the methods by which illegitimate children could be legitimised during a specified period, etc.). There are appropriate academic and professional authorities to deal with all such claims: professional (certified) genealogists, academic historians, public historians, and other scholars with specialist knowledge of historical subjects (historians of heraldry, for example, or historians who specialise by region, era, or subject, as well as related experts in anthropology, archaeology, sociology, etc.). Kingmakers should avail themselves of academic specialisation, consulting with historians and genealogists to acquire knowledge, guarantee understanding, and "rubber stamp" conclusions. This integration should ideally be as public as possible, so that all parties can be held accountable for their scholarship, and should follow the established process by which academic knowledge is generated and evaluated (for example, through publication in peer-reviewed journals or presentation at academic conferences). Self-appointed experts and non-academic publishing should be avoided where possible, as they can too easily be seen as representing insufficient levels of rigour.

Legal claims could include general claims about the monarch's role in international law, interpretation of historically valid succession laws in reference to independent claimants, and rulings as to the legal power of any given claimant. Similar to historical claims, there are a wide range of academic specialists who deal with such claims. While historical and legal scholars can offer kingmakers the benefit of their knowledge and understanding, courts of law are those bodies best suited to deem what is, or is not, legal in any given jurisdiction. That is, the question as to who can legally grant noble titles and operate orders of chivalry in any given jurisdiction is separate from the question as to who has a historical right to do so (although in any fair society, one would certainly hope that the two are related). In regards to these legal rights, it is always the decision of the courts (and never the decision of a kingmaker, should s/he disagree with it) that should be recognised as legitimate. To seriously engage with the validity of such rulings requires a full understanding of the legal system that produced it and the ruling itself. Once more, kingmakers should lean on qualified specialists (lawyers and legal academics from the region in question) to obtain such expertise when not in possession of it themselves.

These recommendations are not intended to end a discussion, but start one. They are cursory, and based on one author's reading of a limited number of cases. However, they are also based on two common-sense observations, which all that theory in 4 is intended to justify: first, that *for any given specialisation, one can usually find a suitably-qualified specialist and /or authority*; and, second, that *specialists and authorities are not infallible – but tend to be less fallible that non-specialists and non-authorities*. It is

my contention that these two general maxims are as true for royal claims as they are for anything else.

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