

A CONSTELLATION OF COURTS  
THE COURTS AND HOUSEHOLDS  
OF HABSBURG EUROPE, 1555-1665



# A Constellation of Courts

The Courts and Households of Habsburg Europe,  
1555-1665

Edited by  
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and José Eloy Hortal Muñoz

LEUVEN UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Minderbroedersstraat 4, B-3000 Leuven (Belgium)

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ISBN 978 90 5867 990 1  
e-ISBN 978 94 6166 132 6  
D / 2014 / 1869 / 47  
NUR: 685, 697

Cover illustration: Lucas I van Valckenborgh, “Frühlingslandschaft (Mai)”,  
(inv. Nr. GG 1065), Kunsthistorisches Museum Vienna



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# Courts and households of the Habsburg dynasty: history and historiography

*José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, Dries Raeymaekers and René Vermeir*

The cultural movements, political doctrines and ideologies that emerged in Europe starting in the thirteenth century shared particular features and structures because they arose from a common court culture, and the courts of European monarchs achieved unquestionable political pre-eminence amongst the different forces that both characterised and shaped the social configurations found in the *Ancien Régime*<sup>1</sup>. However, this culture was gradually eroded during the nineteenth century, when the rise of the nation-state increasingly called the court's political relevance into question. The bourgeois elites who gained power tried to legitimize this new political structure through the creation of anachronistic national histories, which posited that not only did the origins of individual nations lie in the remote past, but that they were more or less unchanged in the present. As a result, the image of the court became deformed in this ideologically motivated literature, turning into a grotesque caricature of itself: a setting for palace intrigues, sumptuous extravagance, immoral behaviour and the exercise of absolute power.

The historiography did not begin to reprise this interpretation of the court and its role in history until a number of researchers working both inside and outside Europe began studying aspects of the early modern era through the lens of the court, rather than the nation-state. First came *The Court Society*, the pioneering study of Norbert Elias, published in 1969<sup>2</sup>. Then, in 1977, Arthur G. Dickens edited an ambitious volume whose novelty consisted in making a thorough comparative study in order to define the phenomenon of the court in space and time. The courts analysed were chosen “not simply because these courts typified

<sup>1</sup> Regarding the concept of the court as a political organisation, see: José Martínez Millán, “La corte de la Monarquía hispánica,” *Studia Histórica, Historia Moderna*, 28 (2006), 17-61.

<sup>2</sup> Norbert Elias, *The Court Society* (Oxford, 1984 English version, original in German 1969).

these periods, but also in order to display the rich contrast of styles which could mark near-contemporaries”<sup>3</sup>. The historiographical genre of ‘Court Studies’ was born, and one year later, Carlo Ossola concluded that understanding this institution was essential for understanding the early modern period<sup>4</sup>.

After 1985, when Cesare Mozzarelli characterized the court as a political institution that had defined a large chunk of European history<sup>5</sup>, ‘the court’ became an unavoidable topic in any research into early modern governance. A series of investigations were initiated that took the court as a starting point for analysing government relations and the informal organization of power, as well as the anthropological and the cultural aspects of court etiquette and ritual<sup>6</sup>. The year 1994 marked the complete reversal of the nation-state distortion in the literature. In a publication that resulted from a conference on the origins of the modern state, Marcello Fantoni made it clear that the concept of court could not be anachronistically approached from the perspective of the nation state because it was an authoritative institution with its own unique characteristics<sup>7</sup>. And its inclusion at such a symposium was, as Trevor Dean stated in the same volume, “the clearest demonstration of the long route undertaken by the Court Studies during the last twenty years”<sup>8</sup>.

Another step was made in 1988 with the publication of a volume edited by Maurice Aymard and Marzio A. Romani that focused on the economic aspects of the court<sup>9</sup>. Until that point the court had

<sup>3</sup> Artur G. Dickens (ed.), *The Courts of Europe. Politics, Patronage and Royalty, 1400-1800* (London, 1977), 7.

<sup>4</sup> Carlo Ossola, “Il ‘luogo’ della Corte,” in Marzio A. Romani (ed.), *Le Corti farnesiane di Parma e Piacenza, 1545-1622* (Rome, 1978), 39-40.

