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Spangler, JW (2017) Court faction overwhelmed by circumstance: The Duchy of Lorraine torn between Bourbon and Habsburg, 1624–1737. In: A Europe of courts, a Europe of factions : political groups at Early Modern centres of power (1550-1700). Rulers & Elites, 12 . BRILL, pp. 197-218. ISBN 9004350586

Publisher: BRILL

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NANCY

Court Faction Overwhelmed by Circumstance: The Duchy of Lorraine Torn between Bourbon and Habsburg, 1624–1737

Jonathan Spangler

In the summer of 1655, the commanders of the army of Lorraine received orders from Nicole, Duchess of Lorraine in her own right, residing in Paris, to lead the troops across enemy lines and into service of the King of France. At the same moment, they also received letters from Francis, Duke of Lorraine, residing in Brussels, ordering them to remain where they were and continue to serve the King of Spain. Meanwhile, a third set of orders was received, from Charles IV, Duke of Lorraine, a prisoner in Toledo, countermanding any orders received from his brother, and authorising the letters sent by his wife, Nicole. The commanders were understandably confused by this last set of instructions, since Charles had abandoned his wife over two decades before and persecuted her mercilessly in his pursuit for an annulment of their marriage. The army of Lorraine had received three sets of commands from three competing princely hands. Which should they follow?

The commanders of the army of Lorraine, led by the Count of Ligniville, were not simply military leaders, they were also for the most part Lorraine noblemen and courtiers, and like most of the higher nobility of their era, were confronted with conflicting loyalties to sovereign, to self and to family, or to something more abstract: the state, the “nation”. Aspirations shared by a nobleman and his friends and family led them to form factions. But, as defined by historians of faction such as Roger Mettam and Alan Marshall, these sets of interests were constantly forming, shifting, and realigning in accordance with the needs of the moment.¹ What were the needs of the moment in 1655 for the various factional groups of the Duchy of Lorraine? One common factor normally associated with a faction is its setting: the court. But the court of Lorraine had been scattered

1 Roger Mettam, *Power and Faction in Louis XIV's France* (Oxford: 1988); Alan Marshall, *The Age of Faction. Court Politics, 1660–1702* (Manchester: 1999). For the latest research on conceptions of dynastic identity, see Liesbeth Gevers and Mirella Marini (eds.), *Dynastic Identity in Early Modern Europe: Rulers, Aristocrats and the Formation of Identities* (Farnham: 2015).

since the occupation by French troops of the ducal capital, Nancy, in 1634.² Can we properly discuss a faction in an example where there is no court? Or can the court be considered more conceptually, as existing wherever the sovereign is, or wherever sovereign authority was maintained? In this case, we could consider that there were four courts, not just those in Paris, Brussels and Toledo, but also the embodiment of Lorraine's sovereignty, the *Cour Souveraine*, a judiciary body, which in 1655 was sitting in exile in Luxembourg.

Can such a splintered court help us understand the nature and functioning of court faction? As we can see from many other examples in European history, faction is highlighted or revealed the most at times of extreme crisis for the court. Court faction is of course not always connected to a dynastic matter though dynastic interests were normally at play as well. The events of the struggle to regain the independence of the Duchy of Lorraine in the 17th century can be seen as an extension of Cardinal Richelieu's *raison d'état*—in other words the desire to neutralize a perennial threat to the security of France's north-eastern borders. But they can also be seen as a dynastic struggle between members of the Ducal House of Lorraine itself, or more generically, as the struggle of a small state to survive in between two much larger antagonistic states, and by the elites of such a small state to either achieve or thwart this goal.³

1 Which Heir? Male or Female, Pro-French or Pro-Imperial?

The succession crisis in Lorraine in 1624 was a complicated and fascinating affair, in part for the questions that surface regarding female rule in the early modern period.⁴ In short, the crisis centred on female heredity and whether Lorraine fell under the succession system known as the "Salic Law". As is well known, the Salic Law, which bars women from ascending or even passing on a sovereign throne, was accepted in France and in many of the component

² Philippe Martin, *Une guerre de trente Ans en Lorraine, 1631–1661* (Metz: 2002).

³ Marie-Catherine Vignal-Souleyreau, *Richelieu et la Lorraine* (Paris: 2004); Phil McCluskey, *Absolute Monarchy on the Frontiers: Louis XIV's Military Occupations of Lorraine and Savoy* (Manchester: 2013), notably 119–195.

⁴ See Rainer Babel, "Dix années décisives: aspects de la politique étrangère de Charles IV de 1624 à 1634," in *Les Habsbourg et la Lorraine*, eds. Jean-Paul Bled et al. (Nancy: 1988), 59–66; and Idem, *Zwischen Habsburg und Bourbon. Außenpolitik und europäische Stellung Herzog Karls IV. von Lothringen und Bar von Regierungsantritt bis zum Exil, 1624–1634* (Sigmaringen: 1989).

states of the Holy Roman Empire, though it was not the accepted norm in other dynastic states such as England or Spain. Henry II, Duke of Lorraine, died in 1624, leaving two daughters, Nicole and Claude. His brother, François, Count of Vaudémont, had two sons, Charles and Nicolas-François. Nicole had married Charles in 1621, and in 1624 they succeeded as joint monarchs of Lorraine and Bar. A year later, however, Charles deposed his wife and declared that, because of Salic Law, he alone ruled as sovereign. Charles IV ruled as Duke of Lorraine and Bar until 1675, though for much of this period he was in exile. He was one of the 17th-century's most colourful characters, an acknowledged brilliant military leader, but loathed and mocked for his political inconstancies and his tumultuous personal life.⁵ After abandoning Nicole, he married the beautiful Béatrix de Cusance, bigamously, since the pope refused to grant him an annulment. At the same time, Charles led a small but highly effective army of Lorrainers, mostly in the service of the emperor and Spain, but sometimes in the service of the King of France.⁶ The irony of the crisis of 1624 is that the chief supporter of the absence of the Salic Law in Lorraine was the King of France, Louis XIII—who owed his own throne to the law's existence in France—and his chief minister, Cardinal Richelieu. Indeed, Richelieu would use this crisis as a trap for Charles IV, to justify France's invasion of his duchies in 1633: with the king refusing to recognize Charles as Duke of the Barrois-*mouvant* (the part of the duchy that was formally a fief of the Crown of France⁷), the duke was not able to do formal homage for it; and Charles could not send Nicole to Paris to perform the act without undermining his own position. The *Parlement* of Paris dutifully declared Charles was forfeit and Louis XIII led his troops in mere days later.⁸

