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VI: “Sneak Peeks” into the Daily
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Abstract: Between 1707 and 1740, the Holy Roman Emperor, Archduke Charles VI of Austria (1685–1740), maintained a near-continuous diary, recording his personal reflections on more than thirty years of rule. This article analyses these insights into Charles’s daily life within the wider context of the Habsburg monarchy and the imperial court during the early eighteenth century, illuminating the ruler’s perspective on familial relationships, annual ceremonies, diplomatic endeavours, and decision-making processes. First, the nature of these records and their positioning within the wider context of diary culture is considered, as well as the distinctive features of Charles’s entries and the challenges inherent in deciphering them. The article then investigates Charles’s personal piety, his relationship with his family, and his various advisors at the Viennese court, as demonstrated by his diary entries during his rule. Combining diplomatic, political, and private contemplations, and offering valuable details about the monarch’s day-to-day routine, this study presents Charles’s diaries as an intimate and essential record of the Baroque period, as well as a unique set of records that reveal the Archduke-Emperor’s innermost thoughts.

Keywords: Charles VI; Habsburg monarchy; Archduke of Austria; Holy Roman Emperor; Spain; Viennese court; imperial household; diary; printed calendar

Archduke Charles VI of Austria was born in 1685, the younger son of Emperor Leopold I and his wife, Eleonora Magdalena of Palatine-Neuburg. His older brother, Joseph, was set to rule the Habsburg monarchy and was elected King of the Romans in 1690, making him the designated ruler of the Holy Roman Empire. As a consequence, Charles’s own future role became intertwined with the Spanish branch of the so-called Casa de Austria. In 1700, after the death of the Spanish king, Charles II, the Austrian Habsburgs were not prepared to accept this end to their rule in Spain along with its European and overseas territories, and the ensuing dispute led to the War of the Spanish Succession. During its course, Charles (Figure 1) was proclaimed king of Spain by his father, Emperor Leopold, in Vienna in 1703 and departed for his new kingdom. Returning to the Habsburg territories after the death of his brother Joseph in 1711, Charles was elected and crowned Emperor in Frankfurt. During his reign, the Habsburg monarchy reached its largest extension, including several former Spanish kingdoms in Italy or the Netherlands (present Belgium), and

territories conquered in the East. Some provinces were lost in the last decade of Charles’s rule, in several dynastic wars fought whilst securing Habsburg succession. Still, literature about this Habsburg ruler at the edge of enlightenment is relatively limited.



Figure 1: *Archduke Charles* (c.1703), by Christoph Weigel, Nürnberg. Abraham a Sancta Clara, Neu-eröffnete Welt-Galleria Private collection.

The following study concentrates on a single important source regarding Charles’s rule: his “diaries,” which cover a period of more than three decades. This article seeks to present this vital example of an individual testimonial by a ruler and to provide the underlying context for writing a diary at court. What information can be gleaned about Charles’s government, his emotions, his relationship to his family and his trusted advisors, and about political matters, by deciphering his difficult handwriting?¹ These notes, covering around 33 years in the life of one

¹ I have written extensively on this subject. See: Stefan Seitschek, “Der Hof tanzt! Musik, Tanz und Fest am Kaiserhof Karls VI. in den Jahren 1720-1725,” *Frühneuzeit-Info* 27 (2016): 62–70; Stefan Seitschek, “Das Ohr des Fürsten. Der Wiener Hof um 1720,” in *Die Repräsentation der Habsburg-Lothringischen Dynastie in Musik, visuellen Medien und Architektur 1618-1918*, ed. Werner Telesko (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2017), 251–262; Stefan Seitschek, *Die Tagebücher Kaiser Karls VI.: Zwischen Arbeitseifer und Melancholie* (Horn: Berger Verlag, 2018); and Stefan Seitschek, “Der geforderte kaiserliche Körper und Geist. Karl VI. und Elisabeth Christine zwischen Krankheit, Sexualität und Frömmigkeit,” in *Männlichkeiten in der Frühmoderne: Körper, Gesundheit und Krankheit (1500–1850)*, ed. Martin Dinges

of the famous rulers of the time, can help us to better understand this period, at the dawn of our modern world.

Are the Diaries Actually Diaries?

Though the significance of diaries as historical sources has long been established, those of the Habsburg rulers have hitherto not been properly evaluated.² Until the eighteenth century, calendars documenting one’s own daily routines were used. Owing to the limited space provided by this format, keepers of such diaries generally only jotted down keywords. Examining these documents is time-consuming work due to the often onerous task of reading the handwritten texts. In return, however, such “personal” sources provide us with unique insights into early modern thoughts and private lives.

Charles usually called his notes “calendars,” “notations,” or books.³ What are the possible attributes of such writings? Diaries are fundamentally characterised by continual and regular (almost daily) notes, written over a period of time.⁴ They usually document the personal experiences and thoughts of the individual writing them, and, due to the immediate nature of the writing involved, their authors typically use the present tense. Different types of diaries exist: some primarily include information about the writer and their personal feelings, while others mention only the events of a day in a telegraphic style. Looking at the notes jotted down by Charles, one immediately notices the complete lack of any sentence structure. Verbs do not exist or are abbreviated, which makes it difficult to identify the intended tense. Only sometimes are they written out in their entirety, but this occurs sufficiently often to see that Charles did in fact use all tenses including past, future, and the common present tense for his diaries.⁵

By keeping a diary, Charles continued an established family tradition.⁶ His ancestors had

and Pierre Pfütsch (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2020), 349–376.

² An overview is provided by Harald Tersch, “Abschusslisten: Hundert Jahre habsburgischer Kalenderkultur (1600-1700),” *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 116 (2008): 92–120.

³ Some handwritten titles of the journals include: “Calendar for the year 1715 in which written everything from day to day, little matters and major ceremonies concerning court, ecclesiastical issues, journeys, public and political negotiations, matters of war, matters of the provinces, domestics, secret family and other important matters, confidential matters, that happened the entire year long. Such calendar as mentioned above for the year 1716” (“Calendter v[or] d[en] jahr 1715 in welchen aufgeschriben was v[on] tag zu tag in allen undt all[es] groß undt klein ceremonie, hoff, kirchensachen, ausgangen, in negociis publicis politicis, belli, provincialibus, domesticis, gehaimern haus undt anderen reservirt wichtigen auch particular confid[ent] sachen sich daz ganze jahr hindurch zugetragen hat. Eben dieser calendter wie oben v[or] d[en] jahr 1716”); “calendar for 1720, wherein written all my notes like in the other years and books. As well as for anno 1721” (“Calender v[or] d[en] jahr 1720 wo allerlay meine notata wie in den ubrigen jahren undt buchern aufgeschriben seindt. Wie auch anno 1721”).

⁴ See: Petr Mat’á, “Tagebücher,” in *Quellenkunde der Habsburgermonarchie (16.-18. Jahrhundert): Ein exemplarisches Handbuch*, ed. Josef Pauser, Martin Scheutz, and Thomas Winkelbauer (Vienna: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2004), 767–780, 768.

⁵ Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 474.

⁶ This writing tradition within the Habsburg family has previously been discussed in Tersch, “Abschusslisten.” On calendars (“Schreibkalender”) in general, see: Harald Tersch, *Schreibkalender und Schreibkultur: Zur Rezeptionsgeschichte eines frühen Massenmediums* (Graz: Neugebauer, 2008). A brief summary is provided in Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 31–40.

written diaries before him, noting down information about their hunting habits among other things. His father Leopold used printed calendars as notebooks.⁷ The pages referred to the days of the month and included various pieces of advice, such as pointing out occasions for bloodletting. Between these printed calendar pages were blank sections that could be used for notes, much like the (printed) calendars that still exist today. Leopold used these books for travel notes but soon began to keep an occasional diary as well. His annual entries were bound in expensive embossed hardcover volumes, typically in quarto size. Leopold gradually embedded more and more information in his notes, including details of hunts and ceremonial events. This Habsburg tradition, with a continuous development of the notes of its members, can be found among other noble families of the Habsburg monarchy and of the Empire as well. Even the writing styles are comparable; usually, these notes recap on the personal experiences and insights of the day in few words and not full sentences.⁸ The records of the nobles not only refer to their families and their own lives but to the court events and important occurrences of the ruling family. It is interesting that news of political events except for dynastic happenings are not generally mentioned in such diaries.

Charles usually called his texts “calendars,” yet his notes exhibit several specific characteristics of diaries: he continuously kept his notes from day to day, though naturally some gaps exist within the total timespan of more than three decades. He referred almost solely to personal experiences and events in which he took part. He did not include reports from newspapers, and merely mentions talking about political developments with his advisors or his personal thoughts. Although Charles used abbreviations, he still referred to his personal feelings. In his later years, he discusses praying and his concerns increased, as this article will explore.

⁷ On Viennese court calendars, see: Irene Kubiska-Scharl and Michael Pözl, *Die Karrieren des Wiener Hofpersonals 1711-1765: Eine Darstellung anhand der Hofkalender und Hofparteiprotokolle* (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2013), 29–61; Stefan Seitschek, “Einige caeremonialpuncten bet(reffend).’ Kommunizierende Gefäße: Zeremonialprotokoll und Wiener Diarium als Quelle für den Wiener Hof (18. Jh.)” (MA thesis, University of Vienna, 2011), 45–53. On schematics, see: Volker Bauer, *Repertorium territorialer Amtskalender und Amtshandbücher im Alten Reich: Adreß-, Hof-, Staatskalender und Staatshandbücher des 18. Jahrhunderts*, Volume 2: Heutiges Bayern und Österreich, Liechtenstein (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1999).

⁸ For the Landgraves of Hessen-Darmstadt, see: Helga Meise, *Das archivierte Ich: Schreibkalender und höfische Repräsentation in Hessen-Darmstadt 1624-1790* (Darmstadt: Hessische Historische Kommission, 2002). On Frederick II, Duke of Saxe-Gotha, see: Roswitha Jacobsen, *Friedrich I. von Sachsen-Gotha und Altenburg: Die Tagebücher 1667-1686*, 3 vols. (Weimar: Böhlau, 1998–2003). For a comparison of the characteristic elements to Charles’s diaries, see: Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 31–40. See also: Stefan Pongratz, *Adel und Alltag am Münchener Hof. Die Schreibkalender des Grafen Johann Maximilian IV. Emanuel von Preysing-Hohenaschau (1687-1764)* (Oberpfalz: Kalmünz, 2013); Alfred von Arneth, “Graf Philipp Cobenzl und seine Memoiren,” *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte* 67 (1885): 1–18; Maria Breunlich-Pawlik, “Die Aufzeichnungen des Sigmund Friedrich Grafen Khevenhüller 1690-1738,” *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchiv* 26 (1973): 235–253; *Die Diarien und Tagzettel des Kardinals Ernst Adalbert von Harrach (1598-1667)*, ed. Katrin Keller, Alessandro Catalano, 8 vols. (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2010); Stefan Seitschek, “Einblicke in Johann Caspar II. Graf Cobenzls (1664-1742), Wirken am Kaiserhof Karls VI,” in *Gorizia al cuore dell’Europa: i Cobenzl, uomini di stato, diplomatici e mecenati al servizio degli Asburgo* (forthcoming). Retrospective memories of the time do exist, such as the well-known works of the Duke of Saint-Simon on the French and Spanish court or the notes of Count Merode-Westerloo of the Habsburg court. M. le comte de Mérode-Westerloo, *Mémoires du feld-maréchal comte de Mérode-Westerloo*, 2 vols. (Brüssel, 1840).