<sup>5</sup> Cesare Mozzarelli, “Principe, corte e governo tra ‘500 e ‘700,” in *Culture et idéologie dans la gènes de l’État Moderne* (Rome, 1985), 370.

<sup>6</sup> Amongst others, David Starkey e.a., *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (London, 1987); Antoni Maczak (ed.), *Klientelsysteme im Europa der Frühen Neuzeit* (Munich, 1988) or Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke (eds.), *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age* (Oxford, 1991).

<sup>7</sup> Marcello Fantoni, “Corte e Stato nell’Italia dei secoli XIV-XVI,” in Giorgio Chittolini e.a. (eds.), *Origini dello stato. Processi di formazione statale in Italia fra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna, 1994), 449-466.

<sup>8</sup> “Le corti: Un problema storiografico,” in Giorgio Chittolini e.a. (eds.), *Origini dello stato: processi di formazione statale in Italia fra medioevo ed età moderna* (Bologna, 1994), 458.

<sup>9</sup> Maurice Aymard and Marzio A Romani, *La Cour comme institution économique* (Paris, 1998).

been the object of numerous cultural studies, but now more general historical analyses were contending with the issue. As John Adamson has stated, the court's significance was not limited to affairs of state, "almost invariably, it was the principal cultural and social centre of the realm"<sup>10</sup>. Indeed, Carlos Javier de Carlos Morales' chapter in this volume demonstrates that the courts and households of the Spanish monarchy were also important economic institutions.

From the year 2000 onwards, a steady stream of scientific meetings, symposia and international conferences brought together an increasing number of specialists from different backgrounds. Currently, Court Studies attracts a great deal of interest, and there exist several centres dedicated to the subject in Europe and the United States, including *Europa delle Corti* (Italy), the *Residenzen-Kommission* of Göttingen (Germany), the *Society for Court Studies* (Great Britain), the *Centre de recherche du château de Versailles* (France) and the *Instituto Universitario La Corte en Europa – IULCE* (Spain), all of which are characterised by their interdisciplinary approach.

Inspired by this renewed interest in the court, René Vermeir of Ghent University and Luc Duerloo of the University of Antwerp, aided by José Eloy Hortal Muñoz of the Universidad Autónoma of Madrid at the time, convened an international round table titled "A Constellation of Courts. The Habsburg Courts and Households in Europe (1555-1665)". This two-day conference (November 3-4, 2006) at the Academy Palace of Brussels, centred on the study of the various Habsburg courts and households among the two branches of the dynasty that arose following the division of the territories originally held by Charles V: first, the Spanish branch that began with Philip II, the heart of which was located in Madrid, and secondly, the Austrian branch that originated with Ferdinand I, and which centred on Prague until 1612, when it shifted to Vienna.

This round table not only helped further the attendees' ongoing research by providing a forum for mutual communication and assessment, but it also sought to address a long-standing debate on terminology. For the purposes of the discussion, a working definition was adopted for the terms 'court' and 'household'. The latter term only denotes the personal entourages of the dynasty's non-ruling members. The former, however, was defined as the various departments and individuals that directly aided the ruler or his *alter nos*, the viceroys

<sup>10</sup> John Adamson (ed.), *The Princely Courts of Europe 1500-1750* (London, 1999), 7.

and governors, in some aspect of governance, as well as their personal entourages. Such courts were located in the various capitals of the composite Habsburg state, and each represented princely authority. While subject to debate, these working definitions are employed in this collection in order to create a typology, which, however imperfect, will allow for comparative research.

Between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Habsburg dynasty steered the course of European history. Its two branches controlled the Hispanic kingdoms and the Holy Roman Empire, as well as the Netherlands, northern Italy, and everything from central Europe to the borders of the Ottoman Empire. During the sixteenth century, the Spanish monarchy took the lead, and was responsible for spearheading a partnership founded on dynastic loyalty and dedicated to defending the Catholic faith. This state of affairs was somewhat altered by the Thirty Years War (1618-1648), which saw both the pinnacle of the collaboration between the two branches of the House of Habsburg, and the start of its decline. The Spanish line became extinct following the death of Charles II in 1700, and the resultant War of Spanish Succession and Treaty of Utrecht heralded a definitive change in the balance of European power.