This brings us back to faction: was there a pro-French and a pro-Imperial faction in Lorraine in the events of 1625–1633? Who in Lorraine supported Nicole, and who supported Charles? And why? The starting point for many discussions of court faction is kinship. Different kinship connections (mostly maternal) oriented Nicole and Charles in different directions. In the previous century, close kinship between the House of Lorraine and the House of Valois had brought the

5 Charles Leestmans, *Charles IV, duc de Lorraine (1604–1675). Une errance baroque* (Lasne: 2003).

6 Jean-Charles Fulaine, *Le Duc Charles IV de Lorraine et son armée (1624–1675)* (Metz: 1997).

7 Half of the duchy of Bar, the part to the west of the river Meuse, had been officially held as a fief of the King of France since a treaty of 1301. The rest, the Barrois-*non mouvant*, was an imperial fief.

8 Édouard Meaume and Edmond Des Robert, "La Jeunesse de la Duchesse Nicole de Lorraine (1608–1634)," *Mémoires de l'Académie Stanislas* (Nancy: 1888), 291–415; Monter, *A Bewitched Duchy*, 116.

dukes mostly into French orbit politically. Duke Henry II remained tied to the French court through his marriages: first to the sister of King Henry IV, Catherine of Navarre, then to the niece of the Regent Marie de Médicis, Margherita Gonzaga. His close companion and favourite was a distant cousin, an illegitimate son of the Cardinal of Guise, who was given the prestigious posts of Grand Chamberlain, *conseiller d'état*, and Marshal of Lorraine, the highest honour that can be given to a Lorraine nobleman.⁹ Meanwhile, at the French court, we can identify a "Lorraine party", for example, Bassompierre and Champvallon. François, Baron of Bassompierre, Marshal of France, was born into one of Lorraine's leading noble houses but for many years served in France as one of Henry of Navarre's companions-in-arms; he therefore frequently served as an informal ambassador between the courts of France and Lorraine. At the same time, his younger brother, the Marquis of Remauville, was *Grand Ecuyer* of Lorraine, and ducal *conseiller d'état*. One brother served as a French courtier, the other in Lorraine.¹⁰ Jacques de Harlay, Lord of Champvallon, in contrast, was a scion of one of the most prominent Parisian *parlementaire* families, but from its youngest branch which had established close links to the House of Lorraine by abjuring Protestantism. Champvallon became chamberlain of Duke Charles III and intendant of his affairs in France.¹¹

One of Henry II's main interests was maintaining peace in his states (he was known as "Henri le Bon"), and was keen to keep his duchies neutral in the impending conflict in the Empire. He feared the more bellicose ambitions of his brother and his nephew, and, in an effort to keep them away from the throne in the event of his death, hatched a plan to marry his favourite, Louis de Guise, to his eldest daughter, Nicole. The duke was also interested in this marriage in order to block the marital projects with the Dauphin of France, which would have resulted in the loss of independence of the duchies.

The duke's younger brother, the Count of Vaudémont, however, had different aims and interests which can be attributed to kinship. Prince François had been married in 1597 to Christine de Salm, co-heiress of one of the leading court families of Lorraine, but also a family with distinctly imperialist leanings, due to their landholdings and kinship networks with families in the Rhineland. Firmly Catholic, the Counts of Salm shared the rule of their county with their cousins, the Protestant *Rhinegraves*, a curious bi-confessional condominium

9 Gifts and offices listed in Georges Poull, *La maison ducale de Lorraine* (Nancy: 1991), 422.

10 Père Anselme de Sainte-Marie (Pierre de Guibors), *Histoire Généalogique et Chronologique de la Maison Royale de France ...*, vol. 7 (Paris: 1733), 464; Meaume and Des Roberts, "La Jeunesse de la Duchesse Nicole," 302.

11 Anselme, *Histoire Généalogique*, vol. 8, 803.

agreed in 1571 that would continue well into the 18th century.¹² Although they owned a lot of land in Lorraine itself, intermarried with the local Lorraine nobility, and frequently held senior positions at court, the Counts of Salm also had significant links with the Imperial court and military. So naturally, when the Count of Vaudémont was seeking employment after one of his quarrels with his brother's plans for the ducal succession in 1620, he made use of these connections with the House of Salm and went east, joining the armies of the Catholic League led by his brother-in-law, the Duke of Bavaria, who appointed him commander in chief of the League on the Left Bank of the Rhine, and took his son, Charles, with him to fight in Bohemia at White Mountain.¹³

While Vaudémont was away in the east, his brother Duke Henry again proposed to marry Nicole to Louis de Guise, but the local nobility protested, and the duke had to back down. A factionally driven murder highlights the splits at court. Philippe Egloff¹⁴ de Lutzelbourg, from a typically Franco-German border family, served as chamberlain to Duke Henry II, and a colonel in the army of Lorraine (leading, logically, one of the German regiments). But he was also, as early as 1607, a gentleman of the chamber of the Count of Vaudémont,¹⁵ who in 1613 sent him on a highly prestigious mission to the Emperor Mathias to receive the investiture of his wife's half of the county of Salm.¹⁶ Lutzelbourg also had his own separate imperial connections, based on his family's traditional links with the nobility of Alsace, being considered by the Habsburgs for an appointment as *Unterlandvogt* (a deputy to the regional governor) of Alsace, and later appointed as colonel of Catholic League troops.¹⁷ In 1617, Lutzelbourg was thus the natural go-between in the fraternal dispute over the marriage of Princess Nicole. He was sent by Duke Henry to ask the Duke of Bavaria to intercede and convince Vaudémont to accept the marriage. It seems Lutzelbourg had some success, but that Vaudémont changed his mind, and sent an agent to murder him on his way back to Nancy. The murderer, François de Riguet, was in the pay of the Count of Vaudémont in 1617, and, after a period of exile, he was granted a

12 Pierre de la Condamine, *Salm en Vosges* (Paris: 1974).

13 Meaume and Des Roberts, "La Jeunesse de la Duchesse Nicole," 314; Fulaine, *Le Duc Charles IV de Lorraine et son armée*, 9.