Considering these features, it seems justified to classify these notes as diaries.⁹

Charles appears to have written primarily for himself, neither addressing nor anticipating future readers. In a general sense, diaries serve as reminders to prevent their writers from forgetting things. Charles regularly spent time recalling his days and making notes about events. But his statements are short and merely provide abbreviated information; in his late years, Charles would encode entire lines of his entries. Keeping in mind this use of ciphers, the diaries were clearly primarily intended for Charles’s personal use—though this encoding may also point to an expected (albeit later) use by others. These sometimes intimate insights cannot be compared to correspondences of the time—not least because private letters were usually destroyed after their owner’s death. Indeed, the diaries of his ancestors were still kept in the archives (and are to this day). At any rate, Charles seems to have made notes not only as reminders, but also to give account of his daily deeds. But for whom? Perhaps for himself, for future Habsburg generations, or simply to justify his achievements before God. His entries portray him as a hardworking, serious, and pious monarch, and can be considered his life’s report for a small audience.

The Diaries

Charles’s diaries, covering the period from 1 January 1707 until his death in October 1740, have been preserved in 18 books kept at the Austrian State Archives (department Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv).¹⁰ In 1707, the Archduke and proclaimed Spanish King had just conquered (in 1705) and defended (in 1706) his base of operations in Barcelona, Spain, with the help of his allies. It may well have been these difficult times and decisive events that provoked him to begin keeping daily notes on his own activities and on events in general. In May 1707 his future wife converted to Catholicism in Bamberg, which heralded a new stage of life for the young king. In any case, it is somewhat surprising that no travel record of Charles’s journey from Vienna to Spain in his own hand has been preserved. Such journey records are often the beginning of personal diaries.

Like his father Charles wrote on quarto pages, but he did not use printed calendars.¹¹ As a consequence—and because they lack printed pages while still using the quarto paper size—

⁹ For further information (including literature), see: Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 26–31.

¹⁰ Oswald Redlich, “Die Tagebücher Kaiser Karls VI.,” in *Gesamtdeutsche Vergangenheit: Festgabe für Heinrich Ritter von Srbik* (Munich: F. Bruckmann Verlag, 1938), 141–151; Stefan Seitschek, “Die sogenannten Tagebücher Kaiser Karls VI.: Ein Editionsprojekt,” in *Editionswissenschaftliches Kolloquium 2013: Neuere Editionen der sogenannten “Ego-Dokumente” und andere Projekte in den Editionswissenschaften*, ed. Helmut Flachenecker, Janusz Tandeci, and Krzysztof Kopyński (Toruń: TNT, 2015), 107–140; Seitschek, *Tagebücher*. There is no evidence of older volumes or other forms of periodic notes by Charles before 1707.

¹¹ It is still unclear why Charles did not use printed calendars. Even though he began his periodical notes in Spain, such calendars were available, commonly given as New Year’s gifts or easily sent there by post or travelling couriers. See: Harald Tersch, “Die Schreibkalender als Informationsmedium,” in *Die Kalendernotizen des Hieronymus Übelbacher, Propst von Dürnstein 1710-1740. Edition und Kommentar*, ed. Helga Penz (Vienna: Böhlau, 2013), 42–50. Even notes in the diaries prove such regular contact between Vienna and Barcelona.

Harald Tersch describes Charles's notes as "calendar notes without calendars."¹² In the first years, the extent of the entries sometimes differs, then cover about two or three lines each, whereas the daily notes written during the last decades of his life became longer, reaching between five and six lines in length. His diaries are not bound in hardcover but instead have simple paper covers (Figure 2). On these pages, he wrote down personal notes almost every day; there are naturally some gaps during the more than three decades of his writing, which Charles explained with his simply having "forgotten" ("vergessen") to write. These gaps are sometimes related to personal losses, such as the death of his only son in November 1716 and his mother in 1720.

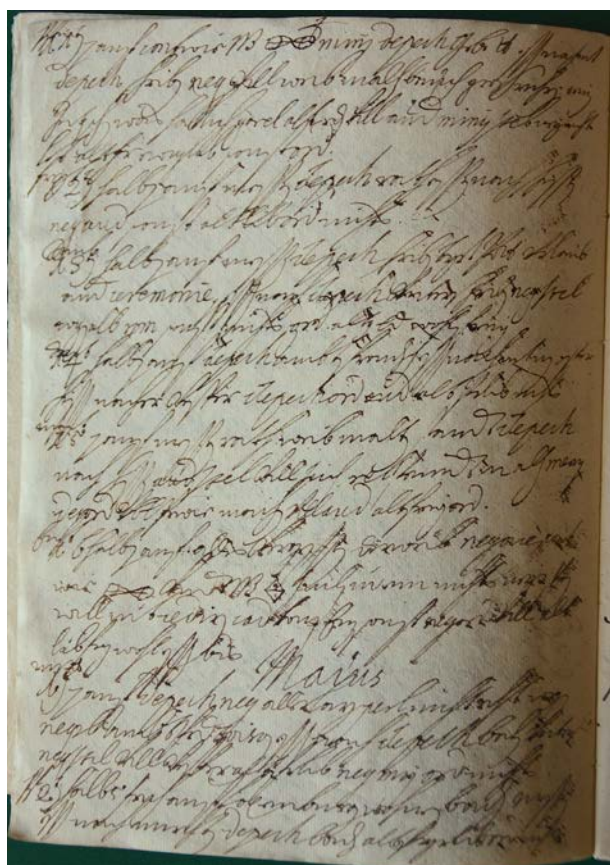


Figure 2: Page of the diary (HHStA, Hausarchiv, Sammelbände 2, Heft 11, fol. 4v)

In 1716, after the death of his firstborn son, he explicitly referred to his notes on sheets including information about conferences (November 4): "From that day on until the end of the year forgotten everything, even keeping diary, partly because of impediments, partly just so; in

¹² "Bei Karls Aufzeichnungen handelt es sich gewissermaßen um Kalendernotizen ohne Kalender." Tersch, "Abschusslisten," 120.

the meantime, wrote matters discussed in conference on pieces of paper."¹³ In December 1727, his wife's illness kept him from writing (December 1): "This month and all days forgetting to write because of my wife's illness which was dangerous but God helped that she is out of danger for now, writing how it will continue, praying ... forgotten everything, now diligent, more writing next year."¹⁴ It seems that Charles made notes on sheets that he later transferred to his diary in batches. Some additional entries and corrections in the diaries illustrate that this writing process was not entirely consistent.¹⁵ Charles also explained blanks with the loss of his notes. Each year usually ended with a reference to the power of God and Mary (e.g. 1723: "O[mnia] ad m[ajorem] D[ei], B[eatae] V[irginis] g[loriam]").

One major challenge in reading Charles's diaries is his handwriting. Both his father's and his own handwritten resolutions sometimes had to be transcribed by contemporary secretaries. Charles's diaries are even more difficult to decipher because he did not write in full sentences, stringing together abbreviated words with almost no punctuation. Some of these words are repeated frequently, such as "official business" or "dispatches." The shortened names of persons or places are especially difficult to identify, though individuals like Prince Eugene (abbreviated "PE") or Francis Stephen of Lorraine ("PL") who are mentioned repeatedly can often be determined. Travel routes mentioning almost unreadable local names can be reconstructed using other sources; it is also necessary to consult alternative records on the Viennese court, such as the "Wienerisches Diarium", the printed court calendars, or the so-called ceremonial protocols ("Zeremonialprotokolle"), in order to interpret the diaries.¹⁶ Finally, Charles used symbols for

¹³ "V[on] diesen tag bis zu endt des jahrs hab ich alls vergessen, auch zu schreiben, teils aus hinderung, theils so, derweil was in conf[erenz] ist in zelt notirt." Charles VI's notes will be cited in German in the footnotes. The translations provided are merely interpretations of these texts due to the telegram style of the diaries. "*" or "**" are used wherever a word or several words are illegible.

¹⁴ "dis monath undt all tag vergess[en] schreiben wegen weib krankheit welche gefahrlich, Gott aber geholfen daz aus gefahr bis jezt, wie weyter wirdt aufschreiben, ich bett[en] ... alles vergessen j[e]zt fliessig, besser dis jahr so."

¹⁵ Such a writing style can be traced in the calendars of Count Preysing Pongratz, Adel, 29–31, or the journals of Frederick, Duke of Saxe-Gotha (see footnote 8 as well).

¹⁶ On these sources, see: Seitschek, "Caeremonialpuncten," 22–65. The newspaper "Wienerisches Diarium" (renamed "Wiener Zeitung" in 1780) has been periodically issued since 1703. In the first half of the eighteenth century, it was published twice per week (Wednesday and Saturday) and reported on events in the political and commercial centres of Europe. A major part of each issue dealt with the Viennese court, reporting on the whereabouts and festivities of the imperial family. Most are available online: <http://anno.onb.ac.at/cgi-content/anno?aid=wurz>. The court calendars were printed calendars for each year and announced the events at the Viennese court in advance. Events and festivities were divided into "Toison" days, "gala" days (meaning birthdays and name days of the imperial family), and other prayers and solemnities (see footnote 7). Comparing these announcements in the calendars to the reports in the Wienerisches Diarium shows that most events took place. Only when the Emperor was ill did he not attend the announced masses and festivities. This illustrates how the (ecclesiastical) year was determined for the imperial family. Finally, the so-called "Zeremonialprotokolle" recorded all ceremonial events at court as guidelines for organising similar events in the future. Naturally, a major issue was the ranking of the courtiers. These "ceremonial protocols" were probably written by the secretaries of the Lord Chamberlain (Obersthofmeister). See: Mark Hengerer, "Die Zeremonialprotokolle und weitere Quellen zum Zeremoniell des Kaiserhofes im Wiener Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv," in *Quellenkunde der Habsburgermonarchie (16.-18. Jahrhundert): Ein exemplarisches Handbuch*, ed. Josef Pauser, Martin Scheutz, and Thomas Winkelbauer (Vienna: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, 2004), 76–93; *Der Wiener Hof im Spiegel der Zeremonialprotokolle (1652-1800): Eine Annäherung*, ed.

certain matters. Sometimes these marks refer to supplementary sheets, of which only a proportion are preserved; other symbols may simply refer to a long-discussed issue, such as the marriage of his daughter, Maria Theresa. In the last decade of keeping his diaries, Charles’s use of ciphers included encoded sections, sometimes extending over several lines.¹⁷

These challenges go some way to explain why the diaries have not been the primary source consulted when dealing with the Viennese court of the time. Owing to Charles’s dual role as lord of the territories of the Habsburg monarchy and Holy Roman Emperor, however, an edition of these periodical notes covering more than three decades seems all the more imperative for future studies.

