

Prince Eugene of Savoy, Austrian Military Commander and Patron of the Arts (c. 1710)

Abstract

Refused a military command by King Louis XIV of France (r. 1661-1715) on the grounds of “a weak constitution” [*Memoirs of Prince Eugene of Savoy*, translated by Frederic Shoberl. London, 1811. xvi], Prince Eugene of Savoy (1663-1736) joined the Austrian side and secured the integrity of the Habsburg lands by scoring a number of momentous military victories. Eugene distinguished himself as a military commander in confrontations with France, notably the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-14), in which he cooperated effectively with the allied British general John Churchill, First Duke of Marlborough (1650-1722). He also won fame in the Austro-Turkish War of 1716-18, which pushed the Ottomans back into the Balkans and temporarily delivered (until 1738) the fortress town of Belgrade into Austrian hands.

In his adoptive country of Austria, Eugene also became an influential politician and patron of the arts. One of the richest men of his day, he made a lasting contribution to Austria’s cultural heritage by commissioning numerous architectural landmarks, such as the City Palace of Prince Eugene in Vienna [*Das Stadtpalais des Prinzen Eugen*], now home to the Austrian finance ministry, the Belvedere palace in Vienna, and the Schloss Hof in Lower Austria. The portrait below was painted by Johann Kupetzky, whose patrons also included emperors Leopold I and Joseph I.

Source



Source: Johann Kupetzky, Portrait of Prince Eugene of Savoy, oil on canvas, c. 1710.

Heeresgeschichtliches Museum Vienna.

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