



Aspiration,
Representation
and Memory

The Guise in Europe,
1506–1688

Edited by Jessica Munns,
Penny Richards, Jonathan Spangler

ASPIRATION, REPRESENTATION AND MEMORY

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The Guise in Europe, 1506–1688

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Line of Descent, from Joinville to Naples

This is a simplified chart connecting important personages discussed in this volume.

Jean
Sieur de Joinville
Chronicler
(d. 1317)

Anseau
Sieur de Joinville
(d. 1342)
1323 m. Marguerite de Lorraine, Dame de Vaudémont

Henri de Joinville
Comte de Vaudémont
(d. 1365)

Marguerite
Comtesse de Vaudémont, Dame de Joinville
(d. 1417)
1393 m. Ferry de Lorraine
(yr son of Duke Jean)

Antoine de Lorraine
**Comte de Vaudémont,
Sieur de Joinville**
(d. 1458)
1417 m. Marie d'Harcourt, heiress of Aumale, Elbeuf
and Mayenne

Ferry de Lorraine
Comte de Vaudémont, Sieur de Joinville
(d. 1470)
1445 m. Yolande d'Anjou,
**Duchess of Lorraine and Bar, claimant to Naples-Sicily,
Aragon and Jerusalem**
(daughter of René I, Duke of Anjou and Isabelle, Duchess of Lorraine)
(d. 1484)

René II
Duke of Lorraine and Bar, titular King of Sicily and Jerusalem
(d. 1508)

<p>Antoine Duke of Lorraine and Bar, titular King of Sicily and Jerusalem (d. 1544) <i>[descendants continue the line of Dukes of Lorraine into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries]</i></p>	<p>Claude de Lorraine 1st Duke of Guise, 1528 Baron de Joinville (d. 1550) 1513 m. Antoinette de Bourbon-Vendôme (d. 1583)</p>
--	---

François
2nd Duke of Guise, Prince of Joinville, 1552
(d. 1563)
1549 m. Anne d'Este, of Ferrara
(d. 1607)

Henri I
3rd Duke of Guise
(d. 1588)
1570 m. Catherine de Clèves
(d. 1633)

Charles
4th Duke of Guise
(d. 1640)
1611 m. Henriette-Catherine de Joyeuse
(d. 1656)

Henri II
5th Duke of Guise
(d. 1664)

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Introduction

The Context of a Dream

Jonathan Spangler, Penny Richards and Jessica Munns

Princes in a World of Kings

From 1648 to 1652, Henri II de Lorraine, fifth duke of Guise, found himself the unwanted houseguest of the king of Spain in the Alcázar of Segovia. He was undeniably captive, but at the same time Philip IV was unwilling to treat him like a common prisoner, to pass harsh judgement on him, even death, though his crimes were certainly worthy of it. There can be no greater betrayal of a prince than fanning rebellion and assuming the mantle of sovereignty. Yet this prince stayed his hand. For he considered Guise also to be a prince – though of a significantly lesser order – and the code of behaviour for the princely fraternity in early modern Europe, signified by the use of such familial greetings as ‘my cousin’ in formal correspondence, warranted a different treatment.¹

We can get a clear sense of this from a document signed a decade earlier by the Duke of Guise and the Spanish king’s representative in the Low Countries, his brother the Cardinal-Infante, in August 1641. In the wording of this treaty, Guise is treated as an allied prince, not a subject; any peace treaties made between the Houses of Austria and France would include him as a diplomatic partner.²

But why would this be so? Guise was a member of a small grouping of elite aristocrats who are not neatly categorised: neither fully sovereign princes nor

¹ This ‘fraternity’ has been termed the ‘society of princes’ by historians such as Lucien Bély and Jonathan Spangler, though not always in agreement on the extent of its reach outside the normally considered circle of European crowned heads. See Bély, *La Société des princes (XVIe–XVIIe siècle)* (Paris: Fayard, 1999); and Spangler, *The Society of Princes: The Lorraine-Guise and the Conservation of Power and Wealth in Seventeenth-Century France* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009). Another approach to this topic, again with a similar title, is found in Christof Dipper and Mario Rosa, eds, *La società dei principi nell’Europa moderna (secoli XVI–XVII)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2005).

