

Appointment Strategies at the Court of Duke Philip the Good: New Applications of Old Mechanisms

Hanno Brand

IN the debate on the modernisation of the late medieval and early modern court, one of the central issues has been the tension between traditional, 'feudal' administrative methods, which were based on personal relations, and novel, rational concepts of government. In particular, historians have focused on the question of how far the personal interests of established elites ceded to bureaucratic methods which served both the centralising policies of sovereign princes and the common good of those princes' subjects. Recent scholarship has made an effort to dispense with the tenacious myth that novel standards and concepts which were developed at the European princely courts lay at the root of the modernisation of society as a whole. Thus, historians have pointed out that modern views and old-fashioned outlooks often co-existed, and they have accused princes and their councillors of having been too backward-looking, and of having failed to anticipate new trends and needs.¹ Wolfgang Reinhard pin-pointed this apparent contradiction by introducing the notion of 'rénovation conservatrice', which is intended to convey that improved or even new methods were introduced, in many cases, as a result of reactionary attitudes.² Others have even denied that the court had a modernising impact on government, arguing that the decision-making process was dominated by informal administrative practices and long-standing privileges. They emphasise that personal relations and informal ties proved to be particularly successful when bureaucratic procedures failed.³ Because the new central institutions were far from

¹ J. Duindam, *Myths of Power: Norbert Elias and the Early Modern Court* (Amsterdam, 1994). See also his contribution in this volume. An earlier version of this chapter was presented at the 43rd Deutsche Historiker Tag in Aachen in 1999; we are grateful to Max Lieberman for his help with the English version.

² W. Reinhard, 'Élites du pouvoir, serviteurs de l'état, classes dirigeantes et croissance du pouvoir', in *Les élites du pouvoir et la construction de l'état en Europe*, ed. W. Reinhard (Paris, 1996), pp. 1–24. See also R. Descimon, 'Empirisme et méthode: présentation', in *Papauté, confessions, modernité*, ed. Descimon (Paris, 1998), p. 10.

³ Duindam, *Myths of Power*, pp. 4–8, 192–4; *La cour comme institution économique*, ed. M. Aymard

effective, princes had to try to enforce their sovereignty by reaching compromises and creating ties between the various power groups and the court.

It is against the background of the apparent contradictions between new and traditional methods that some aspects of nomination policies in the household of Philip the Good, the duke of Burgundy, will be treated here.⁴ On several occasions during his long reign between 1419 and 1467, new bureaucratic methods were introduced, which, however, did not always succeed in guaranteeing further rationalisation of the administrative process. An analysis of the procedures for appointments and remuneration in the household of the third Burgundian duke will suggest that there were indeed considerable obstacles to the modernisation of the court, but also that informal power mechanisms and bureaucratic measures were sometimes compatible and even complementary.

Characteristics of Service at Court

In order to understand properly the legal framework of service at court, it is fundamental to realise that the prince's right of appointment, which was unrestricted in principle, was in practice subject to several limitations.⁵ The conditions of service were detailed in the individual letters of appointment⁶ and in court ordinances⁷ which were drawn up when new households were created or when far-reaching modifications to the court's structure were introduced. The general impression is that servants of all ranks strove for a life-long appointment. However, the number of

and M. A. Romani (Paris, 1998), p. 7; W. Blockmans, 'Corruptie, patronage, makelaardij en venaliteit als symptomen van een ontluikende staatsvorming in de Bourgondisch-Habsburgse Nederlanden', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale Geschiedenis*, 3 (1985), pp. 231–47; P. Moraw, 'Personenforschung und deutsches Königtum', in *Über König und Reich: Aufsätze zur deutschen Verfassungsgeschichte des späten Mittelalters*, ed. R. Schwinges (Sigmaringen, 1995), pp. 1–10.

⁴ Cf. U. Schwarzkopf, *Studien zur Hoforganisation der Herzöge von Burgund aus dem Hause Valois* (Göttingen, 1955), and Schwarzkopf, *Die Rechnungslegung des Humbert von Plaine über die Jahre 1448–1452: Eine Studie zur Amtsführung des burgundischen maître de la chambre aux deniers*, Verhandlungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, 23 (Göttingen, 1970); H. Kruse, *Hof, Amt und Gagen: Die täglichen Gagenlisten des burgundischen Hofes (1430–1467) und der erste Hofstaat Karls des Kühnen (1456)* (Bonn, 1996), and Kruse, 'Die Hofordnungen Philipps des Guten von Burgund', in *Höfe und Hofordnungen 1200–1600*, ed. H. Kruse and W. Paravicini (Sigmaringen, 1999), pp. 141–65; W. Paravicini, 'Administrateurs professionnels et princes dilettantes: remarques sur une problématique de sociologie administrative à la fin du moyen âge', in *Histoire comparée de l'administration (IVe–XVIIIe siècles): Actes du XIVe colloque franco-allemand, Tours, 27 mars – 1er avril 1977*, ed. W. Paravicini and K.-F. Werner (Munich, 1980), pp. 168–77; J. Sornay, 'Les états prévisionnels des finances duciales au temps de Philippe le Bon', *Études Bourguignonnes: finance et vie économique dans la Bourgogne médiévale, Actes du 109e congrès national des sociétés savantes, Dijon 1984* (Paris, 1987), pp. 35–94.

