

#257 The Austrian Successor – The Woman, Maria Theresa, and the War of the Austrian Succession

Here is the explanation of what is meant *in the natural (historically)* by the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748), and the story behind the major cause of the war.

The War of the Austrian Succession. The War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) had to do with Maria Theresa becoming the only woman to sit on the throne of the Habsburg Empire. [Being female, she was not elected Holy Roman Empress. However, her husband Francis I was eventually elected Holy Roman Emperor, ensuring that the Holy Roman Empire would continue in the Habsburg line.]



Empress
Maria Theresa,
oil on canvas from 1745



Francis I Stephen,
Duke of Lorraine and Emperor,
her consort

Charles VI, the Habsburg archduke of Austria, became Holy Roman Emperor in 1711. He was the last male Habsburg heir. He had three daughters and no sons. An old European rule known as the Salic law prohibited a woman from inheriting a kingdom.

In 1720, Charles VI formally published what was called the Pragmatic Sanction, a decree in which he named his daughter Maria Theresa as his successor. Most European rulers had agreed to accept the Pragmatic Sanction, which carried with it the understanding that they would not attempt to seize dynastic territories of Charles VI upon his death. Maria Theresa would be allowed to inherit the lands.

Charles VI published
what was called the
Pragmatic Sanction

Charles VI died in 1740 (October 20). Prussia's Frederick William I had agreed to the Pragmatic Sanction much earlier, but he also died in 1740 (May 31), enabling his son, Frederick II (Frederick the Great), to begin his reign shortly before Charles VI's daughter, Maria Theresa, began her reign. Frederick II reneged on the agreement, beginning his invasion of Silesia on December 16, 1740, and securing the rich province for Prussia. The War of the Austrian



Succession had begun. France, Bavaria, and Saxony also reneged, contesting the claims of Maria Theresa.



Key Understanding: *The issue of a woman on the throne.*
The War of the Austrian Succession began because of the issue of Maria Theresa sitting on the throne of the Habsburg Austrian Empire. However, she would *not* sit on the throne of the Holy Roman Empire.

Remember, the Seven Years' War was a *continuation* of the War of the Austrian Succession, and thus the War of the Austrian Succession becomes a part of the picture of the Roman Empire and the Ten Horns of Daniel 7:7.

Statue in Vienna of Maria Theresa holding the Pragmatic Sanction

*Daniel 7:7 (KJV) After this I saw in the night visions, and **BEHOLD A FOURTH BEAST [the Roman Empire, which came up from the sea]**, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and **IT HAD TEN HORNS** [fulfilled in the French and Indian War (1754-1763) / Seven Years' War (1756-1763), which ended with the Treaty of Hubertusburg on February 15, 1763, 29 years less 2 months before the December 15, 1791, Bill of Rights].*

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