14 Arthur Benoit, "Notice sur Philippe-Egenolff de Lutzelbourg et sur la date de sa mort," *Mémoires de la Société d'Archéologie Lorraine* 10 (1868): 302–309.

15 Henri Lepage, "L'assassinat de Philippe Egloff de Lutzelbourg," *Mémoires de la Société d'Archéologie Lorraine* 33 (1883): 237–258.

16 Ibidem, 242–243.

17 Benoit, "Notice sur Philippe-Egenolff de Lutzelbourg," 305.

ducal pardon in May 1621,¹⁸ and indeed was “rewarded”, even *before* the pardon (1619) by being named lieutenant of Vaudémont’s guards, and was later recognized as noble in 1626.¹⁹

Following Lutzelbourg’s death, reactions escalated. Duke Henry II started proceedings for the marriage of Nicole to Louis de Guise, and his brother François responded by publishing a manifesto claiming that a will of Duke René II from 1506 had been found in the Hôtel de Guise in Paris, which stated that the duchies would follow masculine succession. The Guise family of course had an interest in such a document, since, if the ducal branch failed, they were next in line. Historians have debated whether the document was genuine, but even if it was, it can be considered meaningless as an example of the “fundamental laws” of the duchy, since René himself had inherited his duchies from his mother. Public opinion in Lorraine was fairly united: they were in favour of the succession of Princess Nicole, but not on her marriage to a bastard, no matter how virtuous. Duke Henry relented, and issued another statement recognising that, as it was “desired by the nation” and supported by the assembly of the nobility, he would marry his daughter to his nephew, Charles.²⁰ The Count of Vaudémont and his son had thus won their victory through a powerful combination of international diplomacy, blackmail, and reliance on public opinion and their nascent sense of “national” identity.

Duke Henry II died in 1624, and for a year, Charles and Nicole ruled jointly. But in autumn 1625, Charles managed to manoeuvre out of position the Duchess Nicole, again relying on international diplomacy and court faction. By once again declaring that the duchies followed masculine succession, his father Vaudémont by right had to be the logical successor. The count therefore proclaimed himself Duke Francis II for a day, ennobled some of his servants, paid off his debts, and resigned the next day in favour of his son, Charles. No one protested, though two supporters of Nicole—favourites of her father—were burned for sorcery, André des Bordes and (later) Melchior de la Vallée.²¹

18 Nancy, Archives Départementales de Meurthe-et-Moselle [ADMM] B92, fol. 120.

19 Lepage, “L’assassinat de Philippe Egloff de Lutzelbourg,” 256.

20 Meaume and Des Roberts, “La Jeunesse de la Duchesse Nicole,” 320.

21 Henri Lepage, “André Des Bordes: épisode de l’histoire des sorciers en Lorraine,” *Mémoires de la Société d’Archéologie Lorraine* 7 (1857): 5–55; Melchior de la Vallée, canon and cantor of the Collegiate Church of Saint-Georges de Nancy, was the late duke’s almoner, and had baptised Princess Nicole. It was therefore claimed that he had, like the other supporters of Duke Henry, tried to prevent Charles’s marriage from bearing fruit through sorcery. Monter, *A Bewitched Duchy*, 113–115.

But beyond court faction, the succession to Lorraine and Barrois was now an international issue. The pope and Christina of Lorraine, Grand Duchess of Tuscany, were keen to keep peace in the region, and supported both female succession to the duchies and the endogamous marriage of Nicole and Charles as the most viable solution, and crucial to the fragile peace between France and Spain.²² The Spanish court was clearly concerned, as seen in a letter sent by the Archduchess Isabella in Brussels to Philip IV in January 1626, informing the king that “the Duke of Lorraine and the Count of Vaudémont his father have written to say that the Duchy of Lorraine has been declared a masculine fief.” But she also wrote that the Duchess of Lorraine (Nicole) had also written on this subject, and had requested instructions from the Queen Mother Marie de Médicis.²³ In contrast, Charles and his father sent several letters to the Princess of Conti and to the Duke of Chevreuse (both members of the House of Guise) and to the queen mother, assuring them that they were taking these steps for the good of the dynasty.²⁴ Several years later it seems the Spanish court was still unsure of its position. A letter from Philip IV to Isabella in October 1633 informs her that the king has sent Antonio Sarmiento to negotiate with Charles IV on his entrance into the Catholic League, and asks her to “*préparer le terrain*” so that this can be done easily. He asks the Infanta to advise Sarmiento if it would be worthwhile to attempt to broker this deal with the duke via the duchess.²⁵ On the other side, the archives in France contain records of the efforts of the Dowager Duchess, Margherita Gonzaga, to maintain French support for her daughter’s rights.²⁶ Richelieu himself began to keep a dossier on how he could someday either neutralize or annex the duchies, but refused to consider an offer to kidnap the duke—in an

22 See a memorandum by the Grand Duchess Christina in Florence, Archivio di Stato di Firenze [ASFi] Mediceo del Principato [MP] 4272. My thanks to Dr Sheila Barker of the Medici Archive Project for this reference. For papal involvement in the succession and the marriage arrangements, see Lucienne van Meerbecke, “Le Saint-Siège et la Lorraine sous Paul IV et Grégoire XV,” *Bulletin de l’Institut belge de Rome* 14 (1934): 5–22.

23 Henry Lonchay and Joseph Cuvelier (eds.), *Correspondance de la Cour d’Espagne sur les affaires des Pays-Bas au XVIIe siècle*, vol. 2 (Brussels: 1927), 252.

24 “Pièces justificatives 1–3,” November/December 1625, in Othenin, Comte d’Haussonville, *Histoire de la Réunion de la Lorraine à La France*, vol. 1 (Paris: 1860), 461–463.