⁵ U. Schwarzkopf, 'Zum höfischen Dienstrecht im 15. Jahrhundert: das Burgundische Beispiel', *Festschrift für Hermann Heimpel zum 70. Geburtstag am 19. September 1971*, vol. II (Göttingen, 1971), pp. 423–7.

⁶ As Kruse has correctly pointed out, we still lack a systematic analysis of the letters of appointment which are preserved in significant numbers in the State Archives in Brussels: Kruse, *Hof, Amt und Gagen*, p. 279.

⁷ Kruse, 'Die Hofordnungen', pp. 154–5.

office-holders was limited by decree for many offices in order to prevent excessive rises in salary costs. Therefore, it could happen that even when a *droit de supplication* existed, requests for appointments to offices were refused.⁸ Indeed, many ennobled *protégés* of the duke, who became candidates for court office by acquiring their new status, had to wait for years before they could enjoy the benefits of such a post.⁹ Nevertheless, the number of servants in the ducal households rose steadily. It looks as if court ordinances were not drawn up to prevent further increases in the number of household personnel; rather, the new regulations were drawn up in the context of a situation which had its own dynamics.¹⁰

Both the prince and his court officials had the right to terminate contracts of service; the prince according to his own judgment, the officer by resigning voluntarily. In cases where such a decision was taken by the duke, his reasons can be found in the court ordinances, often concisely and discreetly phrased. Generally, office-holders vacated their posts simply because they were promoted or replaced; but contracts were also terminated due to ignorant behaviour or deliberate neglect of courtly duties.¹¹ When the prince died, his rights of appointment ended, and so did the contracts of employment he had established. This offered his successor the opportunity to remodel his household according to his own wishes and needs. Within that context, the swearing of an oath constituted an important element in the appointment procedures, because it defined the nature of the special relation between servant and prince, in which feudal concepts such as loyalty and trust played a key role. Pointing to practices at the courts of the French king Charles VI and the dukes of Bourbon, Bernard Guenée and Olivier Mattéoni have shown that officers could only enter service at court after they publicly and officially confirmed their loyalty and faithfulness.¹² The same was true for procedures in the Burgundian households. All officers, regardless of their status and rank, were obliged to swear, in the presence of other servants, to fulfil their duties to their best possible ability, to act in the prince's interest and to further the ducal interests in a suitable manner.¹³

Although the internal organisation of the households and the division of labour within them can be reconstructed from court ordinances, it should be emphasised that these normative documents were drawn up at a time of extensive budget cuts and aimed to prevent abuse and fraud. As a consequence, court ordinances must be considered as financial documents. They did not regulate court ceremony; rather

⁸ Schwarzkopf, 'Zum höfischen Dienstrecht', pp. 427–8.

⁹ W. Paravicini, 'Soziale Schichtung und soziale Mobilität am Hof der Herzöge von Burgund', *Francia*, 5 (1977), pp. 137–42.

¹⁰ Kruse, 'Die Hofordnungen', pp. 148–53; W. Blockmans, A. Janse, H. Kruse and R. Stein, 'From Territorial Courts to One Residence: The Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages', in *La cour*, pp. 21–2.

¹¹ Schwarzkopf, 'Zum höfischen Dienstrecht', pp. 424–5.

¹² B. Guenée, *Un meurtre, une société: l'assassinat du duc d'Orléans, 23 novembre 1407* (Paris, 1992), pp. 114–17; O. Mattéoni, *Servir le prince: les officiers des ducs de Bourbon à la fin du Moyen Âge (1356–1523)* (Paris, 1998), pp. 254–5.

¹³ Schwarzkopf, *Die Rechnungslegung*, pp. 40–1; Henri Stein: *Catalogue des Actes de Charles le Téméraire (1467–1477), Mit einem Anhang: Urkunden und Mandate Karls von Burgund, Grafen von Charolais (1433–1467)*, ed. S. Dünnebeil (Sigmaringen, 1999), pp. 628–747.

were they designed as instruments to reduce households' expenses. As such, they were drawn up in order to regulate financial and other compensations for daily service in the duke's household.¹⁴ Norms were also established for the giving of gifts, the payment of additional pensions and the way in which the ducal households' accounts were to be presented to the *Chambre de Comptes* in Lille. Management of the households' accounts was based on the so called *écroes* or daily payrolls, in which were entered the names and allowances of all office holders present on a particular day.¹⁵ These lists provided the financial experts at court with precise information on the daily composition of the household and the amount of its recurrent expenses. It should, however, be emphasised that the *gages* paid to court officers did not represent a salary. They were allowances which were only meant to cover daily expenses during service at court.¹⁶