² Bibliothèque nationale de France [hereafter BNF], Nouvelles Acquisitions Françaises, no. 29. In a marriage contract he concluded later that year, Guise stated that he was under the ‘protection’ of the king of Spain, not in his service. BNF, Dossiers Bleus 404, fol. 475 (16 November 1641).

fully subject nobility. They might have spent most of their time in one state – owning property, building up patronage networks and marital alliances with the local aristocracy – but their interests were always what historians are now calling ‘trans-national’.³ Kinship networks alone demonstrate this facet of early modern elite culture. Guise, for example, was close kin to several of his princely hosts during his Italian adventure, notably the Este of Ferrara. Guise wrote that while in Italy he made good use of these connections:

Monsieur le Cardinal d’Este being in the presence of the Duke of Modena his brother, I wrote to him, to tell him of my adventures and to take my leave of him; filled with sadness of not being able to fulfil this duty in person, not only because of our kinship and close friendship; but for being in his debt ... for allowing me use of his carriages and horse teams the whole time I was in Rome.⁴

He was also closely related to the Gonzagas of Mantua, and more distantly to the kings of France, England and Denmark, and the Habsburgs of Spain and Austria themselves. He would have seen himself as a ‘European’ or ‘Christian’ prince, rather than a nobleman loyal to any emerging conceptualisations of a ‘nation state’.

The nation state as it emerged in the eighteenth century gave us ‘nationalism’ in the nineteenth. But what forces held states and societies together in the preceding centuries? In the late medieval and early modern world, loyalty to a sovereign prince was paramount and defined frontiers and boundaries more than geography, language or culture. Dynasticism drove politics and diplomacy (rather than *raison d’état*) and is now seen as a more precise term for analysing post-feudal political structures.⁵ Yet much historical thinking and writing about

³ See, for example, the recent volume by C. Johnson, D. Sabeau, S. Teuscher and F. Trivellato, eds, *Trans-Regional and Transnational Families in Europe and Beyond: Experiences Since the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Berghahn, 2011).

⁴ *Les Memoires d’Henri de Lorraine, duc de Guise* (Paris: Chez la veuve d’Edme Martin, Sebastien Mabre-Cramoisy, 1681), p. 86. These memoirs were first published in 1666 by Guise’s secretary, Eustache de Saint-Yon, whom many authors believe wrote part or all of the text. Translations appeared almost immediately, such as *Memoires of Henry, Duke of Guise, relating his passage to Naples, and heading there the second revolt of that people, Englished* (London: H. Herringman, 1669); or *Le Memorie del fu Signor Duca di Guisa* (2 vols, Cologne: Pietro della Piazza, 1675); and a standard version was published in the collection of memoirs edited by Michaud and Poujoulat (Paris, 1839). These different editions will feature throughout the text of this volume, with English translations by the editors.

⁵ See, for example, Liesbeth Geevers and Mirella Marini, eds, *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe: Rulers, Aristocrats and the Formation of Identities* (Farnham: Ashgate, forthcoming).

this period remains influenced by nineteenth-century ‘nationalist’ authors, those who were also interested in the emerging ‘scientific’ history, striving to divide the past into neat categories and orderly systems. The trans-regional princely families did not fit neatly, and were therefore ignored. The Ligne princes, originating in Hainaut – a province itself divided between Bourbon and Habsburg rule – provide a prime example; the careers of various members of this family were based in Brussels, Madrid, Paris, or even St Petersburg, but most often centred on the most cosmopolitan of all European courts, Vienna.⁶

Vienna and the Austrian monarchy is seen as a natural home for the ‘trans-regional princes’, given the extremely decentralised and multinational character of the Holy Roman Empire (and in particular its connections to princely elites outside the Empire, in Poland, Hungary and Italy). Nevertheless, the strongest evidence we have that there was something different about families like the Guise in France as well is simply the term by which they were known, not only to historians, but to contemporaries: the *princes étrangers*, the foreign princes. This name, commonly used by members of the French court and the diplomats who served there, was not an official title granted by the French king. This is precisely the point. It was instead a recognition of a status outside the control of the French monarchy, recognition of membership in a foreign, sovereign (that is, princely) house. Degrees of sovereignty, however, were complex, and engaged such thinkers as Jean Bodin and Charles Loyseau, for much of the period.⁷ The House of Lorraine, from which the dukes of Guise sprang in the early sixteenth century, was considered ‘semi-sovereign’ since the Middle Ages, nominally part of the Holy Roman Empire, but never unambiguously so. This ambiguity was more carefully delineated in 1542 in the Treaty of Nuremberg between Emperor Charles V and Duke Antoine of Lorraine, which stated that the duchy was a sovereign state under the protection of the Empire; the Duke would contribute to Imperial taxes, but would not be accountable for troop levies, nor his legal pronouncements appellate to the higher courts of the Empire.⁸ A similar status