25 Lonchay and Cuvelier, *Correspondance de la Cour d’Espagne*, vol. 2, 717.

26 An account of the coup by the dowager duchess in BNF, Collection de Lorraine, vol. 52, fol. 51; a formal protest she sent to her aunt, the Queen Mother Marie de Médicis, via a Mantuan agent in 1627, in Paris, Archives des Affaires Etrangères [AAE] Affaires de Lorraine, vol. 8, no. 36.

interesting foreshadowing of the events to come—by stating that the Christian world would not look kindly on the capture of one sovereign prince by another.²⁷

The events of the occupation of the duchies of Lorraine and Bar by France in 1633–1634 followed a meandering path which ranges from brutal to duplicitous to comical. As we have seen, conflict between France and Lorraine had been brewing for much of the previous decade; these were further exacerbated by the exiles of two prominent French courtiers, first the Duchess of Chevreuse (a Lorraine princess by marriage, to the younger brother of the Duke of Guise) in 1626, and then the Duke of Orléans, the younger brother of the King of France, in 1629. Gaston returned a second time in 1631, and this time he married, against the express wishes of Louis XIII and Richelieu, Marguerite of Lorraine, sister of Charles IV.²⁸ France demanded that the marriage be repudiated, and that homage be done for Barrois by Duchess Nicole in her own name. When this did not happen, the troops moved in, led by the king himself, and by August 1633, laid siege to the capital Nancy. Charles IV and his sister the Princess of Phalsbourg led the opposition before fleeing the Duchy; Marguerite was bundled off to Brussels (disguised as a pageboy) to join Gaston in exile, leaving Nicolas-François, Nicole and Claude to remain in Lorraine and try to make peace.²⁹ Nicolas-François soon realized that compromise was no longer an option and took the most curious step in the entire farce: as Cardinal of Lorraine and Bishop of Toul, he formally issued a dispense for his cousin Claude's consanguineous marriage on one day, and as Duke of Lorraine (Charles IV had abdicated in his favour in 19 January 1634) he married her himself on the very next day. Meanwhile, Duchess Nicole had not been entirely passive: she ratified the passing of the ducal title from Charles to Nicolas-François (thus negating her own claims), and she was a witness at the marriage of her sister to her cousin. But she soon drafted a statement saying that anything she did during this period she disavowed and would later reject, and sent it to the French court with an envoy from the House of Lenoncourt (one of the most pro-French of the Lorraine court nobility). A month later, she herself was escorted with full honours to Paris, where she would remain for the rest of her life.³⁰

27 Richelieu (Armand-Jean du Plessis), *Mémoires*, vol. 8 (Paris: 1927), 105–106.

28 See Georges Dethan, *La vie de Gaston d'Orléans* (Paris: 1992), c. 7 and 8.

29 Vignal-Souleyreau, *Richelieu et la Lorraine*, 208–209.

30 AAE, Correspondance Politique, Lorraine, vol. 13, fols. 723–724. We know frustratingly little about the activities of Duchess Nicole in Paris, where she died in 1657. Some interesting conclusions have been drawn by the medical historian Jacqueline Carolus-Curien, who

We can see clearly in the events of the succession crisis of 1625 to 1634 that there is a split in the family between pro-French (Nicole and her mother) and pro-Imperial (Charles and his father). Archival documents show us that staff numbers at the Palais Ducal in Nancy and at the Hôtel de Salm (Vaudémont's residence, around the corner) had equally large numbers of courtiers and servants.³¹ There is also still a clear high level of participation from other members of the extended house of Lorraine, not just the Guise in France, but also the Grand Duchess Christina in Florence and the Duchess Elisabeth in Bavaria, and also the Bishop of Verdun (François de Lorraine-Chaligny) who was being driven out of his diocese by French "diplomacy" at roughly the same time as the succession controversy.³² But further down the rungs of the court hierarchy, it is nearly impossible to pinpoint for certain which courtiers supported which faction, though it seems clear that by 1630 most of the high nobility and military leaders supported Charles. This was probably not out of loyalty to him as a leader, but because they saw in his position the preservation of their independence—as bigger fish in a smaller pond—and therefore better chances for the exercise of authority and for employment. The best opportunities for employment for a nobleman, of course, came from war, and the warrior Charles IV was keen to get involved. The extremely detailed study of Charles' army by Jean-Charles Fulaine amply demonstrates how much his campaigns in Germany were supported by the cream of the Lorraine nobility.³³ A name that stands out among them is Ligniville.

2 The Nobility of Lorraine in Time of Crisis: The Captivity of Charles IV

Philippe-Emmanuel de Ligniville (or Lignéville), Count of Tumejus, made his mark on the history of the Thirty Years War as both Lieutenant-General of Imperial Armies and Generalissimo of the Army of Duke Charles IV of Lorraine. As with previous nobles discussed above, his family had for many years maintained multiple identities as supporters of pro-French or pro-Imperial factions, yet in so doing, maintained a semi-independent dynastic identity as well. His family were considered one of the four great houses of the duchy of Lorraine,

suspects that Nicole suffered from mental illness, but evidence remains fragmentary: *Pauvres duchesses. L'envers du décor à la cour de Lorraine* (Metz: 2007), 159–177.

31 Lepage, "L'Assassinat," 238; Monter, *A Bewitched Duchy*, 116.

32 Vignal-Souleyreau, *Richelieu et la Lorraine*, 97–98; Cabourdin, *Histoire de la Lorraine*, 183.

33 Fulaine, *Le Duc Charles IV de Lorraine et son armée*, *passim*.

and had roots extending back as far as the foundation of the duchy itself.³⁴ The family split into two branches in the mid-16th century, Tantonville and Tumejus. Of the senior line, Ferry de Tantonville was gentleman of the chamber of François, Count of Vaudémont (father of Duke Charles IV), while his nephew Jean was gentleman of the chamber of Duke Henry II, neatly splitting family service between the frequently feuding brothers. The latter was rewarded with the position of Master of the Hunt of Lorraine and Bar, but both were honoured when the emperor raised the entire family to the rank of count of the Empire in 1620.