The ordinances also contain stipulations regarding the number of months individual officers were expected to be present at court, the maintenance of servants and horses and the rotation of offices. Inspired by the practices at the court of the French king Charles VI, Philip the Bold, the first Burgundian duke, introduced the system of office rotation, albeit on a very limited scale.¹⁷ The system was copied and improved under Philip the Good. Most officials served for periods of three, four or six months per year, with only a few exceptions, such as the *maître de la chambre aux deniers*, whose service was required during the whole year.¹⁸ There is no doubt that office rotation had advantages for all concerned. It made it easier to include rival sections of the nobility in court life; and it helped ensure that the duke was surrounded by the best lawyers, clerks, doctors, theologians and artists. Furthermore, the system allowed for the accumulation of offices outside the court and for

¹⁴ Kruse, 'Die Hofordnungen', pp. 148–57.

¹⁵ Kruse, 'Die Hofordnungen', pp. 157–8. For these documents and their application at court see: Schwarzkopf, *Die Rechnungslegung*, pp. 40–8; Kruse, *Hof, Amt und Gagen*, pp. 10–48; M. Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal: une femme au pouvoir au XV^e siècle* (Lille, 1998), pp. 221–3; W. Paravicini, '“Ordonnances de l'Hôtel” und “Escroes des gaiges”: Wege zu einer prosopografischen Erforschung des Burgundischen Staats im fünfzehnten Jahrhundert', in *Medieval Lives and the Historian: Studies in Medieval Prosopography*, ed. N. Bulst and J.-P. Genet (Kalamazoo, 1986), pp. 253–7.

¹⁶ Kruse, 'Die Hofordnungen', pp. 155–7. Cf. J. Rauzier, *Finances et gestion d'une principauté au XIV^e siècle: le duché de Bourgogne de Philippe le Hardi (1364–1384)* (Paris, 1996), pp. 438–9. According to the latter the 'gaiges' are salaries and can only be considered as expense allowances in case they served as additional compensations for travel and lodging costs.

¹⁷ Rauzier, *Finances et gestion*, pp. 366–7, 440–1; M.-T. Caron, *La noblesse dans le duché de Bourgogne: 1314–1477* (Lille, 1987), pp. 136–9.

¹⁸ The system allowed officers to serve in several households within the same year. It narrowed the circle of trustees and meant that the best servants at court were at the disposal of several ducal family members. After 1458, for example, the chamberlain Claude de Rochebaron served nine months per year in the duke's household and the three remaining months in that of Charles, count of Charolais. Similar arrangements were made for the chamberlain Jean de Rubempré: Kruse, *Hof, Amt und Gagen*, p. 262. The ducal sergeant Jean le Caim, called Camus in the *écroes*, was also a *fourrier* in Isabella of Portugal's household: Schwarzkopf, 'Zum höfischen Dienstrecht', p. 439. Baudouin d'Ognies served as a steward in the households of the duke and the duchess, as did Paul Deschamps, who is mentioned in 1437 and 1442 as a secretary of Philip the Good and his wife, Isabella of Portugal: Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, pp. 252–3.

the duke's officers to serve him in all kinds of diplomatic and governmental affairs at times when their presence at court was not required.¹⁹

As John Bartier has already proved, however, office rotation carried with it the risk that high-ranking officers might simultaneously enter the service of a rival prince. Jean de Vaudrey, for example, who combined his office of squire (*écuyer*) of the ducal stables with that of bailiff of Tonnerre, also served the *connétable* of France, the count of Richemont. It put him in an awkward position, and the tensions arising between his two employers forced de Vaudrey to play, as Bartier put it, 'longtemps un jeu d'extrême subtilité'.²⁰ Jaques de Brimeu, who became a member of the Golden Fleece in 1430, was an *échanson* in the household of John the Fearless and at the court of the French dauphin. From 1420 on, we find him as an *écuyer* both in the ducal stables of Philip the Good and in those of the French king.²¹ The duke's councillor and chamberlain Jean de Lannoy, nominated stadholder in Holland in 1448–1462, served – between 1463 and 1465 – both the duke and the French king Louis XI. Although he had already been appointed governor of Lille by the duke, he accepted the office of bailiff of Amiens, Arras, Doullens and Mortaignes after Philip the Good signed the agreement transferring the towns of the Somme to the French king. De Lannoy's drastic action led to much confusion at the Burgundian court and, according to the chronicler Jean de Clerq, they caused relations between the duke and his former loyal servant to become highly strained.²²

