

THE ELECTION OF EMPEROR FERDINAND II AND  
THE ATTEMPT TO ELECT A KING OF ROME *VIVENTE*  
*IMPERATORE* AT THE REGENSBURG CONVENTION  
OF ELECTORS IN 1630

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A comparison between the election of Emperor Ferdinand II in 1619 and the attempt at electing his son, *vivente imperatore*, in 1630 clearly demonstrates the constant effect on the electors' behaviour of anxiety about absolute imperial power. On one hand, the 1619 election proves the presumption that the House of Habsburg enjoyed, in the electors' eyes, a special relationship to the highest office in the empire. On the other hand, it followed the tactic of electing an emperor who would be able to hold his own in the empire, but would be far from enjoying the sort of power which could jeopardize the electors' interests. A similar calculation governed the Regensburg convention of 1630. As the Vienna court miscalculated its own freedom of action, Ferdinand II did not succeed in linking either the Wallenstein problem or the negotiations about the Mantuan war to his son's election. Even in the confessional era and despite all religious differences, the electors managed to combine forces against the emperor. The Regensburg convention of electors therefore is an important milestone in the struggle between the empire and its constituent principalities, where the electors, seeking to strengthen their own position, put up with a weakening of the empire in the emerging concert of powers.