The junior branch, Tumejus, had moved more closely into the orbit of the French court following marriage to an heiress of lands in Anjou. In the next generation, Philippe-Emmanuel headed up the ecclesiastical hierarchy in Lorraine, as *Grand Prévôt* of St-Georges de Nancy (one of the two main ecclesiastical offices in the duchy, in the absence of a bishopric) and apostolic protonotary. He was one of the signatories on the marriage contract of Nicole and Charles in 1621.³⁵ Here faction at the Lorraine court can be seen in full: when Charles IV later needed a senior Lorraine clergyman to denounce his marriage to Nicole, Philippe-Emmanuel was glad to oblige, since he had not been allowed to officiate at the wedding, precedence having been given to the Bishop of Toul (a favourite of the former Duke Henry II)—thus exacerbating the age-old quarrel that Toul, outside the boundaries of Lorraine, had no jurisdiction over the parish of Nancy, which the Collegiate of St-Georges held directly from the Holy See.³⁶

The Prévôt de Ligniville's namesake and nephew, Philippe-Emmanuel, could not have had a more illustrious background. Born in the late 1590s, he joined the ranks of the army of Charles IV when it went to serve in the imperial forces in 1634, and immediately made a name for himself by capturing Marshal Horn (one of the Swedish commanders) at the Battle of Nördlingen, later that same year.³⁷ In the 1640s, he led the Lorraine cavalry in Spanish service in Flanders, and by 1648, he was the *de facto* commander of the armies of Lorraine in the absence of the duke, and formally promoted to the rank of Marshal-General

34 "Notice sur la Maison de Ligniville," Appendix C of Alphonse-Léon, Comte de Delley de Blancmesnil, *Notice sur quelques anciens titres suivie de considérations sur Les Salles des Croisades au Musée de Versailles* (Paris: 1866), 316–378.

35 Ibidem, 361.

36 Vignal-Souleyreau, *Richelieu et la Lorraine*, 298.

37 For a summary of his career, Delley de Blancmesnil, "Notice sur la Maison de Ligniville," 346–359.

in 1651.³⁸ Twice he led Charles IV's troops in aid of rebel princes in the Fronde, and twice he led them back again to Brussels, where he attained such a level of credit with the local Habsburg government, that he was reputedly advised in advance of the arrest of Charles IV in 1654.³⁹

What therefore was the factional positioning of a man like the Count of Ligniville in the events leading up to the arrest of Duke Charles IV in February 1654? One recent historian who has examined these events closely makes it clear that the main source of conflict that year was the high degree of autonomy given by the Spanish government (led by the Archduke Leopold Wilhelm and the Count of Fuensaldaña) to their two leading generals, the Prince of Condé (first prince of the blood of France, and an exile since the failure of the Fronde) and the Duke of Lorraine.⁴⁰ As royal princes, both saw themselves as partners of the Spanish war effort, not as subjects of the King of Spain. Correspondence reveals that the archduke and Fuensaldaña did not care for either one of them personally, and found coordinating military manoeuvres almost impossible due to their conflicting agendas; however, the power of Condé to disrupt the government of France at this time was seen as an overriding factor, so in the end, the uncontrollable and unpredictable movements of the Duke of Lorraine had to be neutralized. One of the Spanish high command's chief worries was whether the Duke of Lorraine would betray them and take his army across the frontier and into French service. And indeed, plenty of evidence from this period confirms that Charles was in contact with Cardinal Mazarin.⁴¹ Rather than risk this loss of the sizeable Lorraine troops, Leopold Wilhelm obtained from the court of Spain permission to arrest Charles. He was conveyed first to Antwerp, and from there to Toledo where he resided in the Alcázar until his release in October 1659.

During the duke's absence, the French took advantage of the uncertainty of the Lorraine troops and in particular, their noble leaders, and persuaded Duchess Nicole to issue a manifesto, in June 1655. In this document, she gives herself the double (and contradictory) titles of

38 Fulaine, *Le Duc Charles IV de Lorraine et son armée*, 150.

39 Delley de Blancmesnil, "Notice sur la Maison de Ligniville," 350.

40 James Inglis-Jones, "The Grand Condé in exile: Power Politics in France, Spain and the Spanish Netherlands, 1652–1659," PhD diss., Oxford University, 1994, 94–99.

41 Letters can be seen in the Chéruel edition of Mazarin's correspondence, volume 40, as discussed by Ferdinand des Robert, *Charles IV et Mazarin (1643–1661), d'après des documents inédits tirés des archives du ministère des affaires étrangères, des archives de la maison de Ligniville, etc* (Nancy: 1899), 406–418.

Nicole, by the grace of God, Duchess of Lorraine and Bar, etc., regent in the absence of His Highness [Charles IV] and throughout the impediment in which he finds himself, duly authorized by His Highness by diverse letters and commissions signed with his own hand, to govern and dispose of everything.⁴²

She states that, since the King of Spain has failed to recognise the years of loyal service of her “very honourable lord and spouse” (the man who has treated her so terribly for thirty years!), she had sent letters requesting the intervention of the pope, the emperor and the Republic of Venice. And until she is able to go to speak to the King of Spain herself, to remind him of his Catholic piety and the injustice of arresting a fellow sovereign, a prince who has sacrificed his estates, his life, and thousands of his subjects to the interests of the crown of Spain, she has sent instead Sieur Mangin, her counsellor and secretary. She suggests that Venice had offered to give Charles a command to lead troops to besiege Crete, and to act as guarantor for his future behaviour, and even threatened that, on the advice of other “princes of our House”, she would form a small army, to be commanded by the Duke of Guise, who will force the King of Spain to release her husband. But not having received any response, she was forced to make a treaty with the King of France, and received explicit instructions from Charles for her to do so. By means of this manifesto, Nicole orders all commanders of the Lorraine troops to quit the service of the King of Spain, and retire to places named by Duke Charles. She adds that she does this with “full power and sovereign authority” and condemns those who disobey to be criminals of “*Leze-Majesté*”, accomplices of the imprisonment of their master, and “enemies of the State and the Fatherland.” Going one step further, she orders the president and counsellors of the *Cour Souveraine* of Lorraine and Barrois to register this manifesto as law, and to publish it across the region. Included in this manifesto was a short order claimed to be from Charles himself in Toledo, ordering Ligniville specifically and the other commanders and soldiers to leave the army of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, and