¹⁹ W. Paravicini, 'Expansion et intégration: la noblesse à la cour de Philippe le Bon', *BMGN*, 95 (1982), pp. 298–315, and Paravicini, 'The Court of the Dukes of Burgundy: A Model for Europe?', in *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility: The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age ca. 1450–1650*, ed. R. G. Asch and A. M. Birke (Oxford, 1991), pp. 78–9; R. Vaughan, *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy* (London, 1970), pp. 139–40; B. Schnerb, *L'état bourguignon 1363–1477* (Paris, 1999), pp. 292–3. For many examples of the accumulation of offices by members of the ducal households on a regional level see: *Les chevaliers de l'Ordre de la Toison d'Or au XV^e siècle*, ed. R. de Smedt, Kieker Werckstücke Reihe D. Beiträge zur Europäischen Geschichte des späten Mittelalters, 2nd edn (Frankfurt-am-Main, Berlin etc., 2000), pp. 1–152; J. Bartier, *Légistes et gens de finances au XV^e siècle: les conseillers des ducs de Bourgogne Philippe le Bon et Charles le Téméraire* (Brussels, 1955), pp. 103–13. For the reign of Duke Philip the Good see also: B. Schnerb, *Enguerrand de Bournonville et les siens: un lignage noble du Boulonnais au XIV^e et XV^e siècle* (Paris, 1997), pp. 188–221; M. Damen, *De staat van dienst: de gewestelijke ambtenaren van Holland en Zeeland in de Bourgondische periode (1425–1482)* (Hilversum, 2000), pp. 43–78; M. Boone, 'Une famille en service de l'état bourguignon naissant: Roland et Jean d'Uutkerke, nobles flamands dans l'entourage de Philippe le Bon', *Revue du Nord*, 77 (1995), pp. 233–55; H. Brand, 'Jan en Floris van Boschhuijsen, Leidse edelen aan het Beierse en Bourgondische Hof', *Leidschrift: Historisch Tijdschrift*, 15/1 special issue (2000), pp. 64–99.

²⁰ Bartier, *Légistes et gens de finances*, pp. 105–6 and nn. 1, 2, 3, 9. Other examples include the duke's councillor Philibert Audrenet, who also served the duke of Savoy, and Aimé Bourgeois, who was a squire in the stables (*écuyer d'écurie*) of the duke and one of the servants at the court of the duke of Lorraine.

²¹ P. de Win, 'Brimeu, Jacques de', *Nationaal Biografisch Woordenboek*, vol. XIV (1992), col. 76–7.

²² R. de Smedt, 'Jan heer van Lannoy, stadhouder en diplomaat', in *De orde van het Gulden Vlies in 1491: Internationaal Symposium, Mechelen, 7 September 1991*, ed. R. de Smedt, Handelingen van de Koninklijke Kring voor Oudheidkunde, Letteren en Kunst van Mechelen, 95/2 (Malines, 1992), pp. 66–70.

Transfer of Offices within the Ducal Household

The prince's unrestricted right of appointment was, however, undermined by reactionary reflexes among the office-holders. This led to a rise in various forms of protectionism, nepotism and corruption. Marriage between members of the ducal household was common at the Burgundian court. Such tendencies are an important topic in Monique Sommé's excellent book on the household of Isabella of Portugal, the third wife of Philip the Good.²³ Those familiar with the Burgundian court ordinances and the *écroes* are aware of how strikingly dense are the family networks within the ducal households. This was especially true for high-ranking noble families like de Croÿ, Toulangeon, de Lannoy, Lalaing, Brimeu, Rochebaron or Tremoille, to give only a few examples. They were usually represented at court by a number of members and managed to maintain their posts for several generations.²⁴ But the same is true of families from the lower ranks of the nobility, like the Van Uutkerke, or of lawyers, physicians and financial specialists of bourgeois descent like Plaine, Gros, Goux, Mengersreuth or Schoonhoven, who all managed over several generations to create family networks.²⁵ In fact, this seems to have been true of princely servants of all ranks, including the ducal guards and the personnel in the kitchen and stables.

Such tendencies suggest that the ducal household underwent a continuous process of social coalescence, what German historians would call *Verdichtung*. This was reinforced by the common practice of transferring offices to relatives. Unfortunately, the current state of research does not allow a relevant quantitative analysis of both the court ordinances and *écroes*, so that a few examples must suffice to emphasise the argument. In 1455 Pierre de Vautravers succeeded his father as *écuyer d'écurie*.²⁶ Philippe Machefoing, mayor of Dijon between 1439 and 1445, who was until his death in 1453 the duke's *garde de joyaux*, had succeeded his father, Monnot Machefoing, who already served in 1407 the future duke Philip, at the time count of Charolais. Philippe was already in 1415 *valet de chambre* at the Burgundian court and charged with guarding the princely jewels since 1438.²⁷ An interesting case is

²³ Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, pp. 261–346. Also: T. de Hemptinne, 'Vorsten en hovelingen', in *Prinsen en poorters: beelden van de laat-middeleeuwse samenleving in de Bourgondische Nederlanden, 1384–1530*, ed. W. Prevenier (Antwerp, n.d.), pp. 24–5.