Like his father Leopold in his “Schreibkalender”, Charles made notes on his everyday routine. He did not write long sentences about each issue, but merely jotted down a few words on the respective day’s events. For example, on 1 July 1723: “Thursday 1st, up at 7; mass; dispatches, negotiating, much, be informed about here, see what to do, minister; nothing; meal; afternoon not feeling well, alone; gallery, treasury, hall, pretty paintings; afterwards audience; six [o’clock] toison vesper; at court, audience; ordinary, nothing.”¹⁸ It is not easy to group the references together correctly because Charles hardly used any punctuation. Punctuation marks can more often be found in the early diaries when he was residing in Spain from 1707 onwards. As a consequence, “six [o’clock] toison vesper; at court, audience” could be regrouped as “six [o’clock] toison vesper at court; audience”, and so on.

The year at the Viennese court featured various recurring ecclesiastical and other festivities, such as carnivals and birthdays. As a consequence, an annual routine was established that was announced in advance through the printed court calendars.¹⁹ Johann Basilius Küchelbecker wrote about the Viennese court of Charles: “The imperial court is well organized in every aspect and almost every hour of the day determined for specific tasks; that is why it is not surprising that every occasion at the court—be it ceremony, festivity, or prayer—can be predicted a year in advance” (referring to the printed court calendars).²⁰ The Emperor wrote not only about getting up early, around 7 o’clock (a 9 o’clock morning routine after carnival feasts

Irgard Pangerl, Martin Scheutz, and Thomas Winkelbauer (Innsbruck: Studienverlag, 2007). On the Viennese court, see: Jeroen Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles: The Courts of Europe’s Dynastic Rivals, 1550-1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

¹⁷ The code was deciphered by Konstantin Pachner von Zobor around 1940. See: Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Hausarchiv, Abschriften aus den Tagebüchern von Kaiser Karl VI. verfasst von Konstantin Pachner von Zobor.

¹⁸ Charles used the term “neg[otia],” which can be understood as talks or discussions with his advisors. I have nevertheless chosen to translate this as “official business” since such talks or working hours will frequently have been about future policies, regulations, or diplomatic conduct. “Pfi[nstag] 1ten, 7 auf; messen; depe[sc]h[en], neg[otia], vill, weg[en] hie informiren, sehen, was thun, minis[ter]; nichts; essen; nahmit[tag] nicht recht wohl, all[ein]; gale[rie], schazca[mmer], saal, hibsch bilder; nacher aud[ienz]; 6 tois[on] vesper; bey hoff, aud[ienz]; ord[inari], nichts.”

¹⁹ For the year 1725 and its events and sources, see: Seitschek, “Caeremonialpunten” (including an edition of the ceremonial protocol and the court calendar of that year).

²⁰ Johann Basilius Küchelbecker, *Allerneueste Nachricht vom Römisch-Kayserslichen Hofe* (Hanover, 1732), 219–220.

or rising at 4 o'clock for hunting trips are exceptional cases), but mentioned masses, conferences with his advisors, and morning hunts. Meals always divided the daily routine. In the afternoon there were usually negotiations or meetings with his advisors, while in the evening he attended church (vespers) again and met with his most trusted friend, Johann Michael Count Althann (1679–1722).

The year was determined by the most important ecclesiastical feasts, such as Easter and Christmas—an annual routine best illustrated by Charles's own comments (17 March to 7 April 1720): "forgot [to write] these weeks; prayers, all the same like the other years, confessions, list nb [symbol]." ²¹ But even leisure time was planned: the carnival festivities in February with masquerades, dances, and comedy plays, as well as the birthday and name day celebrations of the imperial family and certain hunting trips, were repeated every year. The birthday of the Empress (28 August) and the Emperor's name day (4 November) were celebrated with musical events such as operas. In 1723, the famous opera "Costanza e Fortezza" premiered in her honour on 28 August. ²²

The imperial court also changed residence several times each year. In winter, the imperial family stayed at the Hofburg (Imperial Palace) in Vienna. Around April, the court moved to Laxenburg outside the city, where the Emperor entertained himself hunting herons with falcons. In June, the family moved to the Favorita, where Charles regularly took the waters (23 June 1724: "Sauerbrun Spa started, well, 9 [o'clock] done."). ²³ Come October, the court moved back to the Imperial Palace. Charles regularly refers to these changes by mentioning in his notes the act of packing or of furnishing in the new residence. Returning to these places after brief hunting trips, the Emperor called them home. ²⁴ It is worth mentioning that these transfers of residence sometimes coincided with a continuation of the diaries after blank periods. ²⁵ It therefore seems

²¹ "vergessen dise wochen, andachten, alles wie current ander jahr, beicht, lista nb [Zeichen]." See: Elisabeth Kovács, "Kirchliches Zeremoniell am Wiener Hof des 18. Jahrhunderts im Wandel von Mentalität und Gesellschaft," *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 32 (1979): 109–142; Friedrich Wilhelm Riedel, *Kirchenmusik am Hofe Karls VI. (1711-1740): Untersuchungen zum Verhältnis von Zeremoniell und musikalischem Stil im Barockzeitalter* (Munich: Katzbichler, 1977); Stefan Seitschek, "Religiöse Praxis am Wiener Hof: Das Beispiel der medialen Berichterstattung," in *Frühneuezeitforschung in der Habsburgermonarchie: Adel und Wiener Hof – Konfessionalisierung – Siebenbürgen*, ed. István Fazekas, Martin Scheutz, Csaba Szabó, and Thomas Winkelbauer (Vienna: Institut für Ungarische Geschichtsforschung, 2013), 71–101.

²² See: Claudia Michels, *Karnevalsoper am Hofe Kaiser Karls VI. (1711-1740): Kunst zwischen Repräsentation und Amusement* (Vienna: Hollitzer, 2018). On the opera "Costanza e Fortezza," see: Petra Lunizcková, "Der Aufenthalt des Wiener Hofes Kaiser Karls VI. in Böhmen und Mähren anlässlich der königlichen Krönung im Jahre 1723," *Frühneuezeit-Info* 13, nos. 1 & 2 (2002): 25–32, 30; Ludwig Ritter von Köchel, *Johann Josef Fux: Hofcompositor und Hofkapellmeister der Kaiser Leopold I., Josef I. und Karl VI. von 1698 bis 1740* (1872; Hildesheim: Olms 1988), 539; Herbert Seifert, "Die Aufführungen der Wiener Opern und Serenate mit Musik von Johann Joseph Fux," in *Texte zur Musikdramatik im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert: Aufsätze und Vorträge*, ed. Matthias Pernerstorfer (Vienna: Hollitzer, 2014), 487–502, 499–500; Štěpán Vácha, Irena Veselá, Vít Vlnas, and Petra Vokáčová, *Karel VI. & Alžběta Kristýna: Česká Korunovace 1723* (Prag: Paseka, 2009), 471.

²³ Sauerbrun = acidulous mineral water, spring water ("Sauerbrun anfangen, wohl, 9 aus"). See: Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 92–98.

²⁴ 13 October 1725: "outside, small hunt, 11 ½ home" ("aus, klein jagt; 11 ½ heimb").

²⁵ Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 44–45.

that the relocations often represented new beginnings in Charles's own perception of himself. His daughters sometimes remained at the Imperial Palace and did not move permanently to Laxenburg or the Favorita.²⁶ They regularly visited their parents, however, and these meetings are mentioned by Charles in his diaries (8 May 1723: "my children visiting, nice ... children with me, amusing").²⁷ The dowager Empress Amalia Wilhelmine remained in Vienna year-round but also sometimes paid visits to the summer residences. Charles himself briefly moved back to Vienna for certain occasions, such as to attend Corpus Christi processions. The Emperor's diaries comprise not only private issues and information about the court, but also contain statements on the ongoing diplomatic affairs of the period that resulted in the emergence of a balance of power in Europe.²⁸ The next pages will elaborate on these private issues as reflected in Charles's diaries.

The Emperor

The daily routine of Emperor Charles VI has already been described: he usually rose around 7 o'clock. On 15 January 1732, he noted that he got up late, whereas he also often rose earlier on the occasion of hunting trips (for instance at 4 o'clock).²⁹ Sometimes, Charles mentions having breakfast in the morning; these references usually occur in the context of hunting trips, such as on 14 June 1725: "Mödling [town near Vienna], mass; breakfast good; hunting, whole day in forest near garden."³⁰ The Emperor sometimes worked until late at night, which he makes mention of in his diaries. On 13 August 1728, he writes: "a lot of audiences until late at night."³¹ References to hard work can be found regularly as well, portraying him as a diligent monarch. He mentions that he had "done much" (6 May 1723: "vill getho[n]"), or that his head was full after a day's work (17 June 1723: "vill, kopf voll").³² Occasionally, he notes that he had been reading, leaving it unclear as to whether this refers to literature or government matters. As a consequence, each entry must be interpreted individually. On 7 September 1728, Charles likely meant official texts: "court chancellor came, me reading all night long, writing; meal; again reading, writing."³³

Spare time is also mentioned in Charles's diaries. In his later years in particular, he refers

²⁶ Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 171–172.

²⁷ "me[ine] kind heraus komen, fein ... kinder bey mir, lustig"

²⁸ See: Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 357–466.

²⁹ 15 January 1732: "6 ½ ordinary, overslept, 7 ¼ got up" ("6 1/2 ordin(ari), verschlafen 7 1/4 auf").

³⁰ "Medling, mess[en]; frustuk gut, burst, ganzen tag in waldt bey gardten."

³¹ "Meng aud[ienz] bis zu[er] nacht."

³² 13 August 1724: "night still official business, Perlas" ("nacht noch neg[otia], Perl[as]"); 23 December 1724: "official business, dispatches, better, industriously working, also council" ("neg[otia], dep[es]ch[en], besser, fleis[ig], sonst rath"); 8 January 1732: "me catarrh, not well, head faint, resting; still official business, working, council" ("ich cathar, nit wohl, kopf math, rasten; doch neg[otia], arbeith, rath"); 12 December 1732: "writing, whole day working" ("schreiben, ganz tag arbeithen").