Without doubt, this evolution affected the influence that the Hispanic court had on its Austrian counterpart, not only with regard to how its component parts were organized, but its etiquette as well. According to Ludwig Pfandl<sup>11</sup>, Philip II largely modelled the Spanish court after that of the Burgundians, and this model was then carried throughout Europe by the *infantas* dispatched from Spain in service to the family's marriage politics. In each case, certain adaptations were made to meet local requirements and expectations, just as they had been in Spain with the addition of Castilian elements to the court. During the sixteenth century, this method of expansion was quite successful; such was certainly the case with Infanta Catherine Michelle's marriage to Charles Emmanuel of Savoy<sup>12</sup>. Furthermore, the *dinasticismo* promoted by Philip II also resulted in long-term ties between the Spanish and

<sup>11</sup> Ludwig Pfandl, "Philipp II und die Einführung des burgundischen Hofzeremoniells in Spanien," *Historisches Jahrbuch*, LVIII (1938), 1-33.

<sup>12</sup> María José Del Río Barredo, "De Madrid a Turín: el ceremonial de las reinas españolas en la corte ducal de Catalina Micaela de Saboya," *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna*, Anejo II (2003), 97-122; José Martínez Millán, "La Casa de Catalina Micaela y sus hijos," in José Martínez Millán and Maria Antonietta Visceglia (eds.), *La monarquía de Felipe III* (Madrid, 2008), I, 1064-72.

Austrian branches, which in turn consolidated a growing network of allied territories under the House of Habsburg, and promoted peace and stability. The archdukes Albert and Ernest were instrumental in these plans, which ultimately led to the cession of the Netherlands in 1598<sup>13</sup>.

This situation changed during the course of the seventeenth century. The decrease in the Hispanic monarchy's political prestige strongly affected the ability of its members to implement its court structure, etiquette and rituals, which came under fire by Spain's enemies in an effort to contest Madrid's apparent dominance of the continent. The first such political attack came with expulsion of the Hispanic household of the Infanta Anne of Austria<sup>14</sup>, who Louis XIII forced to adapt French clothing<sup>15</sup> and submit to the etiquette of the Parisian court. Despite this, the princess maintained some aspects of her culture, as Olivier Chaline's analysis of Val-de-Grâce Abbey in this volume demonstrates. At the same time, the imperial court also began to resist Castilian influences over the course of the seventeenth century, as demonstrated by the cases of Empresses Maria Anna and Margaret Theresa<sup>16</sup>.

It is important to note that authors such as Werner Paravicini<sup>17</sup> and Cristina Hoffman have called into question Pfandl's thesis regarding the origins, construction and dispersal of the Spanish model. For example, Hoffman argues in her *Spanische Zeremoniell* that the reforms of Ferdinand I, despite his Castilian upbringing, show little in the way

<sup>13</sup> José Martínez Millán and Carlos Javier de Carlos Morales (eds.), *La configuración de la Monarquía hispánica* (Valladolid, 1998), 257-61.

<sup>14</sup> María José del Río Barredo and Jean-François Dubost, "La présence étrangère autour d'Anne d'Autriche (1615-1666)," in Chantal Grell (ed.), *Anne d'Autriche. Infante d'Espagne et Reine de France* (Paris, 2009), 111-52; Laura Oliván Santaliestra, "Retour souhaité ou expulsion réfléchi? La Maison espagnole d'Anne d'Autriche quitte Paris (1616-1622)," in Giulia Calvi and Isabelle Chabot (eds.), *Moving Elites: Women and Cultural Transfers in the European Court System, Working Papers* (Florence, 2010), 21-31.

<sup>15</sup> Regarding these clashes, see María del Carmen Simón Palmer, "Notas sobre la vida de las mujeres en el Real Alcázar," *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna*, 19 (1997), 21-38, especially 32.

<sup>16</sup> See Laura Oliván Santaliestra in "La influencia del modelo borgoñón en la Casa de las emperatrices hispanas (1629-73)," in José Eloy Hortal Muñoz and Félix Labrador Arroyo (eds.), *La Casa de Borgoña: la Casa del rey de España* (Louvain, 2014), 547-573. The last section of the collection deals exclusively with the households of the various Hispanic infantas and their role in exporting the Spanish court model.