²⁴ Schnerb, *L'état bourguignon*, pp. 279–84.

²⁵ Bartier, *Légistes et gens de finances*, pp. 83–92, 341–81, 388–401; Boone, 'Une famille en service', pp. 233–55. Paravicini, 'Soziale Schichtung', pp. 145–53 (passim and esp. the rich footnotes).

²⁶ RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fols 63–64.

²⁷ W. Paravicini, 'Die Hofordnungen Philipps des Guten von Burgund. Edition I: Die Hofordnungen Herzog Johans für Philipp, Grafen von Charolais, von 1407, 1409 und 1415', *Francia*, 10 (1982), pp. 131–66, 1407 § 9, 1409 § 13, 1415 § 62, 63, and Paravicini, 'Die Hofordnungen Philipps des Guten von Burgund. Edition II: Die verlorene Hofordnung von 1419/1421: Die Hofordnung von 1426/27', *Francia*, 11 (1983), p. 278, and Paravicini, 'Die Hofordnungen Philipps des Guten von Burgund. Edition III: Die Hofordnung für Isabella von Portugal von 1430', in *Francia*, 13 (1985), p. 207; ADN, B 1605 CO 1438, fols 217–217v; ADN, B 3374, No. 113.505, fol. 11; RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fol. 80v; T. Dutour, *Une société de l'honneur: les nota-*

provided by the appointment of the *palfrenier* Jaques d'Angelin as successor to his brother on 19 May 1461. His resignation from his former office as *valet de chambre* paved the way for his cousin, petit Jean d'Angelin, nicknamed d'Ostriche, who entered ducal service for the first time the very same year.²⁸ Such practices suggest that the duke's duty to provide for the welfare of his personnel also benefited their relatives. Ursula Schwarzkopf even thinks that the inheritance of office was subject to specific rules or norms; a theory that regrettably cannot be substantiated by the sources.²⁹ Nevertheless, it seems safe to conclude that the proliferation of family ties, the competition for life-long jobs and the reservation of offices for relatives rendered the court a fairly closed system, which – as long as the vicissitudes of nature did not intervene – could be broken up only by the application of the duke's free right of appointment.

Officers at court used several techniques for constructing networks based on family ties and protectionism. The *resignatio in favorem*, voluntary resignation from office, was designed to secure an office's transfer to a chosen candidate, and proved to be an effective tool that helped to undermine the prince's appointment policies.³⁰ It was used in this way for the first time in the entourage of the French king at the end of the fourteenth century, but it was only introduced in the regional institutions of the duchy of Bourbon and in the county of Flanders around the mid-fifteenth century.³¹ Bartier suggests that these techniques were employed, in particular, by jurists and financial specialists in the Burgundian central institutions; that is, precisely by those who, in principle, had the greatest potential to galvanise the modernisation process.³²

Developments in the duke's household can be elucidated by analysing the court ordinances. Those drawn up in 1449 and in 1458 are particularly useful, for they contain several hundred brief comments on personnel changes within the various households. The reasons given for the changes, however, are highly concise and rarely reveal whether the transfer of an office was made at the request of the resigning officer. Some, however, explicitly do. Thus, in 1452, the duke decided 'du

bles et leur monde à Dijon à la fin du Moyen Âge, Études d'Histoire Médiévale (Paris, 1998), p. 178 n. 71. The author seems to believe that Philippe de Machefoing was active in court service until 1460. The court ordinance of 1449 mentions, however, that Jean Martin had already been appointed as Machefoing's successor on 4 June 1453. For the organisation of this particular office see: J. Paviot, 'Jacques de Brégilles, garde-joyaux des ducs de Bourgogne Philippe le Bon et Charles le Téméraire', *Revue du Nord*, 77 (1995), pp. 313–20.

²⁸ ADN, B 3376 no. 113545 CO 1458, fol. 16v.

²⁹ Schwarzkopf, 'Zum höfischen Dienstrecht', p. 431.

³⁰ The *resignatio in favorem* has its roots in canon law and is based on the idea that an office was the private property of its holder, who consequently could dispose of it as he liked: B. Guinée, *Tribunaux et gens de justice dans la baillie de Senlis à la fin du Moyen Âge (vers 1380–vers 1550)* (Strasbourg, 1963), pp. 169–70; J. van Rompaey, *Het grafelijk baljuwsambt in Vlaanderen tijdens de Boergondische periode*, Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, 62 (Brussels, 1967), p. 394.

³¹ Mattéoni, *Le prince*, pp. 284; Guinée, *Tribunaux et gens de justices*, pp. 169–70; Van Rompaey, *Het baljuwsambt*, pp. 394–9.

