

Title: Evolution of Monarchy in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland: From Absolute Power to a Symbolic Role.

Recommendation:

Accept as it is

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision

Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality		✓		
Clarity			✓	
Significance		✓		

Reviewer's Name: Dr Feroze Ahmad Mir

Reviewer's Comment for Publication

The manuscript addresses an interesting and academically relevant subject concerning the constitutional and political evolution of the British monarchy from a position of substantial governing authority to its contemporary symbolic and constitutional role. The paper provides a historical account extending from Magna Carta and the English Civil War through the Glorious Revolution and the development of modern constitutional monarchy. It further attempts to integrate legal-constitutional, symbolic-institutional, and Marxist structural interpretations within a single analytical framework.

The manuscript's principal contribution is its attempt to explain **not only why monarchical power declined, but also why the institution itself survived despite the loss of direct governing authority**. The combination of social-contract theory and a Marxist structural perspective provides an interesting theoretical foundation for this inquiry.

The historical discussion is generally coherent, and the manuscript demonstrates familiarity with important scholars and theoretical traditions, including Dicey, Bagehot, Bogdanor, Colley, Starkey, Bourdieu, Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Marx and Engels. The treatment of contemporary issues such as royal funding, King's/Queen's Consent, succession reform and public support makes the study relevant beyond a purely historical examination.

However, the manuscript requires **some minor revisions before publication**. The author should improve the analytical depth of certain sections, strengthen the evidentiary basis of contemporary claims, clarify the relationship between the theoretical frameworks and historical evidence, and address several issues concerning citation, terminology, and presentation.

Overall, the manuscript is **academically worthwhile and suitable for publication after minor revision**.

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Detailed Review Report

1. Title

The title accurately reflects the subject and scope of the manuscript. It clearly identifies the geographical context, institution under examination, and principal theme of constitutional transformation.

However, the phrase “**absolute power**” may be somewhat overbroad because the historical British Crown was subject to various legal, customary, feudal and institutional constraints even during periods of strong royal authority. The author may therefore consider whether “extensive sovereign authority” or “predominant political authority” would be historically more precise.

2. Abstract

The abstract is well structured and identifies the research problem, theoretical framework, methodology, principal findings and contemporary relevance. It clearly states that the study investigates how and why the British monarchy lost direct political authority while remaining a functioning national institution.

A minor improvement would be to state the **principal conclusion more explicitly** and distinguish more clearly between the historical findings and the contemporary observations.

3. Introduction

The introduction successfully establishes the significance of the British case by contrasting it with European monarchies that were abolished. It also clearly identifies the principal research questions concerning the nature of monarchical authority, the historical developments that constrained it, and the monarchy's contemporary constitutional role.

The introduction could nevertheless be strengthened by providing a more explicit **research hypothesis or proposition at the outset**. Although hypotheses are discussed later, their connection to the research questions could be made clearer.

4. Literature Review

The literature review is one of the stronger sections of the manuscript. The division into:

- legal-constitutional accounts;
- symbolic and national-institutional accounts; and
- structural/materialist interpretations

provides a useful analytical organisation.

The author effectively identifies a gap between these approaches and argues for their integration.

Nevertheless, the literature review could be improved by incorporating **more recent peer-reviewed scholarship**, particularly scholarship dealing with constitutional monarchy, decolonisation, Commonwealth republicanism, public legitimacy and the contemporary constitutional position of the Crown.

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5. Theoretical Framework

The use of Hobbes, Locke, Montesquieu and Rousseau is intellectually interesting. The manuscript presents them as representing a conceptual movement from absolute sovereignty towards popular sovereignty.

The Marxist perspective is then used to explain the economic and class dimensions underlying constitutional transformation.

The principal concern is that the paper sometimes treats these theories as if they form a **linear historical progression**. The author should clarify that these are analytical lenses rather than necessarily stages through which British constitutional development consciously progressed.

The relationship between **social-contract theory** and **Marxist theory** should also be explained more critically, particularly because their assumptions concerning political authority, legitimacy and social change differ substantially.

6. Methodology

The manuscript identifies a qualitative documentary methodology and specifies three principal categories of sources: constitutional and historical documents, political-theory texts, and secondary academic literature, supplemented by official and contemporary materials.

This is appropriate for the research question.

However, the methodology section would benefit from greater detail concerning:

- criteria for selecting historical sources;
- method of interpreting the documentary evidence;
- selection of contemporary polling data;
- treatment of potentially conflicting historical interpretations; and
- limitations associated with relying primarily on documentary sources.

The author acknowledges the limitations of the qualitative design later in the manuscript, which is appropriate.

7. Historical Analysis

The discussion of **Magna Carta** is appropriately cautious in recognising that it did not establish modern constitutional government in 1215. The author correctly frames its importance more narrowly as an early articulation of the principle that royal authority operated within law.

The discussion of the English Civil War effectively connects constitutional conflict with questions of taxation, religion, royal prerogative and changing socio-economic interests.

The treatment of the **Glorious Revolution and Bill of Rights** is also relevant to the central argument because it illustrates the consolidation of parliamentary constraints upon the Crown.

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However, the historical analysis occasionally moves too quickly from historical events to theoretical conclusions. Greater engagement with competing historical interpretations would make the argument more persuasive.