³³ "Hofcanz[ler] komen, ich ganz abendt lesen, schriben; essen; widter lesen, schriben."

not only to working but to resting,³⁴ and even describes himself as lazy.³⁵ Unsurprisingly, references to resting occur more often during the summer heat and exhausting journeys. Other occasions for increased recreation time were his curative regimens. The Emperor took the waters every year while residing at the Favorita, usually in the last weeks of June ("Sauerbrunnen", meaning acid-rich mineral water or spring water). Such cures were also intended to prevent illnesses; Charles regularly mentions suffering from catarrh (inflammation of the mucous membranes). Here, too, his physician Pius Nikolaus Garelli (1675-1739) tended to him: in 1721 he forbade Charles to join the processions before Easter (8 April 1721: "powder, doctor doesn't want me to walk, not well; at 8 ½ riding to Hernals").³⁶ It is interesting that Garelli not only looked after the imperial family but was also called upon to treat Charles's friend, Althann.³⁷ The Emperor mentions his own illnesses and cures as well as those of his wife and other family members. Elisabeth Christine's health was important with regard to the desired heir, and Charles therefore not only noted the progress of her pregnancies but made her wellbeing one of the major issues in his diaries.³⁸

During Carnival, there were multiple occasions for celebrating. In February the court attended masquerades, for which even the imperial family dressed up (29 February 1724): "dressing up at wife's apartments, children cute, amusing, 7 ½ to feast, 8 ½ meal, 10 ½ again dancing, girl[s?] dancing well."³⁹ Like many Habsburgs, Charles was a passionate hunter. As a consequence, he kept separate hunting diaries after his return to Vienna that cover the period from 1712 to 1740 (10 volumes).⁴⁰ In fact, the court was able to hunt throughout the entire year, the trophies changing with the seasons. The hunting season started with fox tossing and snipe

³⁴ 14 June 1724: "afternoon resting, preparing for tomorrow" ("nachmit[tag] rasten, r[ic]hten morgen"); 30 March 1736: "1 at home; meal; little rest ... drinking, resting until 8 ¼" ("1 zu haus; essen; wenig rasten ... trinken, rasten bis 8 ¼").

³⁵ 31 January 1724: "afternoon Perlas, dispatches, nothing, lazy, nb court chancellor regarding Schönborn" ("nachmit[tag] Perl[as], dep[esc]h[en], nichts, faul, nb hofca[nzler] weg[en] Schonb[ohn]").

³⁶ "Pulver, doct[or] nit wol[le]n daz geh, nit wohl; umb 8 ½ auf Hernals fahren." Like several other churches, the church in Hernals featured the reconstructed Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

³⁷ 21 May 1720: "Althann sick, head, podagra, Garelli doesn't like, stay at home, me ill-humoured" ("Alt[hann] ubl, kopf, pod[agra], Garell[i], nit gefal[le]n, haus bleiben, ich ubl humor"). In addition, this example illustrates that Charles' feelings were affected by the illnesses of his friend.

³⁸ See: Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 131–140. Charles recorded the number of weeks of each pregnancy in his diaries, always on the same weekday (for example on Saturday in 1724). 17 March / 7 April 1720: "otherwise at home, wife talking whether pregnant, belly big, moving, time [= menses] awaiting" ("sonst haus weib anstand ob schwanger, bauch gros, rihren, zeit, art[lich] erwahrten"); 31 July 1723: "wife, Garelli, nb absence period [menses] 8 days, hoping pregnant, counting 3 weeks, everybody happy" ("weib, Gar[ell]i, nb bleibt 8 tag zeit aus, hof schwanger, rait 3 wochen, all froh"). For further information, see: Seitschek, "Körper."

³⁹ "Anlegen bey weib, kind, sie herzig, lustig, 7 ½ zu fest, 8 ½ essen, 10 ½ widter tanz, mad[le]n brav bey tanz." 24 February 1721: "afterwards court ladies, empress dressing up, at aya, me a[pp]lying ?] pagan, nb nice, at 12 bed" ("na[c]h dames, k[ai]s[er]in verklad[en], bey aya, ich ap[lizieren ?] heid, nb hibs[ch], umb 12 bett"). See: Michels, *Karnevalsoper*, on the operas.

⁴⁰ HHStA, Hausarchiv, *Sammelbände* 2. These hunting calendars were already studied by Baron Oskar von Mitis in the early twentieth century. See: Oskar Freiherr von Mitis, *Jagd und Schützen am Hofe Karls VI* (Vienna: Gerlach & Wiedling, 1912).

shooting before continuing with the traditional chasing of herons with falcons in Laxenburg, as described by Küchelbecker.⁴¹ In June or early July, deer hunting usually commenced in the forests around Vienna. Charles was often accompanied by his wife and even his daughters (14 August 1725: "after 6 off, with Empress at 9 at the hunt, arrival; meal; deer not showing, should have stayed inside").⁴² Elisabeth Christine was a skilled shooter who took part in the annual shooting contests at the Bellaria or Favorita residences.⁴³ In July there were blocked hunts, and the annual highlights usually took place in August: water hunts on the Danube.⁴⁴ September was small game season, and wild boar were hunted beginning in October (25 October 1725): "with Empress entire day blocked [boar] hunt in Lobau [floodplain area near Vienna]."⁴⁵

Finally, it is noteworthy that the Emperor's diaries regularly refer to attending mass in chapels, praying, attending processions, and going to confession and receiving communion thereafter (10 June 1722: "confessing, communion; 8 in city, St. Michael mass, procession").⁴⁶ These references increase towards the end of Charles's life, not only in terms of the number of occasions but in regard to their content and extent as well. A quite extraordinary entry commemorates his deceased daughter Maria Amalia (1724-1730), six years after her passing on 18 April 1736 and only few years before his own death: "preparing, devotions, grievous, nb Amalia child anniversary, commending to God, fiat voluntas, invoking, praying, mass."⁴⁷ A few days earlier, he had referred to his dead son, in an entry dated 13 April. It is important to state that although references to trusting in the will of God or commending deceased relatives and friends to his mercy are generally quite common in Charles's notes, his deceased children are mentioned only rarely. A remarkable example of Charles's trust in God's will is the mention of a possible threat to his own life (28 November 1724): "arriving letter, my life in danger, God's

⁴¹ Küchelbecker, *Nachrichten*, 254–255. According to Küchelbecker, the hunt went on from 6am to 10am and again from 3pm to 6pm.

⁴² "Nach 6 weg, mit k[ai]se[rin] 9 auf der klopf, burst, ankomen; essen; hirschen nit heraus wollen, besten drin bliben."

⁴³ The shooting competition from 24 to 27 July 1722 (the so-called "Hauptschießen," meaning main shooting), for example, was organized by the Emperor himself. The Empress, the Emperor's niece Maria Amalia, and his sisters participated in this shooting. Archduchess Maria Theresa was represented by her father and nobles (see *Wienerisches Diarium* 61, 1 August 1722).

⁴⁴ 8 August 1725: "to the hunt, Stockerau [city near Vienna], great shame, raining, 6 ½ off, 9 arriving, chasing on the water, thick clouds, not possible, preparing on land, me meanwhile eating, only done at 3, hunting, 6.40 finished, depart there, arrive here at 9 ¼" ("ins jagen, Stokraw, gahr schand, regen, 6 ½ wek, 9 an komen, auf wasser jagen, wol[ken] stark, nit kon[en], auf land ri[c]hten, ich derweil essen, erst umb 3 fehrtig, jagen, 6 40 aus, weg hie, 9 ¼ an"). In this case, the hunt on the river could not take place due to weather conditions. Indeed, several hunting trips had to be cancelled because of rain or fog. Charles often referred to this fact in his diaries with displeasure ("schand," meaning shame).

⁴⁵ "Mit k[ai]s[er]in ganzen tag Lob[au] haz gespert." 12 November 1725: "8 off boar hunting, Dornbach [today in Vienna's 17th district], empress, Tereserl [Maria Theresa] attended too, 9 ¼ there, 3 ½ off" ("8 wek ins sau jagen, Dornbach, k[ai]s[er]in, auch Ter[e]serl mit, 9 ¼ hin, 3 ½ wek"). For more information about hunts in the diaries, see: Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 314–319.

⁴⁶ "Bei[c]ht, com[munion], 8 in statt, Mich[ael]er ambt, pro[zession]."

⁴⁷ "Ri[c]hten, and[acht], ernst, nb Amal[ia] kindt jahr, Gott befehl[en], fiat volu[ntas], anrufen, betten, messen."

will.”⁴⁸ He regularly asks for God’s help in the context of beginning or ending journeys (24 September 1728: “before 8 arrived in Graz; thank God my hard journey over, may he finally give his blessing”),⁴⁹ concerning his succession (8 April 1736: “confession, communion, earnest, end of fasting because of Easter, soul, applying succession, war everything in [code] because of [code], assistance [?], nb serious”),⁵⁰ or regarding the deaths of relatives or his trusted friend Althann (16 March 1722: “God have mercy on his soul”). He also explicitly mentions praying for his deceased confidant on the anniversary of the latter’s death on 16 March 1732 (“friend † anniversary, today 10 years, sad, never forgetting, offering to God”)⁵¹ and describes his mother’s death as a good death after she had received all the sacraments.⁵² Several times, Charles thanks God for curing a family member; once such example occurs in the context of an illness of Elisabeth Christine (1 January 1728: “thank God no fever, me with wife most of the time at the moment”).⁵³ These examples illustrate the Emperor’s religious attitude and his trust in the will of God, portraying him as a pious monarch and a caring son, husband, and father.

The Imperial Family

References to Charles’s immediate relatives and events like the deaths of family members or close friends provide us with an insight into his feelings.⁵⁴ Elisabeth Christine of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel (1691-1750) married Archduke Charles in April 1708; even diplomats described her as beautiful.⁵⁵ With the wedding held in Vienna while Charles himself was already residing in Barcelona, his older brother Joseph stood in for him for the purpose of the ceremony. The

⁴⁸ “Komen brif, mein leben gefahr, was Gott will.”

⁴⁹ “Vor 8 da Graz ankomen; Gott lob me[in] schwer rais endt[lich] geb sei[n] segen.”

⁵⁰ “Beicht, com[munion], ernst, schluss fasten ostern, sel, apli[zieren] succ[ession], krig alles in [Ziffer] wegen [Ziffer], bey standt, nb ernst.” Another interesting reference is the entry on the birth of his youngest daughter (5 April 1724): “thanks to God, fiat voluntas Dei, a boy will succeed by his mercy, in everything his will” (“Gott sey dank, fiat voluntas Dei, wird dur[c]h sein gnadt bub folgen, in al[lem] sein will[en]”).

⁵¹ “Fr[eu]nd † jahrtag, heunt 10 jahr, betrü[bt], nie vergessen, Gott opfern”; 16 March 1728: “friend † anniversary, praying, never forgetting, eternally, sad, commending to God” (“fr[eu]nd † jahrtag, betten, ni vergessen, ewig, betrü[bt], Gott befo[h]len”). These references illustrate the close relationship between the Emperor and Count Althann (see below).