³² Bartier, *Légistes et gens de finances*, p. 91 and n. 1. See also Damen, *De staat van dienst*, pp. 159–60.

gré, consentement et à la requête de Lancelot de la Vielzville' to appoint the latter's son Jehan as his chamberlain. Similarly, the *écuyer tranchant* Gerard Loyte ensured the succession of his son Loys.³³ The *resignatio in favorem* was not only used to launch the career of a relative. On 27 April 1466 the duke's secretary was charged 'à mettre en ordonnance maistre George Baert au lieu du maistre George Bul. lequel a resigné son estat de secretaire en ordonnance au profit dudit Baert'.³⁴ In 1457, Guillaume de Crespond, who served as the duke's *saucier*, decided to resign in favour of Perrin du Vault,³⁵ and in 1452 a similar request was launched by the *huisier d'armes* Huguenin de Chissey in favour of Humbert de Vesoul.³⁶ Unfortunately, the court ordinances do not contain the information needed to establish the exact nature of the relations between the applicants and the resigning officials. It seems, nevertheless, that we are dealing here with some obvious cases of patronage which apparently did not meet with much opposition from the duke. Around 1450, the *resignatio in favorem* was an accepted procedure that was common at all levels of the duke's household.

An interesting aspect of the procedure is that the duke himself sometimes prevailed upon one of his officers to resign in favour of his own candidates. This happened, for example, in 1454, when the duke's *panetier* Jean de Masilles, who was responsible for the office's accounts, was urged to make place for the more experienced Jacques de Montmartin. Although the ordinances state that Jean de Masilles 'de son bon gré s'en est depporté et a icellui resigné au prouffit d'icellui Jaques de Montmartin', his voluntary resignation may have been the result of a deal. The very same day, the duke signed the appointment of young Jean de Masilles, the son of the resigned *panetier*, in the office formerly held by Jacques de Montmartin.³⁷ Apparently, the duke was not able or not prepared to prevent hereditary succession to offices, but he could pursue his own interests by using the same techniques that were applied to undermine his policy of appointment.

The ability of late medieval princes to make their own decisions when appointing household officers was also curtailed by the practice known as *survivance*, and most of all by the increasing use of substitutions. *Survivance* gained much in importance during the reign of the French king Charles VI, but hardly affected appointment practices at smaller courts in the realm such as that of the duke of Bourbon. *Survivance* referred to the princely favour of allowing an officer to cede his position to someone else without losing his rights to the office itself and to the allowances entailed by it. As a consequence, two different individuals shared office for the rest of the resigning officer's life.³⁸ It is, however, very difficult to establish in which cases *survivance* occurred, since the sources only reveal the activities of the officer in charge and ignore the presence of the retired officer in the background. There are,

³³ RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fols 18–18v, 47, 49v.

³⁴ ADN, B 3376 no. 113.545 CO 1458, fol. 182v.

³⁵ RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fol. 58v.

³⁶ RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fols 109–109v.

³⁷ RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fols 28, 29v. See also Schwarzkopf, 'Zum höfischen Dienstrecht', pp. 431–2 n. 31.

³⁸ Guenée, *Tribunaux et gens de justices*, pp. 176–7.

however, some indications in the court ordinances of 1458, suggesting that *survivance* was used to anticipate the succession of a favourite as well as to provide funds for support in old age. The example of the *sommelier* Huguenin Moroulx, who continued to be considered a member of the duke's household after his retirement from office in 1462, may serve as a typical example. He was replaced by Pierrequin van der Scaghe, who is mentioned from 1457 as a substitute *sommelier*. In order to ease the financial burden, the duke decided to reduce their daily allowances as long as both men shared office.³⁹ It seems, however, that *survivance* was just as rare a phenomenon in the ducal households as it was at the court of the dukes of Bourbon.⁴⁰ This was probably due to the fact that a whole range of measures providing support for retired officers were already in place, and that the additional costs of such arrangements obliged the duke to act cautiously.⁴¹ It was also clear that there were other, probably more effective ways to pave the way for one's relatives.

A superficial glance at the court ordinances suffices to reveal that substitution in office was widespread at the Burgundian court. From the duke's point of view, it was an excellent way to ensure that the courtly duties were fulfilled at times when the principal office-holders were absent. To the officers themselves, substitution provided a way to encourage the succession of a candidate of their choice. The *trompette de guerre* Audry Jambe, for example, managed to broker a deal whereby he and his son substituted for each other when one of them was absent from court.⁴² Similarly, although existing arrangements stipulated that Jean de Schoonhoven was to stand in for any absent secretaries, an exception was made at the request of the duke's secretary Jean de Milet in favour of his son Pierre. A third example is furnished by the *apothecaire* and *valet de chambre* Pierre Michel, who was allowed to share his office with his father, Jacob.⁴³ The duke tolerated such deals because of their obvious advantages. Although the duke must have been aware of the dangers of these practices, he also realised that substitution provided for training in office. Thus, the clear-cut opportunism of his officers was not necessarily incompatible with the duke's wishes to appoint experienced and well-trained officers.