⁶ For the clearest illustration of the most trans-national of all of these princes, who defied any sense of ‘national’ identity, see Philip Mansel, *Prince of Europe: The Life of Charles Joseph de Ligne (1735–1814)* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003). A similar case could be made for the careers of the princes of Orange, most famously Willem III. See David Onnekink and Esther Mijers, eds, *Redefining William III: The Impact of the King-Stadholder in International Context* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

⁷ Edward Andrew, ‘Jean Bodin on Sovereignty’, *Republics of Letters: A Journal for the Study of Knowledge, Politics, and the Arts* 2, 2 (June 2011) [<http://rofl.stanford.edu/node/90>].

⁸ William Monter, *A Bewitched Duchy: Lorraine and its Dukes, 1477–1736* (Geneva: Droz, 2007), p. 46.

existed for the duchy of Savoy and the states of northern Italy, but also for the micro-principalities that fringed the lengthy borderlands between France and the Empire, primarily in the remote hilly regions of the Ardennes and the Vosges (Bouillon, Sedan, Charleville, Salm), and in other border regions (Monaco or Finale) where the Alps meet the Mediterranean. Here sovereignty was rarely taken for granted, and their princes were engaged in a near-continual struggle for recognition from either the emperor or the king of France.⁹ For the Guise, this position was more secure – they could lose their fortune or their political power, but they could not lose their rank.

Being a *prince étranger* at the French court brought particular privileges and honours, for example, the right to remain seated in the presence of senior members of the royal family (besides the king), or ‘hatted’ before the king at audiences of foreign ambassadors, though these rights were not fully delineated until the later seventeenth century.¹⁰ Most significantly, the honours attached to this rank aided its bearers in securing that most desirable prize of any courtly dynasty: regular access to a monarch and thus to the most important source of patronage and favours, essential for the maintenance of a *clientèle* network which all grandee court families needed for survival in the early modern period.¹¹ The recent study by Matthew Vester of one of these *princes étrangers*, Jacques de Savoie, Duke of Nemours, allows us to see clearly how such client networks crossed boundaries, demonstrating ongoing interconnected ties with courtiers and judicial officers in France, military and diplomatic friends in Turin and other Italian court cities, and officers and elites in his own apanage of the Genevois.¹² The parallel conceptualisation of ‘foreign’ princes at the more cosmopolitan court in Vienna has not been studied with this same focus, though a clear distinction was certainly made between the local Austrian nobility, and those who came from other princely territories in the Empire; moreover, distinctions were necessarily made between members of Protestant versus Catholic princely

⁹ See, for example, Simon Hodson, ‘Politics of the Frontier: Henri IV, the Maréchal-Duc De Bouillon and the Sovereignty of Sedan’, *French History* 19, 4 (2005). In fact, some of these were never recognised at all, for example, the Gramont family’s claims to be sovereign in their tiny Pyrenean seigneurie of Bidache.

¹⁰ Ezéchiél, Baron Spanheim, *Relation de la Cour de France en 1690*, Emile Bourgeois, ed. (Paris: Mercure, 1973), p. 116.

¹¹ The status and privileges of a *prince étranger* are discussed in Spangler, *Society of Princes*, pp. 19–41.

¹² Matthew Vester, *Jacques de Savoie-Nemours: L’apanage du Genevois au Coeur de la puissance dynastique savoyarde au XVIe siècle* (Geneva: Droz, 2008), notably ch. V, ‘Sur le front et à la cour’.

dynasties, and also those of 'old' versus 'new' princely families.¹³ Indeed, one of the features of the Lorraine-Guise family in the sixteenth century that is similar to Imperial princely families is the proliferation of ducal titles, one for each sub-branch set up across the century: Aumale, Elbeuf, Mayenne, Chevreuse. But this is not exclusively a princely trait – other grandee families in France did the same (notably the Montmorency, though they certainly had princely aspirations) – nor was it exclusively a French or Imperial pattern: grandee families in Britain sometimes attracted a glittering array of ducal and comital titles, for example the Hamiltons in Scotland, or the Howards in England. And although monarchies like Britain or Sweden did not attract the same number of junior semi-sovereign princes as France, the career of Prince Rupert of the Rhine in Britain in the mid-seventeenth century should certainly be considered in this light.