<sup>17</sup> Werner Paravicini, "The Court of the Dukes of Burgundy. A Model for Europe?," in Ronald G. Asch and Adolf M. Birke (eds.), *Princes, Patronage, and the Nobility*, especially 98-9 and 102.

of Burgundian influences, and goes on to suggest that the *Spanisches Hofzeremoniell* was not extensively implemented at the Viennese court<sup>18</sup>. Jeroen Duindam believes that Pfandl's views need nuanced at the very least. For example, he questions whether the decrees regarding etiquette issued by Ferdinand I in 1527 and 1537 were Burgundian in style, given the distance that the rules imposed between the emperor and the court. He believes that this reflects a more Castilian way of doing things, and was probably the result of the future emperor's education on the Iberian Peninsula<sup>19</sup>. Furthermore, Duindam argues that the Austrian Habsburgs employed the term 'Burgundian' as a way of claiming historical legitimacy, and that it does not actually indicate that the Viennese Court was Burgundian in some essential way. Frank Huss<sup>20</sup> and John Spielman, however, disagree and think that the Viennese court was heavily influenced by Spain's preference for the Burgundian style. According to Spielman, Ferdinand I granted the Burgundian office of *Oberhofmeister* a central role at court, while his son, the archduke Charles then adapted Burgundian dining rituals in his decree of September 10, 1550<sup>21</sup>.

In light of the above, we must consider the debate regarding the exact nature of the Austrian court still open. Indeed, it is, as Duindam has pointed out<sup>22</sup>, difficult to delineate what elements were Burgundian, particularly after successive reforms and reinterpretations of etiquette and ceremony, not to mention the possible influence of other courts, whether Aragonese, Papal, or even Native American. In particular, more research is required into the courts of those infantas that later became empresses. These institutions were formed according to the Castilian model and included elements that were obviously Burgundian in origin, but those portions of the court most inspired by the Burgundian tradition returned to Madrid after delivering the

<sup>18</sup> Christina Hoffmann, *Das Spanische Hofzeremoniell von 1500-1700* (Frankfurt-am-Main, 1985), 294-6, especially 296.

<sup>19</sup> Jeroen Duindam, "El legado borgoñón en la vida cortesana de los Habsburgo austriacos", in Krista De Jonge, Bernardo J. García García and Alicia Esteban Estringana (eds.), *El legado de Borgoña. Fiesta y ceremonia cortesana en la Europa de los Austrias 1454-1648* (Madrid, 2010), 35-58, especially 49.

<sup>20</sup> Frank Huss, *Der Wiener Kaiserhof. Eine Kulturgeschichte von Leopold I. bis Leopold II* (Grensbach, 2008), 214-9.

<sup>21</sup> John P. Spielman, *The City and the Crown: Vienna and the Imperial Court 1600-1740* (Purdue, 1993), 54.

<sup>22</sup> Duindam, "El legado borgoñón", 49.

infanta to Vienna. And yet, distinctly Burgundian ceremonial usages – albeit with Castilian modifications – did become incorporated into the courts of the empresses. With regard to the retinues of those who made the reverse journey during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – Anne of Austria<sup>23</sup>, Margaret of Austria<sup>24</sup>, Mariana of Austria<sup>25</sup>, and the archdukes Rudolph, Ernest, Albert and Wenceslas<sup>26</sup> – they were severely curtailed in number, and very few attendants were allowed to keep their positions. The emperors occasionally lent their assistance here, such as when Maximilian II insisted that Anne of Austria’s servants remain in Castile, as outlined by José Hortal Eloy Muñoz’s chapter in this volume. The preceding paragraphs demonstrate, however briefly, that the two branches of the House of Habsburg had a close, on-going relationship. Yet until quite recently, we have only had detailed analyses on their separate evolutions<sup>27</sup>, none of which take into account the dynastic logic and cooperation that helped shape these changes. Similarly, their respective courts have been intensively, but separately, investigated

<sup>23</sup> José Martínez Millán, “La corte de Felipe II: la Casa de la reina Ana”, in Luis Ribot García (ed.), *La Monarquía de Felipe II a debate* (Madrid, 2000), 159-84. For the structure of the household, José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, “Organización de una Casa. El Libro de Veeduría de la reina Ana de Austria”, in José Martínez Millán and María Paula Marçal Lourenço (eds.), *Las Relaciones Discretas entre las monarquías Hispana y Portuguesa: las Casas de las Reinas (siglos XV-XIX). Arte, música, espiritualidad y literatura* (Madrid, 2008), I, 275-309.