Ducal Patronage and the Accumulation of Offices

Attempts to influence appointment procedures were motivated by the many advantages offered by service in the ducal household. Such service offered, among other things, long-term employment, access to the court-based system by which spoils were distributed and the possibility of appointment to regional and local offices

³⁹ RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fol. 33 ADN, B 3376 no. 113.545, fol. 8v; CO 1449, fol. 33.

⁴⁰ Mattéoni, *Servir le prince*, pp. 288–9. At the Bourbonian court, only 3.72 per cent of all cases of office transfers were linked to *survivance*.

⁴¹ H. Kruse, 'Der burgundische Hof als soziales Netz', *Francia*, 29 (2002), pp. 229–55.

⁴² RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fol. 118.

⁴³ RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fols 97v–98. See also Schwarzkopf, 'Zum höfischen Dienstrecht', p. 428 n. 22.

which were financially lucrative. Accumulation of functions may be regarded as characteristic of court service and was even promoted by the duke, because the household officers' direct access and personal ties to the prince turned them, at least theoretically, into loyal representatives of the central administration in the various Burgundian territories. The limited scope of this contribution does not allow us to go into the multitude of personal links between the regional and local institutions and the ducal household in order to reinforce the court's status as the political centre of gravity. Attention will be focused on the appointment policies of the duke related to administrative offices in his domains, which were determined by such mechanisms as patronage and venality.⁴⁴

The duke intervened on numerous occasions to ensure the nomination of his household members to administrative functions within the ducal domains. Household officers of all ranks were entrusted with functions as local or regional sergeant or castellan or as wardens of the gambling tables in Flanders, as keepers of ducal forests and residences, as guards of local prisons or as scribes and clerks working in local or regional institutions.⁴⁵ The *huissier d'armes* Jean Rigault enjoyed from 13 December 1426 a life-time appointment as a guardian of the prison called La Pierre in Malines. In 1434 the duke charged his herald Châteaubelin and Jean Paternostre, who was an *aide de la paneterie* in Isabella of Portugal's household with the wardenship of the gambling tables in Douai with all 'droits, proufits et émoluments'. Willequin Bloc, who served as a falconer in the duke's household, is also mentioned as castellan of Ter Walle in Ghent between 1426 und 1433. The last example concerns the ducal messenger Hervé Meriadec, who in 1455 was promoted into a leading function in the ducal stables, and who in 1458 was granted an appointment as keeper of the ducal residence in Wervicq.⁴⁶ Such posts could even remain in the hands of members of the duke's household as in the transfer of the gaming tables in the Quatre Métiers in western Flanders after the death of the duke's cook Lusequin des Marez to his squire of the body Humbert de Coustain in 1420.⁴⁷

Although daily allowances covered the expenses for food, clothing, travel and lodging, additional incomes were crucial for petty officers, so such accumulation of offices might have been a financial necessity for lesser office-holders, whose presence

⁴⁴ The literature is abundant. See, e.g.: W. Reinhard, 'Puissance étatique: une problème du crédit? Structure et fonction du commerce des offices à l'époque moderne', in *Papauté, confessions, modernité*, pp. 137–53; W. Blockmans, 'Corruptie, patronage, makelaardij en venaliteit', pp. 231–47; R. Mousnier, *La vénalité des offices sous Henri IV et Louis XIII*, 2nd edn (Paris, 1971); F. Autrand, 'Vénalité ou arrangements de famille: la résignation des offices royaux en France au XVIe siècle', *Ämterhandel im Spätmittelalter und im 16. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1984), pp. 69–81.

⁴⁵ See also: Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, pp. 357–60; Bartier, *Légistes et gens de finances*, pp. 103–13.

⁴⁶ ADN, B. inv. 1603, fol. 27v; 1607, fol. 89; Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, p. 359; J. van Humbeeck, 'Exploitation et répression de jeux d'argents en Flandre au XIVe et XVe siècles', *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis*, 46 (1978), pp. 327–52; Schwarzkopf, 'Zum höfischen Dienstrecht', pp. 439–41. For the ducal residences see: W. Paravicini, 'Die Residenzen der Herzöge von Burgund, 1363–1477', in *Fürstliche Residenzen im Spätmittelalterlichen Europa*, ed. H. Patze and W. Paravicini, Vorträge und Forschungen, 21 (Sigmaringen, 1991), pp. 228–9.