This brings us to Spanish Italy and the Spanish monarchy in general. There is no equivalent of a formalised title in the Spanish court hierarchy for the 'foreign prince', but there was a parallel trend of granting *grandeza* to foreign nobles, though this was more a reward for loyal service than a recognition of status. Examples include the French marshal Tessé, who helped Philip V win his throne in the War of Spanish Succession, or the memoirist Saint-Simon for helping arrange that same king's marriage a few years later. Numerous aristocrats from Spanish dominions in Naples, Sicily and Milan, as well as Flanders, were given grandeeships, with specific honours, but without any sense of integration within the Castilian or Aragonese nobility. These honours matched most closely those of dukes, without any sense of sovereignty. Part of the issue here is probably that the Habsburgs had to be careful distributing ranks of the highest order in their various overseas possessions, given that the titles under which they themselves governed were in some cases of nominally lesser titular rank than prince – for example, they reigned as duke of Milan in Lombardy, or as duke of Brabant or count of Flanders in the Netherlands. And yet, there were princely titles created for subjects of the king of Spain in these territories, such as the prince of Ligne or the prince of Epinoy in the

¹³ New work is emerging in this vein, however, notably from scholars such as Petr Maťa, who writes on the Czech high nobility and their relationship with the Viennese court, Thomas Winkelbauer on 'new' princes (like the Liechtenstein) in the Empire, Géza Pálffy on the Hungarians, and Cinzia Cremonini on the 'Reich Italians'. See Jeroen Duindam, 'The Court of the Austrian Habsburgs: Locus of a Composite Heritage', *Mitteilungen der Residenzen-Kommission der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen* 8, 2 (1998), pp. 24–58.

Netherlands, or the several hundred princely titles given in Sicily and Naples, the detailed rationale for which has yet to be fully explored by historians.¹⁴

Regions far from the major centres of monarchical power – the Low Countries, the Ardennes, the Italian peninsula – were thus contested spaces and frequent theatres of activity for semi-sovereign border families like the Lorraine-Guise.¹⁵ This nexus of activity, and the interplay between princely status and representation as it applied to them, is the subject of this book. Many of these families who felt they were being squeezed out by the rise of the great powers in the seventeenth century had ambitions to win greater thrones. The House of Savoy can be said to have had the greatest success, by expanding their domains across the Alps into the Piedmont, acquiring a royal title (the fictional title of Cyprus first, then something more tangible, if nearly as artificial, in Sardinia), and ultimately transforming themselves into the royal house of all of Italy. The House of Lorraine had similar ambitions, and while these were at first derived from their claims as heirs to the House of Anjou (see below), and thus heirs to the kingdoms of Jerusalem (which by the fifteenth century no longer existed) and Naples (which did, but was in the hands of the crown of Aragon), they were also posited as genuine heirs of the blood of Charlemagne. Propaganda was published on behalf of the dukes of Lorraine proclaiming Carolingian descent, firstly to put forward claims to the throne of France in the turbulent 1580s – as rivals of the ‘decadent’ and ‘un-Christian’ Valois dynasty, and their potential successors, the ‘heretical’ Bourbons¹⁶ – and later to prove their worthiness to take on the mantle of the Imperial title itself, through marriage to the Habsburg heiress in 1736 and the

¹⁴ This is further clouded by the fact that the title ‘duke’ was usually regarded as higher than ‘prince’ in the Empire and Low Countries, and ambiguous until the nineteenth century elsewhere. The authors wish to thank Professor Luc Duerloo for ‘clarifying’ this issue. The contrast between the very few instances of principalities erected in the Spanish Low Countries and the overwhelming volume of the same in Naples is perhaps simply a reflection that Naples and Sicily were kingdoms, therefore dukedoms and principalities conflicted less with notions of sovereignty than they did in the duchy of Brabant or the county of Flanders. For the exponential rise of Spanish titles in Naples, see Claudio Donati, ‘The Italian Nobilities in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries’, in Hamish Scott, ed., *The European Nobilities* (London: Longman, 1995), vol. I, p. 249; and Rosario Villari, *The Revolt of Naples* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 118–21.

¹⁵ On this topic, see *Contested Spaces of Nobility in Early Modern Europe*, Matthew Romaniello and Charles Lipp, eds (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011).

¹⁶ A thorough examination of genealogical claims put forward by the House of Lorraine was published over a hundred years ago, and has not been substantially updated: Louis Davillé, *Les Prétentions de Charles III duc de Lorraine à la couronne de France* (Paris: Alcan, 1909); though for more recent thoughts on the subject, see Jean-Marie Constant, *Les*