<sup>24</sup> Félix Labrador Arroyo, “La Casa de la reina Margarita”, in José Martínez Millán and María Antonietta Visceglia (eds.), *La Monarquía de Felipe III*, I, 1125-68.

<sup>25</sup> See José Rufino Novo Zaballo, “La Casa de la reina Mariana de Austria durante el reinado de Felipe IV y el período de regencia”, and Diego Crespi de Valldaura, “La Casa de la reina Mariana de Austria durante su Regencia (1665-1675)”, both in the second volume of José Martínez Millán and José Eloy Hortal Muñoz (eds.), *La Monarquía de Felipe IV: la Casa del rey* (Madrid, 2014 forthcoming).

<sup>26</sup> See the contribution of José Eloy Hortal Muñoz in this volume.

<sup>27</sup> The first scientific work devoted to the political evolution of the Austrian Habsburg branch, for example, is also the most comprehensive reconstruction of it for the period between 1494 and 1848: the 6 volumes of Eduard Vehse *Geschichte des österreichischen Hofes und Adels und der österreichischen Diplomatie* (Hamburg, 1851). The historiography improved in the mid-20th century as a result of the work carried out by influential Czech historians such as Bohdan Chudoba, whose bilateral history of Habsburg Spain and the Holy Roman Empire has yet to be revised (*Spain and the Empire, 1519-1643*, Chicago, 1952). Evans and Karl Vocelka were involved in renewing interest in the Habsburgs during in the 1970s, while a prominent school has recently been established in Vienna under the leadership of Alfred Kohler, Thomas Winkelbauer and Friedrich Edelmayer.

in the last few decades<sup>28</sup>. Fortunately, however, we now have more comprehensive studies<sup>29</sup>, like that of Alejandro López Álvarez, whose contribution to this collection examines the ceremonies employed by the Habsburg monarchs of both branches.

This divide must be crossed in order to truly comprehend the relationship between the European courts under Habsburg rule. As José Martínez Millán ably explains in his contribution to this volume, Philip II inherited a political entity lacking overarching structures, and whose constituent territories felt the physical absence of their prince quite keenly<sup>30</sup>. In order to keep his inheritance intact, Philip II initially decided to employ his father's proven model for uniting these disparate regions: incorporating their elites into his service via the court. However, this plan proved short-lived, since the Castilian elites advocated Castilian hegemony throughout the monarchy, and at court<sup>31</sup>. Both the process of confessionalization<sup>32</sup> and the decision to permanently locate the court at Madrid – accompanied by measures designed, as far as possible, to make the sovereign omnipresent – undoubtedly reinforced

<sup>28</sup> With regard to Spain, see among others, José Martínez Millán (ed.), *La corte de Carlos V* (Madrid, 2000), 5 vols.; José Martínez Millán and Santiago Fernández Conti (eds.), *La Monarquía de Felipe II*; José Martínez Millán and María Antonietta Visceglia (eds.), *La Monarquía de Felipe III*; and José Martínez Millán and José Eloy Hortal Muñoz (eds.), *La monarquía de Felipe IV*. With regard to Austria, see Jeroen Duindam, *Vienna and Versailles: The Courts of Europe's Dynastic Rivals, 1550-1780* (Cambridge, 2003) and Karin J. MacHardy, *War, Religion and Court Patronage in Habsburg Austria* (Houndmills, 2003) in particular. Nevertheless, much remains to be done on this subject.

<sup>29</sup> José Martínez Millán and Rubén González Cuerva (eds.), *La dinastía de los Austrias: las relaciones entre la Monarquía Católica y el Imperio* (Madrid, 2011), 3 vols. The upcoming congress organized by IULCE at the end of 2014 on the relationships between both branches of the Habsburg Dynasty and the House of the Vasas is of particular interest in this regard.

<sup>30</sup> With regard to this process, see José Martínez Millán, “La integración de las élites ciudadanas castellanas en la Monarquía a través de la Casa Real”, in José Martínez Millán and Santiago Fernández Conti (eds.), *La monarquía de Felipe II*, I, 645–85.