42 “Nicole, par la grâce de Dieu, duchesse de Lorraine et de Bar, etc., régente en l’absence de Son Altesse [Charles IV] et durant l’empeschement où Elle [Son Altesse] se trouve, duement autorisée par Son Altesse par diverses lettres et commissions signees de sa main proper, pour gouverner et disposer de tout.” “Manifeste de la Princesse Nicole de Lorraine à l’Occasion de la Captivité du Duc Charles IV en Espagne,” published by the Abbé Guillaume in the *Journal de la Société d’Archéologie Lorraine et du Musée Historique Lorrain* 28 (1879): 188–195.

forbids them from following contrary orders coming from any other source, notably those of Duke Francis.⁴³

Who is Duke Francis? The previous summer, the Spanish authorities in Brussels had summoned Duke Francis of Lorraine (as Nicolas-François was known since the abdication of Duke Charles) from Vienna where had been living with his wife Claude since 1634. They realized that in order to keep the remaining Lorraine troops in the field, and loyal, they needed another member of the ducal family to act as commander—and to continue to act as a counterbalance to the pretensions of Condé.⁴⁴ The Spanish had also immediately issued a manifesto justifying the outcry against the arrest of Charles. Archduke Leopold Wilhelm stated that Charles's inconstancies in his alliance with the King of Spain, his intrigues with the enemy, and his blessing on his troops' violent behaviour were simply unsupportable in time of war.⁴⁵ Responses to the archduke's manifesto were swiftly published, denouncing the arrest of a sovereign prince as a thing so extraordinary, so contrary to the public good, that later generations would believe it was a fable.⁴⁶ More concretely, in March 1654, the remnants of the government of the Duchy of Lorraine, the *Cour Souveraine* (sitting in exile in Luxembourg), formally denounced the arrest and forbid anyone from reading the archduke's manifesto; as a response, Spanish officials in Luxembourg arrested several *présidents* and *conseillers* of this body.

Who wrote the response to the archduke's manifesto? Richard-Maupillier argues that, given their erudite and legalistic style, it was probably by someone associated with the *Cour Souveraine* but with ties to the Duchess Nicole in Paris, and likely supported by Cardinal Mazarin.⁴⁷ The message is clearly that Lorraine nobles should abandon any alliance (or even friendship) with Spain and to join with the true sovereign (Nicole) who continued to support her husband in his imprisonment. The "betraying brother", Duke Francis was suspected by some to have been complicit in the arrest, or even that it was his idea, fearing for his sons' future from their distant home in Vienna.⁴⁸ Many years later, a

⁴³ Ibidem, 194.

⁴⁴ Inglis-Jones, "Grand Condé in Exile," 101.

⁴⁵ His arguments are summarized in Dom Augustin Calmet, *Histoire ecclésiastique et civile de Lorraine ...*, vol. 3 (Nancy: 1728), col. 490.

⁴⁶ *Response au Manifeste de l'Archiduc Leopold qui pretend iustifier l'emprisonnement du Duc de Lorraine* (Paris: 1654). See Frédéric Richard-Maupillier, "Deux manifestes dénonçant l'arrestation de Charles IV," *Pays Lorrain* 82.4 (2001): 282–285.

⁴⁷ Richard-Maupillier, "Deux manifestes," 283.

⁴⁸ Anonymous, "Affaires du Duc de Lorraine & le sujet de sa prison," printed in *Histoire du Traité de la Paix conclüe sur la Frontière d'Espagne et de France entre les deux couronnes*

former agent of Duke Francis, Nicolas du Bois, Lord of Riocour, wrote his own account to justify the actions of his master, and argues that he did all he could to free Charles IV, including sending yet another member of Lorraine's highest aristocracy, the Marquis Du Châtelet, to Madrid to negotiate with Philip IV.⁴⁹

More significantly, Du Bois reflects on the confusion of the situation, with multiple factions vying for control of the remnants of Lorraine's sovereignty—there was also an agent of the Duchess Nicole in Madrid—often working to cross purposes (and indeed, Charles IV seemed to have his own agent with him in Toledo, the financier Augustin Nicolas, whose purposes remain in the shadow). According to Du Bois (writing in the third person), this Nicolas,

wanting to be the sole actor here in these negotiations, spread rumours and defamed Du Bois, in writing, and verbally. He threatened to publish something that would dishonour Duke Francis, the entire *Nation Lorraine*, and particularly the barons Du Châtelet and Hennequin [François' secretary], accusing François of parricide, sacrilege, rebellion, perfidy and spoliation.⁵⁰

Representatives were also sent from the Marquis of Mouy (first prince of the blood of Lorraine), and also from the Duke of Orléans (Louis XIII's brother Gaston), as brother-in-law of the imprisoned duke, though not all of these envoys were successful at obtaining passports to enter Spain.

In the face of this confusion, some of the Lorraine commanders followed the instruction of Duchess Nicole and brought their units into French service, like the colonels Rémencourt and Mauléon. Both came from the middle ranks of Lorraine nobility, both with properties located close to the borders with France and with family ties on both sides.⁵¹ They published their reasons in an edition of the *Gazette de France* in 1655, stating that Lorraine had seen too much desolation, and that the sacrifices made by Charles IV and his army had only

en l'an 1659 ... Aussi, Un Recueil de diverses matières concernantes le Sr Duc de Lorraine (Cologne: 1665), 81.

49 Nicolas du Bois de Riocour, *Histoire de l'Emprisonnement de Charles IV, Duc de Lorraine, detenu par les Espagnols* (Cologne: 1688). Du Bois had been acting as Charles IV's intendant at the *Cour Souveraine* in Luxembourg.