⁵² 1 January 1720: “until finally God took her on the 19th at 5 in the afternoon, first day lost ability to speak, not regained, but conscious, giving signs, receiving all sacraments, Christian death” (“bis endlich den 19ten sie Gott * zu sich umb 5 nachmit[tag] genomen, ersten tag sprach verlohren, nit mehr bekommen, doch bey sich, zeichen geben, all sacr[amente] empfang[en], christlich storben”).

⁵³ “Gott lob k[ein] fiber, ich jzt noch meist alweil weib.”

⁵⁴ On the history of emotion, see: Wolfgang Behringer and Volker Leppin, “Gefühl,” in *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit*, ed. Friedrich Jaeger (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler’sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 2006), 4: col. 247–254; Rob Boddice, *The History of Emotions* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018); Rob Boddice, *Die Geschichte der Gefühle von der Antike bis heute* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2020); Susan J. Matt and Peter N. Stearns, ed. *Doing Emotions History: History of Emotions* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2014).

⁵⁵ Alphons Lhotsky, “Kaiser Karl VI. und sein Hof im Jahre 1712,” *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 66 (1958): 62–63. See: Küchelbecker, Nachrichten, 149–150; Lady Mary Montagu, *Briefe aus dem Orient*, ed. Irma Bühler (Frankfurt: Steingrüben, 1962), 37–39 (14 September 1716), 65 (1 December 1716); Eduard Vehse, *Geschichte des österreichischen Hofes und Adels und der österreichischen Diplomatie* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1851), 2.6: 205–206, 2.7: 31–33.

future Queen of Spain had previously converted to Catholicism in Bamberg on 1 May 1707. She reached the Catalonian coast in July 1708 and finally arrived in Barcelona on 1 August. Charles’s diaries show that he was fond of his wife. In July 1708 he rode to Mataro, where Elisabeth Christine’s ship had dropped anchor (28 July 1708): “else riding to Mataro, queen so beautiful, very content.”⁵⁶ On 1 August, the royal couple celebrated the queen’s arrival in Barcelona: “Althann abiding, dear, afterwards entry, Te Deum, ratifying marriage, queen arriving, public meal in hall, queen dear, beautiful, good.”⁵⁷ Charles had hopes for an early pregnancy (6 August 1708: “wife ill, vomiting, talking, hope pregnant, talking Garelli”), but their first child and only son would eventually be born as late as 1716 in Vienna.⁵⁸ The young king mentions his wife frequently in these early years; their relationship appears to have been quite close. Nevertheless, Charles’s friend Althann likewise appears regularly in the notes, as will be explored in further detail. Following the death of his older brother Joseph, Charles left Spain for the Empire and Vienna while his wife remained in Barcelona for a time, governing in her husband’s stead. In 1713 the couple reunited in Vienna, long awaited by the advisors of the last male Habsburg. An heir for the realm had still not been born, with Joseph having left only two daughters. As a result, the future line of succession among the members of the Habsburg family was determined in the Pragmatic Sanction in April 1713—and it comes as no surprise that Charles regularly mentioned his hopes for a son in his daily notes.⁵⁹

What role did Elisabeth Christine play in Vienna? Charles mentions his wife often in his diaries, and she seems to have gained more influence as a confidant, especially after Count Althann’s death: the number of references to her increases significantly after 1722. In 1723/1724, Elisabeth Christine was pregnant, and in 1725 she appears frequently in notes due to illness—but the overall increase in mentions after Althann’s death nevertheless cannot be explained by the Emperor’s concern for his wife’s health and pregnancy alone. Indeed, François-Louis de Pesmes de Saint-Saphorin reported that Count Althann advised the Emperor to exclude his wife from political affairs.⁶⁰ In 1725, Charles spoke with Elisabeth Christine about the pact

⁵⁶ “So[n]st rit auf Mataro, königin so schon, gar content.”

⁵⁷ “Alt[hann] beständig, lieb, nach einrith, Te Deum, ratif[izieren] heyrath, königin komen, ofendlich saal essen, k[öni]gin lib, schon, gut.”

⁵⁸ “Weib krank, schpeiben, hof schwanger reden, Garelli reden.”

⁵⁹ Charles Ingraio, “Empress Wilhelmine Amalia and the Pragmatic Sanction,” *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 34 (1981): 333–341; Stefan Seitschek, “Die Anerkennung der Pragmatischen Sanktion in den Tagebüchern Karls VI.,” *Häuser und Allianzen* 30 (2015): 77–96.

⁶⁰ Theo Gehling, *Ein europäischer Diplomat am Kaiserhof zu Wien: François Louis de Pesme, Seigneur de Saint-Saphorin, als englischer Resident am Wiener Hof 1718-1727* (Bonn: Röhrscheid, 1964), 50; Charles W. Ingraio and Andrew L. Thomas, “Piety and Power: The Empress-Consort of the High Baroque,” in *Queenship in Europe, 1660–1815: The Role of the Consort*, ed. Clarissa Campbell Orr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 107–130, 123; Gerlinde Körper, “Studien zur Biographie Elisabeth Christines von Braunschweig-Lüneburg-Wolfenbüttel” (PhD thesis, University of Vienna, 1975), 355–371. The entry on 10 February 1715 seems to confirm this observation: “wife [alternative reading: because] nothing, wants to intervene, careful; Althann dear, from the heart, talking about everything, friend” (“weib [alternative reading: weil] ni[c]hts, will einmischen, acht; Alt[hann] lib, herzen, all sagen, frei[n]d”). This note at least illustrates the influence of Althann compared to the Empress.

with Spain. One issue in the treaties were the future marriages of the imperial daughters with the Spanish heirs.⁶¹ Owing to her affiliation with the ruling house of Hanover in England, the Empress had established good contacts with their diplomat in Vienna, Saint-Saphorin. During the diplomatic difficulties with England in the late 1720s, Elisabeth Christine's role was more complicated.⁶² After the political tension ended, Court Chancellor Sinzendorf suggested that she should correspond with the English queen with reference to her family relations.⁶³ In any case, it seems that Elisabeth Christine was able to influence decisions at court, especially during the final decade of Charles's rule. After the death of Prince Eugene, for example, the diaries suggest that she tried to intervene with regard to his succession.⁶⁴ Charles also mentions his children repeatedly in his diaries, especially the younger ones after their births. He generally makes reference to their health and that of his wife, providing further evidence of his role as a caring father. Especially following the birth of their first child, Leopold, Charles regularly mentions visiting the boy. His feelings are illustrated above all in the last days of his firstborn son. On the day of Leopold's death, 4 November 1716, he writes

meal; wife, bed, caution because of pregnancy; end, my first child Leopold * angel, God has taken home at [-]65 in the afternoon, very sad, fiat voluntas Dei; nothing. Born April 13, 6 months and 22 days old, angel ** above us, praying but sad; nothing. From this day on until the end of the year I have forgotten everything.⁶⁶

Maria Theresa was born on 13 May 1717, only half a year after Leopold's passing:

⁶¹ 1 November 1725: "talking with the empress about Spain as well, much" ("auch weg[en] Sp[anien] k[ais]s[er]in reden, vill").

⁶² Gehling, *Diplomat*, 30, 45, 87, 211; Körper, "Studien," 358; Michael Pözl, "Kaiserin-Witwen in Konkurrenz zur regierenden Kaiserin am Wiener Hof 1637-1750: Probleme der Forschung," *Wiener Geschichtsblätter* 67 (2012): 187.

⁶³ Charlotte Backerra, *Wien und London, 1727-1735. Internationale Beziehungen im frühen 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2018), 305–307.

⁶⁴ Charles mentions the name of Lothar Josef Count Königsegg-Rothenfels (1673-1751), who succeeded Prince Eugene as Minister of War on July 2, several times during April 1736. On 24 April, he writes: "wife because of war counselor Königsegg, nb well set" ("weib wegen krigsrath Königs[egg], nb r[e]cht einrichten"). Elisabeth Christine was not fond of Königsegg: Élisabeth Badinter, *Maria Theresia: Die Macht der Frau* Munich: btb Verlag, 2018, 33–34. For general information, see: Backerra, *Wien*, 106–109; Ingrao and Thomas, "Piety," 123; Körper, "Studien," 361–366. On the role of the empresses at court, see: Ingrao and Thomas, "Piety"; Nur die Frau des Kaisers? *Kaiserinnen in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Bettina Braun, Katrin Keller, and Matthias Schnettger (Vienna: Böhlau, 2016).

⁶⁵ A blank space was left between these words, possibly for later addition of the exact time of death.

⁶⁶ "Essen; weib, bett, acht wegen schwa[n]ger; end, mein erstes kindt Leopold [*] engl, hat Gott heim [-] nachmittag zu sich nomen, ich alls betr[ü]bt, fiat voluntas Dei; nichts. Ist gebohr[en] den 13ten April, alt worden 6 monath undt 22 tag, ein e[n]gl [*] der uber uns, bett, aber, b[e]tr[ü]bt, n[ic]hts. V[on] diesen tag bis zu endt des jahrs hab ich alls vergessen." Charles was very unhappy after the death of his son, and still remembered him in 1736 on the day of his birth (13 April): "praying, nb son, Deo offerre fiat voluntas" ("betten, nb sohn, Deo offerre fiat voluntas"). This entry reflects Charles's hopes for future heirs only months after the marriage of his daughter Maria Theresa.

at half past 4 message Empress unwell, I arrive at Vienna, at 6 Empress bad, everything fortunate, at 7 and 20 minutes a daughter Maria Teresia Walburgis Christina born, Empress, child well, me a meal in public, great joy because of dead son, thanks to God, gala, afternoon baptism.⁶⁷

Such examples highlight the deep concerns felt by the Emperor about his family members. Charles's oldest daughter is regularly mentioned in the context of hunting trips, and several entries also refer to her vocal artistry (18 May 1724: "afternoon to children, theatre, most of the time upstairs ... at 4 opera, second time even better, approved, Teresl singing well, sorrow, happiness"⁶⁸). On multiple occasions Charles noted his daughter feeding the poor on the evening before her birthday,⁶⁹ and also made reference to Saint Nicholas' day and present giving (6 December 1725): "children Niclas [gifts], nice, amusing."⁷⁰

Prince Francis Stephen of Lorraine arrived at the Habsburg court in 1723, coming in place of his older brother Leopold Clemens, who had died on 4 June. Receiving the message about the death of the young prince, Charles expressed not only his sadness but possibly also his determination to proceed with the plans for a marriage between the Habsburg and Lorraine houses.⁷¹ During his coronation journey to Bohemia, Charles met Francis Stephen for the first time in Horzowitz near Prague (10 August 1723): "Prince Lorraine, handsome, well grown, speaking German properly, writing wife."⁷² The Emperor thereafter mentions the young prince, who moved to Vienna in December 1723, in his diaries several times.⁷³ Francis Stephen was to complete his education by getting to know the Viennese court, but his possible future role as the Emperor's son-in-law was likewise internationally recognized by this time. In the court residence he was given the rooms of the Emperor's mother Eleonora Magdalena, who had died in 1720. He accompanied Charles on hunts and practiced at the Viennese riding schools several times,

⁶⁷ "Umb halb 5 nach[richt] k[ai]s[er]in, ubel, ich auf Wi[en] ankom[men], 6 k[ai]s[er]in ubl, alles gluklich umb 7 und 20 minut ein tochter Maria Teresia Walpurgis Christina auf welt, k[ai]s[er]in, kindt wohl, ich ofend[lich] essen, gross freudt wegen todt sohn, ich Gott dankt, gall[a], nach[mittag] taut."