<sup>31</sup> For the ongoing rivalry between those elites who fought for the hegemony of Castile and those who supported the greater involvement of other kingdoms, see José Martínez Millán, “La articulación de la Monarquía hispana: Auge y ocaso de la Casa Real de Castilla”, in *Plus ultra. Die Welt der Neuzeit. Festschrift für Alfred Kohler zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by Friedrich Edelmayr, Martina Fuchs, Georg Heilingsetzer and Peter Rauscher (Münster 2007), 407–52.

<sup>32</sup> An account of the historical development of this concept can be found in Ulrich Lotz-Heumann, “The Concept of “Confessionalization”: A Historiographical Paradigm in Dispute”, *Memoria y Civilización: Anuario de Historia*, 4 (2001), 93–114.

this trend<sup>33</sup>. Philip II was well aware that he needed an organizational structure, and he decided that the harmony of the body politic could best be guaranteed via hierarchy and inequality. Castile would head up his territories, and its councils would form the basis of the political entity to which they belonged.

This change, in the words of Lope de Vega, turned Madrid into an ‘archive of nations’ enabling the non-Castilians who resided at court to live there just as if they were in their countries of origin, under their own jurisdictions. However, the majority of the non-Castilians active in the Madrilene court no longer belonged to the upper aristocracy and the various royal courts and households had ceased to welcome them into their service. Thus it was necessary to seek new ways of ensuring that the crown’s munificence filtered throughout Spain’s vast holdings, as Rivero Rodríguez discusses in his contribution to this volume<sup>34</sup>. The crown’s viceroys and governors, semi-autonomous in the regions they governed, gradually began to incorporate local elites into their own service, a process that was consolidated under Philip III. Their households evolved into large courts that mirrored the royal court in Spain. The local elites, both the titled and the untitled, decided, therefore, to seek positions in their native lands rather than Madrid. At the very most, they sent their offspring to Castile to be brought up as pages, *meninos*, companions for the royal children in other words, ladies-in-waiting or *coustilliers*, those who accompanied the king to worship or on journeys. This led to the revival of some vice-regal courts, such as those located in Naples, Sicily and Portugal, as well as the erection of new, larger courts in the Americas.

With regard to the Habsburg Netherlands, the leading members of the nobility were, at best, only marginally associated with the Madrilene court during the second half of the sixteenth century onwards. They remained in the north, and as a result, created a court of some significance in Brussels, one that flourished culturally in much the same way as other analogous courts in the Spanish monarchy. This

<sup>33</sup> With regard to this process, see Manuel Rivero Rodríguez, “El Consejo de Italia y la territorialización de la monarquía (1554–1600)”, in Ernest Belenguier Cebrià (ed.), *Felipe II y el Mediterráneo* (Madrid, 1998), III, 97–113.

<sup>34</sup> See also Manuel Rivero Rodríguez, “Una monarquía de casas reales y cortes virreinales”, in José Martínez Millán and Maria Antonietta Visceglia (eds.), *La Monarquía de Felipe III*, IV, 31–60, and chapter 4, ‘La Edad de Oro’, in *La edad de oro de los virreyes. El virreinato en la Monarquía Hispánica durante los siglos XVI y XVII* (Madrid, 2011), 133–74.

was certainly the case during the archducal period, when Albert and Isabella ruled the Habsburg Netherlands as sovereigns<sup>35</sup>. The Brussels court lost some of its prominence after Albert's death in 1621 and the subsequent return of the Netherlands to the Spanish crown, but remained an important court, especially following the creation of the *Maison Royale de Bruxelles* in the mid-seventeenth century<sup>36</sup>.

Until recently, few historians paid any attention to the Brussels court of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries outside of the archducal period, and those who did – J. Proost<sup>37</sup>, S. Clercx<sup>38</sup>, and V. Coremans<sup>39</sup> among them – took an institutional approach. Yet understanding this court's history is key to unravelling the evolution of the relationship between both branches of the family during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, since no less than three Austrian archdukes – Ernest (1593-5)<sup>40</sup>, Albert (1595-8)<sup>41</sup> and Leopold-Wilhelm (1647-56)<sup>42</sup> – were governors-general of the Habsburg Netherlands, and Albert was its sovereign from 1598 to 1621. Fortunately, interest has increased since the 1990s. The fourth centenary of the cession of the Habsburg Netherlands to the archdukes in 1998 spurred further research into

<sup>35</sup> There has been extensive research on the subject, see the comprehensive overview in Alejandro Vergara (ed.), *El Arte en la Corte de los Archiduques Alberto de Austria e Isabel Clara Eugenia (1598–1633). Un Reino Imaginado* (Madrid, 1999).