50 Ibidem, 120.

51 Matthieu Husson, *Le simple crayon, utile et curieux, de la noblesse des duchez de Lorraine et de Bar ...* (Verdun: 1674).

been rewarded with treachery on the part of the Spanish.⁵² Du Châtelet, as Marshal of Lorraine and representative of the highest ranks of the Lorraine nobility, continued to travel back and forth as envoy between Charles IV, Francis, the Spanish government in Brussels, and the Lorraine troops in the field. He attempted to negotiate a deal with the French king (supposedly on the suggestion of Charles IV himself, who vacillated between supporting his brother and his wife), and joining his efforts to those of other Lorraine colonels and prominent members of the Lorraine *ancienne chevalerie*, and indeed with the head of the House of Lorraine in France, Henry II, Duke of Guise. Duke Francis himself defected to the French side in November 1655, taking the rest of the Lorraine army with him. According to one source, it was to undermine the authority Charles was exercising from prison through Nicole; according to another, it was to ensure the best way he could the swift release of his brother from prison.⁵³

The commander of the Lorraine troops, Philippe-Emmanuel, Count of Ligniville, also remained at the centre of much of this confusion—sending letters to Duke Charles in Toledo saying he was receiving contradictory instructions from Francis and Nicole and asking for clear direction. According to Du Bois, in Summer 1655, Duchess Nicole, making her claims in the government of the state, and as true wife (as declared by the Holy See), sent lots of letters to Ligniville and other officers, notably those who governed places still held by Lorraine troops, and declared that they should obey only her as Regent. These wrote to the envoys in Spain to ask if they should not obey Duke Francis as first prince of the blood, especially since the duchess was in the hands of the French. The envoys responded that they knew neither the intentions of the duchess nor of Duke Francis, but that they should “avoid false leaders”, such as the duke’s financier Nicolas or his private physician Mouzin, each of whom was conducting his own negotiations.⁵⁴ And at the same time, the *Cour Souveraine* was still acting independently as best it could: in September, the court declared a rumoured treaty made by the duke to “sell” his troops outright to the Spanish in exchange for his freedom as null, and any other orders the duke sent while in captivity. This was done specifically by the Procurer-General of the Duchy in Charles’s name and denying (on his behalf) any alleged orders

52 “Lettre des colonels Remenecourt et Mauléon, aux hauts officiers, colonels, autres officiers et soldats de l’armée du duc Charles de Lorraine, avec les articles qui ont esté accordez à ces colonels par Sa Majesté,” *Gazette* (1655): 61–68.

53 Anonymous, “Affaires du Duc de Lorraine & le sujet de sa prison,” 89–92; Du Bois, *Histoire de l’Emprisonnement de Charles IV*, 113–120.

54 Du Bois, *Histoire de l’Emprisonnement de Charles IV*, 40.

he sent to Duchess Nicole, “who is in France in the power of our enemies”. In essence, orders have come from her, thus compelling Duke Francis to issue contradictory orders, and so we issue the same.⁵⁵

When the Lorraine troops did ultimately enter French service, Ligniville remained in command under the leadership of Duke Francis, now an ally of Mazarin. Contemporary Lorraine historians Beauvau and Calmet debated whether Ligniville had betrayed Charles IV and the House of Lorraine in 1654 by maintaining a direct link with the Spanish government, independent of the duke, and then refusing to obey the duke’s order to take the Lorraine army on a rampage through the Spanish Netherlands, putting all “à feu et à sang” in order to force his release. Indeed, Beauvau suggests that Ligniville had not been motivated chiefly by loyalty, but by the fact that his savings were in the banks in Antwerp, and his brother held a high rank in the Spanish army.⁵⁶ Any suggestion Charles IV himself believed that Ligniville had betrayed him can be dismissed by examining the later career of the count: he was named the duke’s representative at the Imperial diet in Regensburg, and was named governor of his nephew and heir, Prince Charles. After Duke Charles’s release following the Treaty of the Pyrenees, 1659, Ligniville’s position as a close advisor to the family remained firm, even on matters besides military.⁵⁷ Through him the old Lorraine nobility continued to assert its position as naturally the chief supporters and advisors of the ducal house. As governor and tutor of Prince Charles—the future Charles V—Ligniville influenced the development of the ducal family and its *Hausmentalität* in its next two generations. To undo the damage of the reign of Charles IV and to preserve the independence of the Duchy itself, subsequent dukes would have to rely on the Lorraine nobility more heavily, a reversion to the older system and a blow for princely absolutism.⁵⁸ This can be potentially identified as a “third way” faction, a faction to support neither France nor the Empire, but Lorraine itself, as embodied in its ruling house.

⁵⁵ Ibidem, 100.

⁵⁶ As discussed in Delley de Blancmesnil, “Notice sur la Maison de Ligniville,” 352.

⁵⁷ Ibidem, 355.

⁵⁸ This is in contrast to the argument put forward by Charles Lipp who argues in favour of a stronger absolutism of Duke Leopold, based on his researches of the new nobles (*annoblis*) but ignoring almost completely the role of the *ancienne chevalerie*. Charles Lipp, *Noble Strategies in an Early Modern Small State: The Mahuet of Lorraine* (Rochester: 2011).

3 Loyalty to Dynasty or Loyalty to Place

During the French occupation of the duchies of Lorraine and Barrois, many noblemen followed their own needs as individuals or of their families, disregarding notions of loyalty to the ducal family or the sovereignty of the Duchy. At the highest levels, we see the example of the assumption of the role as French governor of occupied Lorraine by the head of one of the four grand families of Lorraine, the Marquis of Lenoncourt in 1643—reflecting his family's close connections with France as major landowners in Champagne, not just Lorraine—but counterbalanced by another Lenoncourt, the Marquis of Blainville, serving as one of Charles IV's top officers in the army of Lorraine.⁵⁹ This period of great stress in the region promoted factional divides, for example at the nearby episcopal court of Verdun, where one nobleman from the Barrois, Jean de Nettancourt, Count of Vaubecourt, French lieutenant-general of the bishopric of Verdun since 1631, clashed with another, Paul des Armoises, Lord of Hannoncelles, Dean of the Council of the Bishopric, whose loyalties lay with the bishop, François de Lorraine-Chaligny. The situation was resolved by force, when Des Armoises was replaced as Dean by an outsider, the Chevalier de Dampval, in 1636, with French military backing, and the Bishop lost what little remained of his secular authority over the city.⁶⁰

The high nobility of Lorraine retained its sense of geographical mobility that had characterized it for centuries, and the end of the career of the Marshal de Ligniville proves to be no different. Offended by the Treaty of Montmartre of 1662, which effectively sold Lorraine and Bar to the King of France,⁶¹ Ligniville left Lorraine and offered his service to the Elector of Bavaria, who named him Marshal-General. While in Germany, he nevertheless continued to support the House of Lorraine by once again representing the duke at the Imperial Diet and at the court of Vienna, and continuing to serve as advisor to young Prince Charles after he too had fled from the orbit of Louis XIV and offered his service to Emperor Leopold. Ligniville served his last campaign as an imperial Fieldmarshal-lieutenant at the battle of the river Raab in Hungary in August 1664, after which he died in Vienna. The end of Ligniville's career

⁵⁹ Fulaine, *Le Duc Charles IV de Lorraine et son armée*, 125, 128, and 258.