⁶⁸ "Nachmit[tag] zu kindt, teat[er], meist oben ... 4 opera [Euristeo], 2t mahl noch besser, aprob[iert], Ter[e]s[er] sing wohl, layd, fr[eu]d." Already on 16 May, if the note is interpreted correctly, he mentioned his younger daughter: "afternoon all the time upstairs, 4 ¼ opera, fine, mostly good, all approved, Mariandl dancing" ("nachmit[tag] allweil ob[en], 4 ¼ opera, wohl, haubt gut, all aprovert, Mara[n]d[l] danzt").

⁶⁹ 12 May 1725: "Theresl feeding the poor, tomorrow 8 years old" ("Teresel spais[ung], morgen 8 jahr alt").

⁷⁰ "Kind nicl[aseinlegung], wohl, lustig."

⁷¹ Charles received this message on 14 June 1723: "afterwards sad message delivered, Duke of Lorraine eldest son died of pox, me very sad, still considering further children" ("na[c]her ungluk[lich] nahr[ic]ht komen, herz[og] Lothri[ngen] altist sohn blatrn storben, ich s[e]hr laidt, nb kinder kinf[t]ig weith[er] betreibt").

⁷² "Pr[inz] Lothr[ingen], funden hibsch, wohl gewachsen, manirli[c]h redt teusch, weib schriben."

⁷³ 12 August 1723: "Prince Lorraine here, cute, 14 years old" ("p[rinz] Lo[thringen] da, herzig, 14 jahr alt"); 13 August: "Prince along, amusing, shot well" ("pr[inz] mit, lustig, brav schossen"); 22 December: "well raised" ("[Prince of Lorraine] erzogen wohl"); 26 December: "Prince Lorraine nice, good, considering for future" ("pr[inz] Lo[thringen] fein, wohl, sehen wie kunftig"); 5 January 1724: "Prince Lorraine, good behaviour" ("pr[inz] Lot[hringen], wohl fuhr[t] sich auf").

which is mentioned in the diaries or even the “Wienerischen Diarium.”⁷⁴ Especially enlightening are the entries referring to Francis Stephen’s refusal to renounce his claim to Lorraine in favour of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany in 1736. Charles discussed this matter several times, not only with the prince himself but with his trusted advisors Count Starhemberg (1663-1745) and Johann Christoph of Bartenstein (1690-1767), with his wife, and with Maria Theresa. By forfeiting Lorraine, Francis Stephen stood to lose his status as sovereign as long as the Grand Duke of Tuscany was alive. The conflict is illustrated in an entry on 2 March 1736:

afternoon note Partenstein about Duke, wants to be sovereign, do nothing, nb court chancellor carefully, nb his men considering peace bad, ending, afterwards Empress, telling Duke mad, focus on sovereign otherwise nothing, dead, Duke nb coming by personally, [Duke] talking entirely mad, me being serious, nice, talking about what to do, one house, damaging himself, progress of peace, concluding etc., I strong, remaining so, afterwards Partenstein arriving, long, his answer about talk, tomorrow leaving, otherwise bad, talking.⁷⁵

In the end, Francis Stephen had to renounce the claim to his homeland Lorraine in order to ensure peace in Europe after the War of the Polish Succession—and of course, to safeguard his future role as husband to the heir of the Habsburg monarchy, Maria Theresa. Fortunately for the Viennese court, Gian Gastone de’ Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, died in July 1737.⁷⁶

In general, Charles’s diaries illustrate the good relations within the imperial family. Another example is Charles’s departure for his other Inner Austrian territories from Graz in 1728, leaving his family behind (16 August 1728): “everybody at wife[’s rooms], crying, sad, child, then in God’s name leaving at 5, journey, alone, wife remaining at Graz, sad, me comforting child, in God’s name, first towards Wildon, arriving at 8 ½, me not well, chest, stomach, head; meal; afterwards writing to wife, taking powder, yes, sleeping.”⁷⁷

A further significant role at the Viennese court was played by dowager Empress Amalia

⁷⁴ On Francis Stephen of Lorraine, see Renate Zedinger, *Franz Stephan von Lothringen (1708-1765): Monarch, Manager, Mäzen* (Vienna: Böhlau, 2008). On mentions of him in the diaries, see: Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 194–203.

⁷⁵ “Na[c]hmit[tag] zettl Parten[stein] weg[en] herz[og], sovrain will, nichts thun, nb hofc[anzler] acht drin, nb sein leut ubel sehen fridt, endten, na[c]her k[ai]s[er]in eben diser sagt h[e]rz[og] irr, fest souv[erän] sonst nichts, tot her[zog], nb selbst zu mir komen, r[e]dt ganz irr, ich ernst, lib, r[e]dt, vorstell was thu[n], ein haus, er sich selbst schadten, standt fr[ie]dten, aus machen, etc., ich stark, so bliben, na[c]her Parten[stein] komen, lang, dessen ant[wort] weg[en] redt, morgen fortgehen, sonst ubel, r[e]dten.” See below on Bartenstein’s role during the last decade of Charles’s rule.

⁷⁶ France wanted to prevent the imperial son-in-law ruling at its borders, and the French King Louis XV consequently claimed Lorraine for his father-in-law Stanislaus Leszczyński (1677-1766), who renounced his claim to the Polish crown. After his death, the duchy was to become part of France. See: Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 201–203; Zedinger, *Franz Stephan*, 105, 111–128.

⁷⁷ “All bey weib, weint, bet[rübt], kindt, sey endlich Gottes namen, 5 wek, rais, al[lein], weib Graz lassen, betrübt, ich kindter trosten, in Gottes namen, erst na[c]ht Wildan 8 ½ ankomen, ich gahr nit wohl, brust, magen, kopf; essen; na[c]her weib schreiben, pulver nemen, ja, schlafen.”

Wilhelmine (1673-1742). Her daughters with the late Emperor Joseph I remained in Vienna until their marriages to German princes in 1719 (Saxony) and 1722 (Bavaria), and the birth rights of these two women were an important reason for the issue of the Pragmatic Sanction in 1713. It is therefore no coincidence that Amalia Wilhelmine appears several times in the diaries around this time.⁷⁸ Charles mentions her visiting the imperial couple at their summer residences, or himself paying visits to Amalia in Vienna while staying in Laxenburg or the Favorita. The Emperor returned to Vienna several times during the hunting seasons to attend church festivities in the liturgical year, such as Corpus Christi processions in the city, sometimes visiting the dowager Empress. Amalia Wilhelmine also took part in other family occasions such as birthdays or name days. On 5 February 1732, Charles mentions her presence at a theatre play (Kammerfest): "Children comedy, again Empress Amalia present, over before 5, everyone well."⁷⁹ On the other hand, the imperial couple congratulated the dowager Empress, for example on the births of her grandsons. In 1721 the message of a newborn was delivered from Saxony. Charles noted on 27 October: "message from Saxony, prince born, small gala, graced, dispatches; congratulating Amalia; conference; Amalia, meal."⁸⁰ According to a later entry, it seems he wrote a congratulatory letter to Saxony as well.⁸¹ The Emperor also referred to his sister-in-law during his later years regarding the ambitions of her husband's daughters. Saxony and Bavaria did not recognize the Pragmatic Sanction as imperial law in 1732 despite having officially accepted the renunciations of their brides a decade earlier. Charles's note written on 20 February 1736 may pertain to these difficulties concerning his succession: "all afternoon working, Partenstein talking long about Duke [of Lorraine], reasoning, capable, Empress Amalia careful, Bavarian intrigue."⁸² These few references illustrate that Amalia Wilhelmine still played a role at the imperial court and was well integrated within the imperial family.⁸³

His Advisors

⁷⁸ See: Seitschek, "Anerkennung."

⁷⁹ "Kind comedi, widter k[ai]s[er]in Amal[ia] dabey, vor 5 aus, wohl alle."

⁸⁰ "Na[c]hri[c]ht Sax[en] pr[inz] gebohrn, kl[eine] gall[a] geschmuk; dep[es]ch[en]; Amal[ia] glu[c]k wunsch[en]; rath; Amal[ia], essen." Charles appeared to be short-tempered in 1728 (4 September 1728: "Bavaria, another son, in time God's will ... afternoon, official business; writing to wife, dispatching, also Garelli, answering Bavaria", "Bayr[n], widter ein sohn, wan Gott will ... nahmit[tag], neg[otia]; schriben an weib, abfehrtigen, auch Garel[li]; Bayrn antworten"). In fact, he hoped for a future heir for his house.

⁸¹ 5 November 1721: "writing dispatches to Saxony" ("schr[i]ben Saxen dep[es]ch[en]").

⁸² "Ganz nachmit[tag] arbeithen, Part[en]stein redten lang wie herz[og] raison[ieren], capace, k[ai]s[er]in Amal[ia] acht, Bayern intrigue." Amalia met her Saxon and Bavarian sons-in-law in 1737 in (Neuhaus) and Melk (1739) to discuss these matters. See: Michael Pözl, "Die Kaiserinnen Amalia Wilhelmina (1673-1742) und Elisabeth Christine (1691-1750): Handlungsspielräume im Spannungsfeld dynastischer und persönlicher Interessen," in *Nur die Frau des Kaisers? Kaiserinnen in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Bettina Braun, Katrin Keller, and Matthias Schnettger (Vienna: Böhlau, 2016), 175–192; Michael Pözl, "Am Anfang und am Ende. Die Mutter und die Schwägerin Karls VI.," in *Herrschaft und Repräsentation in der Habsburgermonarchie (1700-1740). Die kaiserliche Familie, die habsburgischen Länder und das Reich*, ed. Stefan Seitschek, and Sandra Hertel (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 115–137.

⁸³ On Amalia's role in Vienna, see: Ingrao and Thomas, "Piety"; Pözl, "Die Kaiserinnen"; Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 142–161.