<sup>36</sup> See José Eloy Hortal Muñoz and Koldo Trápaga Monchet, "The Royal Households in the Habsburg Netherlands after the Departure of the Household of Burgundy: From the Entourages of the Governors-General to the *Maison Royale de Bruxelles*", *Dutch Crossing* (forthcoming).

<sup>37</sup> Jean Joseph Eugène Proost, "Le prévôt général de l'Hôtel, ses attributions et ses prérogatives", *Annales de l'Académie d'archéologie de Belgique*, 33 (1876), 141-64.

<sup>38</sup> Suzanne Clercx, "La chapelle royale de Bruxelles sous l'ancien régime", *Annuaire du Conservatoire de musique de Bruxelles*, 65 (1941), 159-79.

<sup>39</sup> Victor Coremans, "L'archiduc Ernest, sa cour, ses dépenses (1593-1595)", *Compte rendu des séances de la Commission royale d'histoire ou recueil de ses bulletins*, 13 (1847), 85-147.

<sup>40</sup> For his period as general-governor, see Victor Coremans, "L'archiduc Ernest" and José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, "La casa del archiduque Ernesto durante su gobierno en los Países Bajos (1593-1595)" in Antonio Álvarez-Ossorio Alvariano and Bernardo J. García García (eds.), *La Monarquía de las Naciones. Patria, nación y naturaleza en la Monarquía de España* (Madrid, 2004), 193-213.

<sup>41</sup> See the bibliography of José Eloy Hortal Muñoz's chapter in this volume.

<sup>42</sup> See René Vermeir, "Un austriaco en Flandes. El archiduque Leopoldo Guillermo, gobernador general de los Países Bajos meridionales (1647-1656)", in José Martínez Millán and Rubén González Cuerva (eds.), *La Dinastía de los Austria, I*, 583-608 and the bibliography, as well as Sophie Aspeslagh, *Het leven in het paleis op de Coudenberg te Brussel onder landvoogd Leopold Willem van Oostenrijk (1647-1656)* (Master's thesis, Catholic University of Louvain, 2007).

Albert and Isabella's court<sup>43</sup>, and many historians began applying Court Studies' new methodologies to their research on the region.

The project funded by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) and directed by René Vermeir and Luc Duerloo from 2005 to 2009 was particularly important in this respect. The goal was to encourage research into the entire history of the Brussels court in the hopes that this would further our understanding of how the Spanish monarchy was governed, as well as the evolution of the relationship between both branches of the House of Habsburg over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The project culminated in the conference that ultimately led to this collection of articles, as well as two doctoral theses: one by Dries Raeymaekers regarding aspects of the archdukes' court (1598-1621)<sup>44</sup>, and one by Birgit Houben, which focused on the governorships of both Isabella Clara Eugenia (1621-33) and Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand (1634-41)<sup>45</sup>. The renewed interest that the project generated also led to several masters' theses<sup>46</sup>, as well as studies carried out by specialists such as Werner Thomas, Krista De Jonge, Alicia Esteban, and Violet Soen.

An updated and comprehensive study on the dynamics of the imperial court is also lacking<sup>47</sup>. However, thanks to the results of

<sup>43</sup> Principally compiled in Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo (eds.), *Albert & Isabella, 1598-1621. Essays* (Turnhout, 1998).

<sup>44</sup> Published by Leuven University Press in 2013 as *One foot in the palace. The Habsburg Court of Brussels and the Politics of Access in the Reign of Albert and Isabella, 1598-1621*.

<sup>45</sup> *Wisselende gedaanten. Het hof en de hofhouding van de landvoogden Isabella Clara Eugenia (1621-1633) en de kardinaal-infant don Fernando van Oostenrijk (1634-1641) te Brussel* (unpublished doctoral thesis, Ghent University). Portions of this thesis were published as articles, see, among others, Birgit Houben, "Les dignitaires bourgeois de la cour comme agents de la Franche-Comté: du courtage provincial à la cour bruxelloise (1621-1641)," *Revue du Nord*, 90 (2008), 747-773 and Birgit Houben and Dries Raeymaekers, "Women and the Politics of Access at the Court of Brussels: The Infanta Isabella's Camareras Mayores (1598-1633)," in Nadine Akkerman and Birgit Houben (eds.), *The politics of female households. Ladies-in-waiting across Early Modern Europe* (Leiden, 2013), 123-45.