⁶⁰ Vignal-Souleyreau, *Richelieu et la Lorraine*, 317–318. Other factions in the *Trois Evêchés* include Lorrainers who supported the Jesuits and those who supported the Oratorians or early Jansenists, thus tying them to religious factions emerging in France at the same time (*Ibidem*, 346).

⁶¹ Jonathan Spangler, "A Lesson in Diplomacy for Louis XIV: The Treaty of Montmartre, 1662, and the Princes of the House of Lorraine," *French History* 17.3 (2003): 225–250.

thus re-emphasizes the high degree of mobility of the high nobles of border territories like Lorraine: in the words of Delley de Blancmesnil: “One of the privileges of the *ancienne chevalerie* was to serve abroad in peacetime without derogation of nationality and even without requesting the prince’s authorization.”⁶²

At the same time, this notion of dynastic mobility transferred from Ligniville to Prince Charles, who succeeded as Duke of Lorraine and Bar in 1675, following a second occupation of Lorraine by France in 1670, and the inglorious death of Charles IV in exile. It was manifest at Charles V’s very cosmopolitan court in Innsbruck, and was passed on in turn to his son, Duke Leopold, whose actions following his restoration to his duchies in 1698 demonstrate clearly that he understood the importance of loyalty to the dynasty over loyalty to a place. This is also a very Habsburgian trait—Leopold was after all the son of an archduchess, and was raised at the court of Vienna with his cousins, the Archdukes Joseph and Charles. Habsburg cosmopolitanism drew together nobles from across Europe who were loyal to the imperial dynasty more than to a particular geographical place.⁶³ As duke, Leopold was careful to solidify his still rather fragile hold on power by continuing the tradition of his father in balancing his favours between those nobles from the *ancien chevalerie* and more recently ennobled Lorrainers who had served him in exile, and those foreigners who had flocked to his court in Innsbruck or served in his armies in Hungary. Leopold’s court at Nancy and at Lunéville would retain this distinctive cosmopolitanism—led by nobles from Ireland, Italy, Austria and Hungary—but was also heavily staffed by members of the old Lorraine nobility, including many of those whose kin had served in the French occupation of the duchies.⁶⁴ Leopold forgave and forgot. He even recruited members of his own extended family to return to Nancy in an emulation of Louis XIV who had surrounded himself with princes of the blood as a means of accenting

62 “C’était un des privilèges de l’ancienne chevalerie de pouvoir, en temps de paix, servir à l’étranger sans dérogeance à la nationalité, et sans même demander l’autorisation du prince.” Delley de Blancmesnil, “Notice sur la Maison de Ligniville,” 356.

63 Jeroen Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles: the courts of Europe’s major dynastic rivals, 1550–1780* (Cambridge, Eng.: 2003), 78–80; Robert Evans, “The Limits of Loyalty,” in *The Limits of Loyalty: Imperial symbolism, popular allegiances, and state patriotism in the late Habsburg Monarchy*, eds. Laurence Cole and Daniel Unowsky (New York: 2007), 223–232.

64 There is no adequate modern biography of Duke Leopold of Lorraine. See the forthcoming volume edited by Anne Motta, *Échanges, passages et transferts à la cour du duc Léopold (1698–1729)* (Rennes: 2017).

the *gloire* of his dynasty and of his court.⁶⁵ And, like Louis XIV, he was determined to never let faction take hold again at the court of Lorraine: old and new nobles, natives and foreigners, all were given a place in Leopold's court, army or government. A quick look at the staffing of the duke's household recalls names that have appeared throughout this chapter (old nobles like Lenoncourt, Du Châtelet, Ligniville, Nettancourt, and Des Armoises; new nobles like Du Bois de Riocourt), plus new names, such as former French occupiers who chose to remain (Sublet d'Heudicourt), or those recruited during campaigns in eastern Europe (Carlingford, Throckmorton, Pfütschner, Lunati, Spada). The long lists of those serving in the ducal stables in particular are surprisingly full of Germans, and Czechs, and even Hungarian *heyduques* (*hajduk* in Hungarian).⁶⁶

After nearly a century of indecision and strife, the successful strategy for survival as an independent duchy was to try to neutralise faction by creating a third faction, the party of Lorraine. The reign of Duke Leopold (1698–1729) that followed is seen as a second golden era, carefully balanced between Habsburg and Bourbon influences, which even managed to weather intact the storm of a third occupation by French forces during the War of Spanish Succession.⁶⁷ But it was not enough, and the strategic need for the French state to secure its northeast frontier led to the final annexation of the duchies in 1737. Once again faction emerged in the ensuing decade, and Lorraine nobles had to choose between emigration—to follow the ducal family to Vienna—or service at the court of France at Versailles.⁶⁸ As before, the factional and kinship divides were complex and ever-shifting.

65 See my contribution to the aforementioned *Échanges, passages et transferts*: “Le rappel des princes de sang par Léopold: une stratégie politique pour rehausser l’image ducal”.

66 ADMM, 3 F 289, no. 96, “Etat de L’Hotel a Monsieur le Grand Maistre” [probably 1708].

67 Phil McCluskey, “Louis XIV, Duke Leopold I and the neutrality of Lorraine, 1702–1714,” *European History Quarterly* 45.1 (2015): 34–56.

68 For a case study, see Jonathan Spangler, “Transferring Affections: Princes, Favourites and the Peripatetic Houses of Lorraine and Beauvau as Trans-Regional Families,” in *Internationale Geschichte in Theorie und Praxis: Traditionen und Perspektiven*, eds. Barbara Haider-Wilson, Wolfgang Mueller, and William D. Godsey (Vienna: 2016). Across several centuries, the Beauvau family demonstrated dynastic loyalty by shifting their spheres of activity from Anjou to Lorraine to Naples, and finally on to Tuscany when the ducal family finally departed Lorraine in 1737.

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