Johann Michael Count Althann had already accompanied Charles on his journey to Spain, and married Maria Anna Pignatelli (1689-1755) in Barcelona. Some scholars believe there was a relationship between the young Charles and Maria Anna, at least before the arrival of Charles’s bride Elisabeth in 1708. He mentions a girl (“madl”) several times in his notes during these years (already in his first entries in 1707)—and while this sometimes appears to be in reference to his future wife, to whom he wrote several letters, it more often seems to refer to another girl, possibly Maria Anna. How close the relationship between Charles, Count Althann, and Maria Anna was is best illustrated by the entry on the wedding of the latter on 12 February 1709: “Althann’s marriage with Marian, both very happy, me having much fun, eternal friend until death, queen showing good, Mari[an] favo[rite?], nice, hoping it lasts, dancing until 6 o’clock in the morning.”⁸⁴ Back in Vienna, the married couple regularly met with the Emperor, evidenced by the mention of “both Althann” in his notes. After the count’s death, Charles took care of the children and helped Maria Anna, who sometimes visited him according to the diaries (17 March 1722: “sad, praying for him [Althann], reading masses, assuring the wife I will never abandon them; staying in apartments, not well”⁸⁵). He had also assumed the role of godfather and became the custodian of Althann’s children.⁸⁶ Althann was not only one of Charles’s closest confidants but served as Grand Stabmaster (Oberstallmeister) from 1716. As a consequence, he regularly accompanied Charles on his hunts; in 1719, he noted eating with Count Althann during such a trip.⁸⁷ The entries in the diaries demonstrate that the Emperor and Althann sometimes talked about politics. More frequently, however, the Grand Stabmaster simply accompanied Charles on his countless hunting trips, and there is mention of “playing” (cards or billiards) in the evening in summer and winter (4 February 1722: “Althann talking much, playing, dear”).⁸⁸ Only after the death of his friend in March 1722 did Charles explicitly mention that he was not playing due to his sadness (29 April 1722: “not playing, Althann [dead], sad”).⁸⁹ The two men’s connection was so close that even a homosexual relationship is occasionally hinted at. This strong bond is best illustrated in the entry on Althann’s death (16 March 1722):

⁸⁴ “Des Alt[hann] hochzeit mit Marian, bed sehr vergnugt, ich vill freid, ewig freind bis in todt, k[öni]gin zeigt gut, Mari favo[rite?], lieb, wunsch taurt, tanzt bis 6 uhr fruh.” On the “girl” and its impact in literature, see: Charlotte Backerra, “Intime Beziehungen Kaiser Karls VI. in Historiographie und Quellen,” in *Homosexualität am Hof: Praktiken und Diskurse vom Mittelalter bis ins 21. Jahrhundert*, ed. Norman Domeier and Christian Mühling (Frankfurt: Campus, 2020). On Althann’s role at court, see: Andreas Pečar, “Favorit ohne Geschäftsbereich: Johann Michael Graf von Althann (1679-1722) am Kaiserhof Karls VI.,” in *Der zweite Mann im Staat: Oberste Amtsträger und Favoriten im Umkreis der Reichsfürsten in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Michael Kaiser (Berlin: Duncker and Humblot, 2003), 331–344.

⁸⁵ “Betruht, vor ih[n] bett, messen lesen, weib versichern ich sie all nie verlassen werdt; in zimer bliben, nit wohl.” On the day after Althann’s death, “weib” refers not to the Empress but to Althann’s widow.

⁸⁶ Franz Pichorner, “Die ‘spahnische’ Althann: Maria Anna Josepha Gräfin Althann, geb. Marchesa Pignatelli (1689-1755). Ihre politische und gesellschaftliche Rolle während der Regierung Karls VI. und Maria Theresias” (Dipl. thesis, University of Vienna, 1985) 43–44; Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 238.

⁸⁷ 19 June 1719: “5 up; chasing with falcons; mass; eating with Althann; after chase leaving Laxenburg, staying in Favorita” (“5 auf; baiz; messen; mit Alt[hann] essen; nach baiz endt, weg v[on] Lax[enburg], in Favorit[a] wohnen”).

⁸⁸ “Alt[hann] vill r[e]dt, spilen, lib.”

⁸⁹ “Nit spil[en], Alt[hann] †, betruht.”

during the last mass (oh highest God) very quickly at 8 o'clock, my sole heart, my solace, my most faithful servant, my friend of the heart, who loved me most dearly like I did him for 19 years, had a true friendship, our hearts were united and we hid nothing from each other, never disagreed in those 19 years, my chamberlain, afterwards Grand Stablemaster, my everything, my dearest Michl Johann Count Althan died, in half a quarter hour our hearts were divided, he is always in my heart, dear friend, whom I always have in my heart, his children and wife, which I owe him, as long as I live I will care for, to God I moan about my suffering, he alone can ease my pain, everything is lost for me; had three sons: Michl Hans, April 4, 12 years old; Carl, April 14, 8 years old, Tonerl, July 19, six years old, Teresl, 11 years old in October, Maria[n]dl seven years old, never will abandon them; may God bless his soul and give me consolation, amen.⁹⁰

Even after his death, Althann's name appears frequently in the diaries. Although some comments seem to imply an intimate relationship, references such as “lieb” (kind, dear) or “bis in tod” (until death) can also be interpreted as simply documenting a very close and trusting friendship not uncommon for the time. Above all, the relationship between Charles and Count Althann may have changed over the years.

Considering this aspect, the early diaries—especially those from the time of the arrival of Charles's wife in Barcelona—are more specific. Althann appears to have been genuinely afraid of losing the King's trust, whereas the latter regularly wrote in his diaries that he would continue to be the count's friend (25 July 1708: “Althann forever dear, enduring until death, writing to the queen⁹¹ twice each day, Althann dear”).⁹² This trust was confirmed by sending Althann to meet his wife upon her arrival at Mataro, who duly informed his lord about Elisabeth Christine's beauty (25 July): “Althann arriving, found the queen good, beautiful.” Charles was also accompanied by his friend on a journey through Catalonia, during which he wrote on 9 January 1710: “Althann sleeping with me, well, in one bed, always dear.”⁹³ On 30 January, the day before

⁹⁰ “Unter der letzten messen ganz ga[c]h [oh hohster Gott] umb 8 mein einzigs herz, mein trost, me[in] treyster diener, me[in] herzen freundt, der mich wie ich ihn 19 jahr innigh[c]h gelibt, ein wahr freundschaftt gehabt, unser ein herz wahren undt in nichts aneinander nichts verborgen gehabt, in disen 19 jahren nie uneinig gewesen, mei[n] camerher, na[c]her obrist stallme[i]ster, mein alles, mein l[i]bster Michl Johan grav Althan gestorben, in einer halben 4tl stund seind unser herzen zertrennt worden, der ewig in mei[n] herz, lib fr[eun]d, d[en] ewig in [herzen], sei[n] kindtern undt fraw was ich ih[m] schuldig, so lang ich leb erkandlich sein werdte, Gott sey mei[n] laydt klagt, de[n] ich al[lein] trost, alles vor mi[c]h verlohren; hat 3 sohn Michl Hans de[n] 4 Apr[il], alt 12 iar, Carl de[n] 14 Ap[ri]l, alt 8 jahr, Tonerl de[n] 19 July, alt 6 jahr, Teresl, alt 11 jahr in 8ber, Mariadl alt 7 jahr, niemal verlassen, Gott sey seiner seel gnadig undt trost mich, amen.”

⁹¹ Deleted: “madl” (“girl”).

⁹² “Alt[hann] komen, k[öni]gin wohl schen funden audienzen; Alt[hann] ewig lieb, bestand[ig] bis in todt, all tag 2 mahl k[öni]g[in] schriben; Alt[hann] lib.”

⁹³ “Alt[hann] bey mir schlaff, gut ga[n]z haubt, in ein bett, ewig lieb.” Cf. 8 January 1710: “Althann sleeping with, well, dear, all heart” (“Alt[hann] bey schl[af], gut, lib, all herz”); 12 January 1710: “Althann sleeping with me, me one bed, quite good, mostly forever dear, friend” (“Alt[hann] schlaff mit mir, ich ein bett, ga[n]z gut, haubt ewig

their return to Barcelona, Charles noted: “not talking with Althann, a little angry, he too, otherwise he always dear in my heart, taking leave, last time sleeping together.”⁹⁴ Supposing that these handwritten notes are interpreted correctly, they seem to provide clear evidence of a very close relationship between the Archduke and his advisor Althann.⁹⁵ Even in later years, we find similar notes when Charles was separated from his wife Elisabeth Christine; for example during a visit to Mariazell in 1715, or his stay at Laxenburg after the birth of their first son in 1716. These entries may be explained likewise by the Habsburg practice of the ruling couple sharing a bedroom—in times of the empress’ absence, a chamberlain stayed near the ruler.⁹⁶

Several other advisors are mentioned in the diaries, such as Court Chancellor Philipp Ludwig Count Sinzendorf (1671-1744), who was responsible for matters of the Habsburg monarchy and gradually gained more influence in foreign policy. Together with Vilana Perlas Marquis de Rialp (1663-1741) he had a significant impact on peace negotiations with Spain in 1725, as illustrated by the frequent entries in the diaries around this time. Perlas was the Spanish secretary of state in Vienna and thus responsible for the administration of the former Spanish territories in Southern Italy, as well as the Austrian Netherlands, after 1713. According to the diaries, he regularly conferred with the Emperor and was consequently able to influence politics. After Althann’s death, he became the most influential representative of the Spanish group at the Viennese court, as is shown by several notes in the diaries. Only a few weeks after Althann’s passing, Charles wrote on 6 April 1722: “Perlas wants to close himself off, nb but need him, strong because of Sinzendorf, Trautson good.”⁹⁷

When talking about influential advisors at the baroque Viennese imperial court, one cannot omit the successful military commander, Prince Eugene (1663-1736). Eugene was not only president of the War Council from 1703 but presided over Charles’s central consultative

lieb, freundt”).

⁹⁴ “Mit Alt[hann] nicht r[e]dt, wenig bos, er so, sonst ih[m] ewig lieb v[on] herzen, url[aub] lezt schlaf beys[ammen].”

⁹⁵ On this relationship, see: Backerra, “Beziehungen”; Charlotte Backerra, “Disregarding Norms: Emperor Charles VI and His Intimate Relationships,” *Royal Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2019): 74–88; Seitschek, “Körper.” Backerra refers to my study of the diaries of Charles VI several times, including on the topic of Charles’s relationship to Althann raising the question of the discrepancy between a possible relationship and his role as a Catholic ruler. Backerra misunderstands this raised question (and subsequently translates the argument incorrectly) as indicating doubt concerning the possibility of such a relationship, which was never the intention. Indeed, the author refers briefly to homosexual relationships at other European courts to contextualize the situation in Vienna, but a profound analysis was not possible at the time of writing. In any case, Backerra attempts to answer the raised question in her article “Disregarding Norms.”