8. Modern Symbolic Monarchy

The section on modern monarchy is particularly useful because it moves beyond the conventional narrative that the Crown simply “lost power.” The discussion of Bagehot's distinction between the “dignified” and “efficient” parts of the constitution provides a useful framework for understanding the monarchy's continuing institutional significance.

The use of Bourdieu's concept of symbolic power also strengthens the argument concerning how an institution can retain legitimacy and influence without exercising direct governing power.

9. Contemporary Issues

The discussion of the **Succession to the Crown Act 2013**, Sovereign Grant, King's/Queen's Consent and contemporary public support gives the paper considerable contemporary relevance.

This section should, however, be revised carefully.

In particular, the author should distinguish between:

- **formal constitutional powers;**
- powers exercised conventionally;
- powers exercised on ministerial advice; and
- symbolic or informal influence.

This is important because describing the contemporary monarchy as merely “symbolic” may understate its remaining constitutional functions.

The discussion of polling should also rely primarily on **transparent and methodologically documented polling sources**. The apparent difference between the YouGov figures and the figures cited by Republic demonstrates why polling methodology and question wording should be discussed carefully.

10. Discussion

The discussion successfully brings together the principal findings and argues that neither the legal-constitutional nor the Marxist-materialist explanation is sufficient independently.

The argument that **the sequencing of constitutional crises helped the British monarchy survive** is particularly interesting and potentially represents one of the manuscript's strongest analytical contributions.

This argument should, however, be developed further. The author could explicitly compare the British experience with one or two abolished monarchies to demonstrate why gradual constitutional adaptation produced a different institutional outcome.

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11. Conclusion

The conclusion effectively restates the central argument that the monarchy survived through **active institutional adaptation rather than passive continuity**.

It would be stronger if it included a few specific implications arising from the research—for example, what the British experience tells us about institutional survival, constitutional adaptation, or the relationship between formal political power and symbolic legitimacy.

Strengths of the Manuscript

1. **Strong and relevant research topic** with continuing constitutional and political significance.
2. **Clear research problem** concerning the paradox of declining political authority alongside institutional survival.
3. **Well-organised historical narrative** covering major constitutional turning points.
4. **Interdisciplinary theoretical framework** combining political theory, constitutionalism and Marxist structural analysis.
5. **Good use of established scholarship**, including Dicey, Bagehot, Bogdanor, Colley, Starkey and Bourdieu.
6. **Contemporary relevance**, particularly through discussion of succession reform, royal financing, King's/Queen's Consent and public legitimacy.
7. **Interesting central argument** that institutional adaptation, rather than simple continuity, explains the monarchy's survival.
8. **Appropriate qualitative methodology** for a historical and constitutional inquiry.
9. **Balanced recognition of limitations**, particularly regarding the inability of the qualitative design to establish precise causal weight between economic and legal-political factors.

Weaknesses of the Manuscript

1. The theoretical framework sometimes appears **more linear than the historical evidence warrants**.
2. The distinction between **constitutional, ceremonial, symbolic and residual political powers** requires greater precision.
3. The literature review would benefit from **more recent academic scholarship**.
4. Some historical claims require **additional primary-source support or more precise citation**.
5. The contemporary discussion relies partly on media and advocacy sources and should give greater priority to **official and peer-reviewed sources**.
6. The comparative dimension is limited. A comparison with other surviving or abolished European monarchies could strengthen the central argument.
7. The methodology section could provide greater detail regarding **source selection and analytical procedure**.
8. Some arguments are asserted rather than sufficiently demonstrated through evidence.
9. The manuscript requires **minor grammatical, stylistic and formatting corrections**.
10. The conclusion could offer more explicit **theoretical and practical implications**.

International Journal of Advanced Research

Publisher's Name: Jana Publication and Research LLP

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ISSN(O): 2320-5407 | ISSN(P): 3107-4928

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Significance of the Study

The manuscript is significant because it examines a central constitutional paradox: **how an institution can lose substantial direct political authority while continuing to possess constitutional legitimacy, symbolic influence and institutional durability.**

Its integration of legal-constitutional, symbolic and structural explanations provides a potentially useful framework for understanding institutional transformation beyond the British case. The manuscript's argument that constitutional change should be understood through the interaction of **legal constraint, socio-economic transformation and symbolic adaptation** is particularly valuable.

The contemporary component further demonstrates that the constitutional settlement surrounding the monarchy is not necessarily static but continues to evolve through parliamentary reform, public debate and changing perceptions of legitimacy.

Final Recommendation

Recommendation: ACCEPT FOR PUBLICATION AFTER MINOR REVISIONS

The manuscript is **worthy of publication** because it addresses an important subject, presents a coherent argument, employs an appropriate qualitative methodology, and offers an interesting integrated explanation of the decline of royal governing authority and the survival of the British monarchy.

The revisions required are primarily **analytical, evidentiary and editorial rather than fundamental**. The author should strengthen the theoretical integration, update and diversify the contemporary sources, improve constitutional precision, and correct language and referencing issues.

Reviewer's Final Decision

Overall assessment: The paper makes a meaningful contribution to the study of constitutional monarchy, political institutions and British constitutional development and is recommended for publication after minor revisions.