<sup>46</sup> Among them: Ellen Roegis, *Het hof van don Juan José de Austria, landvoogd in de Habsburgse Nederlanden (1656-1658)* (Master's thesis, Ghent University, 2006) and Sophie Aspeslagh, *Het leven in het paleis op de Coudenberg* [see n. 42].

<sup>47</sup> Indeed, when compared with the extensive bibliography on court factions and their political roles available for other contemporary centres of power, the Austrian court appears sorely neglected. However, this has been somewhat rectified with regard to the reigns of Ferdinand II (1619-1637) and Ferdinand III (1637-1657) as a result of the University of Vienna's wide-ranging 2000 project titled "Patronage- und Klientelsysteme am Wiener Hof" (<http://www.univie.ac.at/Geschichte/wienerhof/>).

the University of Vienna's recent project titled "Zu Diensten Ihrer Majestät. Geschichte der Organisation des Wiener Hofes in der Frühen Neuzeit", progress has been made on several fronts<sup>48</sup>. Further research in this area is of paramount importance because for a considerable part of the period under consideration in this collection, the responsibility of governing Austria's hereditary lands was divided among several members of the family, and as a result, distinct archducal courts came into being at Innsbruck (1564–1665) and Graz (1564–1619). These constituted a discernable, second level of princely courts within the Austrian Habsburg territories, one step below the imperial court in Prague and Vienna. The Spanish monarchy on the other hand consisted of various formerly independent entities. Some of these continued to be governed from their former capitals, as was the case in Naples or in the Spanish Netherlands. These cities remained seats of royal sovereignty in a number of ways, and the entourages of the resident viceroys or governors should therefore to be considered a third level of court. The court of Brussels under the reign of the archdukes Albert and Isabella (1598–1621) however, falls into the same category as Innsbruck and Graz.

The Austrian branch of the dynasty underwent a rapid expansion in numbers. At its highpoint in 1613, there were no fewer than 14 archdukes and 13 archduchesses, and regardless of their seniority, all of them had to be provided for in a *Standesgemäß* fashion. If they reached adulthood, they received a household of their own. In quite a few cases they were allowed their own residence, and some went on to become the governors of provinces, or, as in the case of the aforementioned archduke Albert, rulers in their own right. Others were provided with ecclesiastical benefices, which gave them access to important revenues and sometimes allowed them to act as independent rulers, as was the case with prince-bishoprics, or grandmasterships of the Teutonic Order. As for the archduchesses, they mainly wed, although a few took monastic vows. And as widows, some chose to reside in or nearby a convent.

Alongside the various levels of Habsburg courts, were the households established for the non-ruling members of the family. There were of course huge differences in size between, on the one hand, the courts of Madrid or Vienna, and of the households of the younger members of the family, on the other. Being a Poor Clare, Sor Margarita de la Cruz

<sup>48</sup> See <http://www.fwf.ac.at/de/abstracts/abstract.asp?L=D&PROJ=P20157> (consulted October 13, 2013).

had only a minute household serving her in the *Descalzas reales*, but she had a household nevertheless. These households were spread out across Europe, but together they comprised a crucial power-base for the dynasty, and offered an important source of employment to the extensive network of aristocrats and lesser men and women who spent their lives serving the House of Austria.

The ultimate goal of this volume is to trace the connections between the various Habsburg courts and private households, regardless of their standing or composition, in order to begin outlining the network they created. Cutting across the traditional division in the historiography between the two branches of the House of Habsburg outlined above, and seeking to examine the roles played by the courts and households of lesser known members of the dynasty, will help to determine to what degree their organization followed a particular model, to what extent individuals were able to move between them in pursuit of career opportunities and advancement, and whether this increased their cosmopolitanism. In this fashion, we hope to help establish the impact that a single dynasty and the evolving relationship between its constituent parts had on the development of its related courts.

*José Eloy Hortal Muñoz, Dries Raeymaekers and René Vermeir*