⁹⁶ Johan Caspar, Count Cobenzl, mentioned in his memories that he was staying in the Emperor’s chamber for the first time because of the Empress’ illness on 6 March 1725. Cobenzl was Grand Chamberlain (Oberstkämmerer) since 5 November 1724.

⁹⁷ “Perl[as] will sich zumachen, nb doch brau[c]h, sta[rk] w[e]g[en] Siz[endorf], Traut[son] gut.” The entry on 28 April seems to reflect this personnel change: “Althann †, missing everywhere; Perlas much because of Sicily” (“Alt[hann] †, abgeht uberall; Perl[as] vill weg[en] Sicil[ien]”). On Perlas, see Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 242–247. A Spanish biography is: Sebastia Sardiné i Torrentallé, Jo, Vilana-Perles: *El Diplomàtic Català que va Moure els Fils de la Guerra de Successió (1704-1734)* (Lleida 2013). On Sinzendorf (including more literature), see: Seitschek, *Tagebücher*, 265–267.

body, the Privy Council.⁹⁸ He is mentioned regularly in the diaries, though not as frequently as other counsellors like Althann or Perlas. Following his victories against the Ottomans, several affairs unsettled Eugene’s position at court, and his administration of the Austrian Netherlands gave cause for criticism for several years after 1716. Eugene never governed there personally, with his minister Marquis de Prié (1658-1726) deputising for him instead. Charles referred to the unfortunate situation in the Austrian Netherlands several times in his notes. On 27 August 1724, for example, he addressed the problems very frankly: “all morning much, Prince Eugene about Netherlands, handing me a memorandum, obtaining funds, seeing an end, change, keeping Prince but salvaging land, much.”⁹⁹ Finally, on 13 November 1724, he wrote: “Perlas, dispatches, official business, about Prince, Netherlands, he tomorrow, how, yes, nb afterwards Badany, much.”¹⁰⁰ This entry is significant because it illustrates that Charles already knew about the Prince’s resignation planned for the following day and was not taken by surprise as sometimes described. Eugene was criticized by his opponents regarding the possible influence of Countess Batthyány-Strattmann, with whom he enjoyed playing games in the evenings. The note shows that Batthyány had a say in the Prince’s affairs, and that she was even received by the Emperor the day before Eugene’s administration of the Austrian Netherlands ended.¹⁰¹ The next day, the prince renounced his governorship and was appointed vice vicar of the Italian territories with a generous remuneration as compensation.¹⁰² The tension between the Emperor and Eugene seems to have eased following Eugene’s resignation and the conviction of his critic Count Bonneval in early 1725.¹⁰³ On 15 January 1725, Charles noted: “Prince Eugene better this way, speaking freely much.”¹⁰⁴ Trust and respect for the Prince are expressed in the comparatively long entry on his death on 21 April 1736: Charles mentions Eugene’s great service for his

⁹⁸ On the Privy Council, see: Michael Hochedlinger, “Der Geheime Rat nach 1612 und seine Nachfolger,” in *Verwaltungsgeschichte der Habsburgermonarchie in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Michael Hochedlinger, Peter Mat’á, and Thomas Winkelbauer (Vienna: Böhlau, 2019), 434–437.

⁹⁹ “Ganz vormitag, vill, p[rinz] E[ugen] weg[en] Nid[erlande], mir punct eingeben, mitl machen, end sehen, ander[n], pr[inz] beyhalten, doch landt salviren, vill.”

¹⁰⁰ Countess Eleonore Batthyány-Strattmann (1672-1741); “Perl[as], dep[es]ch[en], neg[otia], weg[en] pr[inz], Nid[erlande], er morg[en], wie, ja, nb na[c]her Badany, vill.”

¹⁰¹ Countess Batthyány-Strattmann seems to have received money for advising Eugene to renounce his governorship. On her, see: Backerra, Wien, 46, 112–113; Max Braubach, *Prinz Eugen von Savoyen*, 5 vols. (Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, 1963-1965), 4: 202–204; Gehling, Diplomat, 102; Seitschek, Tagebücher, 432–433.

¹⁰² 5 December 1724: “Prince here about vicar Italy, otherwise much, talking open-heartedly, well, satisfied about Netherlands, Archduchess too” (“pr[inz] da weg[en] vic[ar] Ital[ien], sonst vill, ofen herz r[e]dt, wohl, zufr[ie]d weg[en] Nid[erlande], erz[herzogin] auch”). On the administration, see: Klaas van Gelder, *Regime Change at a Distance: Austria and the Southern Netherlands Following the War of the Spanish Succession (1716-1725)* (Leuven: Peeters, 2016).

¹⁰³ On Bonneval, see: Heinrich Benedikt, *Der Pascha-Graf Alexander von Bonneval (1675-1747)* (Graz: Böhlau, 1959); Max Braubach, *Geschichte und Abenteuer: Gestalten um den Prinzen Eugen* (Munich: Bruckmann, 1950), 274–353; Braubach, Eugen 4:184–215; Hermann E. Stockinger, “Die Apostasie des Pascha-Grafen Alexander von Bonneval (1675-1747) und europäische Stimmen zum ‘Fall’ Bonneval,” in *Wahrnehmung des Islam zwischen Reformation und Aufklärung*, ed. Dietrich Klein and Birte Platow (Munich: Fink, 2008), 109–137.

¹⁰⁴ “P[rinz] E[ugen] so besser, vill frey r[e]dt.”

dynasty, though he was simultaneously already thinking about improving the administration after the Prince’s death.¹⁰⁵ He also mentions praying for the Prince and his soul during his last months (e.g. 25 March), further proving of a respectful relationship between the Emperor and his general. In the last decade of Charles’s rule, his diaries show that Bartenstein became one of his most influential advisors. Bartenstein is mentioned regularly in the course of the disagreement between Charles and his son-in-law Francis Stephen concerning the latter’s renunciation of Lorraine in 1736 (see above).¹⁰⁶

Conclusions

Although Charles’s diaries consist “only” of brief notes and are difficult to decipher, the handwritten lines offer unique insights into the life of the Archduke and later Emperor, and thus into Habsburg rule and politics during the Baroque period in general. These notes were not written for the general public or even for a smaller group outside the family, and although their main intent seems to have been to portray the Emperor as a hard-working and pious ruler with a sense of duty, they also reveal numerous private secrets, such as Charles’s close relationship to his most trusted advisor, Count Althann. The diaries include not only recurring daily routines—waking up, masses, meals—but offer insights into Charles’s political and private life as well, including his meetings with advisors, reflecting their influence; decision-making processes; conversations with family members; and assessments of court members and European politicians. The daily notes include multiple dimensions of Charles’s reign: we encounter him as a caring father and husband. This private dimension is complemented by information regarding his personality, daily working routines, piety, and concerns about health issues. We have seen that we can learn much from the diaries about the Emperor himself: about his feelings and thoughts, and about various members of his family. Forming three decades of continuous notes, these entries offer insights into the life of the imperial family that letters could never provide.

¹⁰⁵ 21 April 1736: “half past 8 nb note Prince Eugene who had served my house since 83 on the battlefields, since 97 as commander, great services rendered, 703 appointed president of war council, serving me since 711 in all areas, found dead in his bed after long illness, nb may God have mercy on his soul, in his 73rd year; now considering how to adjust everything properly, establishing better system, nuncio audience, much, until 11 council; meal; afternoon negotiating, Partenstein, writing, working whole afternoon, court chancellor; praying for Prince Eugene too ... † of Savoy” (“umb halb 9 nb na[c]hricht pr[inz] Eugene, der sindter [seid] 83 in meines haus dienst in feldt sindter 97 in comando actionen, gross dienst gethon 703 krigspresident worden, mir sindter 711 in all dienst, ih[m] bett todt gefundten wordten nach langer krankheit, nb Gott sey der seel gnadig, in sein 73ten jahr; j[e]zt seh[en] alles r[e]cht einri[c]hten, besser ordnung; nunc[ius] aud[ienz], vill, bis 11 rath; essen; na[c]hmit[tag] neg[otia], Part[enstein], schreiben, arbeithen ganz na[c]hmit[tag] hofc[anzler]; auch weg[en] pr[inz] E[ugen] betten; [...]. † v[on] Savoy”).

¹⁰⁶ On Bartenstein, see: Alfred von Arneth, “Johann Christoph von Bartenstein und seine Zeit,” *Archiv für Österreichische Geschichte* 46 (1871): 1–214; Backerra, Wien, 19, 128–133; Max Braubach, “Johann Christoph Bartensteins Herkunft und Anfänge,” *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 61 (1953): 99–149; Joseph Hrazky, “Johann Christoph Bartenstein: Der Staatsmann und Erzieher,” *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 11 (1958), 221–251; Ines Peper, Thomas Wallnig, “Ex nihilo nihil fit: Johann Benedikt Gentilotti und Johann Christoph Bartenstein am Beginn ihrer Karrieren,” in *Adel im “langen” 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Gabriele Haug-Moritz, Hans P. Hye and Marlies Raffler (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2009), 167–185.

There is also a dynastic dimension with regard to the mention of Charles's children and his hopes for a future heir. Finally, the diaries include a political and diplomatic element. We can trace attempts to influence the emperor's decisions in various political and courtly contexts: the entries include indications of trust and mistrust within the family and in regard to the imperial advisors. In particular, Charles's notes illustrate the opportunities grasped by different people to exert influence at the imperial court. Peace negotiations with Spain exemplify political matters mentioned in the records. These references to the diplomatic issues of the time are extremely short, but they are also recurrent; consequentially it is possible to reconstruct the day-by-day decision-making process at court from the perspective of the decision-maker himself.

Taking all these aspects into account, a useable (digital) publication of Charles's diaries would seem valuable—and in fact necessary—to help further our knowledge of the imperial court during the first half of the eighteenth century.¹⁰⁷ For too long, Prince Eugene and his activities have been the focal point of historical interest rather than the Habsburg ruler (or perhaps better said, ruling couple) of the period. For a more advanced understanding of this period, it is necessary to focus not only on the court but on Emperor Charles VI himself and his intentions.¹⁰⁸ Only by doing so can we achieve a fuller comprehension of the reign and reforms of his daughter, Maria Theresa.

¹⁰⁷ The author is in the process of preparing a (digital) edition of several years of Charles's notes.

¹⁰⁸ Several works on the court of Charles VI have recently been published: Backerra, Wien; Éric Hassler, *La Cour de Vienne 1680-1740: Service de l'empereur et stratégies spatiales des élites nobiliaires dans la monarchie des Habsbourg* (Strasbourg: Presses universitaires de Strasbourg, 2013); Andreas Pečar, *Die Ökonomie der Ehre: Der höfische Adel am Kaiserhof Karls VI. (1711-1740)* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2003); and Kubiska-Scharl and Pölzl, *Karrieren*.