⁴⁷ ADN, B 1603, fol. 20.

at court was limited to a few months a year.⁴⁸ Even their participation in the distribution of spoils at court could not make up for the loss of income lesser officers incurred while they were not employed in court service. Gifts, benefits and ad hoc compensations were only transferred on an irregular basis, and the pensions alone represented, at least on paper, an additional regular income. In practice, however, payment of pensions was often postponed or even cancelled when new budget cuts were announced.⁴⁹ This situation may have encouraged the duke to appoint members of his household to the regional or local offices that promised attractive financial returns or at least some sort of influential position that they would not have acquired without the duke's intervention.⁵⁰

This particular form of appointment policy can be seen as a special case of the widespread system by which offices were sold.⁵¹ The transfer of public office by the duke to one of his favourites, along with its financial advantages and jurisdictional competences, represents a form of venality because it implies the use of public money for private purposes. This is especially true in cases where the duke deliberately alienated parts of the princely domains in favour of officers of his own household. In particular the incomes from the gambling tables in Flanders and from other low-ranking offices such as the sergeantry in Veurne, the clerkship of the cloth hall in Courtrai or the guardianship of the prisons of Dordrecht and Malines were susceptible to this kind of transaction.⁵² Although sources do not always mention why such offices were transferred, the fact that they were considered as gifts for life suggests that the duke was searching for ways to compensate his household members for services for which no adequate payment would otherwise have been provided. The range of yearly incomes varied considerably, however. For example, control over the gambling tables of Courtrai, which Philip the Good ceded to his chamberlain Mahiet Regnault in 1421, represented an annual income of about 240 Parisian pounds and those of the gambling tables in Furnes 72 pounds a year.⁵³ But such high revenues were probably an exception, since the yearly incomes of, for example, the doorkeepers or keepers of the ducal forests did not exceed 10 pounds and sometimes even consisted of payments in kind.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ M. Sommé, 'Que représentait un gage journalier des 3 sous pour l'officier d'un hôtel ducal à la cour de Bourgogne au XV^e siècle', in *Les niveaux de vie au moyen âge: mesures, perceptions et représentations, Actes du colloque international de Spa 21–25 Octobre 1998*, ed. J.-P. Sosson, C. Thiry, S. Thonion and T. van Hemelryck (Louvain, 1999), pp. 303–7; Blockmans, 'From Territorial Courts', pp. 22–3.

⁴⁹ For the delayed or annulled payments of pensions and allowances see: ADN, B 1938, fols 133–135v; inv. 1605 CO 1438, fo. 223; RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fols 151–151v; Kruse, 'Die Hofordnungen', pp. 155–6, and Kruse, 'Les malversations commies par le receveur général Martin Cornille à la cour de Philippe le Bon d'après l'enquête de 1448/49', *Revue du Nord*, 77 (1995), pp. 283–312. Cuts in pensions and even daily allowances were also announced in 1430 for the period of one year and in 1454: ADN, B 1604 fol. 20v; 1607 fols 74/76v.

⁵⁰ Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, p. 257.

⁵¹ Mousnier, *La vénalité des offices*, p. 13; Mattéoni, *Servir le prince*, pp. 289–90.

⁵² *Comptes généraux de l'état bourguignon entre 1416 et 1420*, ed. M. Mollat, R. Faveau and R. Fawtier (Paris, 1965–76), pp. 348, 354, 360, 377; ADN, B 1602, fols 106v, 107, 108, 120; 1603, fol. 27v.

⁵³ Mollat, *Comptes généraux*, pp. 360, 377; ADN, B 1602, fol. 108.

⁵⁴ Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, p. 359; Bartier, *Légistes et gens de finances*, pp. 423–5.

Referring to the situation in the French bailiwick of Senlis, Guenée concluded that the unconditional gifts of the prince provoked various forms of private venality,⁵⁵ because the beneficiary obtained free possession of the transferred office and with it the right to sell it to someone else or to nominate a successor.⁵⁶ Such mechanisms also occurred at the Burgundian court. In 1454 Philip the Good charged Antoine de Villiers, *écuyer tranchant* in the household of the duke's nephew the duke of Etampes, with the governorship of his residence La Feuillie in Cambrai, granting him all adjacent seigneurial rights and 'plain pouvoir, auctorité, mandement especial dudit office de baillage et de gouvernement de ladite maison'.⁵⁷ The duke even intervened personally in favour of his household officers when losses of profits linked to offices or rights were feared. In January 1457, the government of the city of Malines agreed to compensate the ducal *sommelier de corps*, Jean Coustain, with 100 pounds on a yearly basis for the transfer to the town of various urban taxes called 'inneghelt, hostelage and vliegute' to the city. Coustain had received the collection rights of these taxes as a ducal gift six months earlier, but was forced to transfer them to the city, after which the duke requested the town government to arrange for adequate indemnities.⁵⁸

Such examples suggest that the gift of offices is to be considered as a financial arrangement by which the officers of the ducal household secured an income additional to their daily allowances. Since the system operated at the expense of the duke's revenues from his domains, the financial experts tried to minimise such losses as much as possible, emphasising that the daily allowances of 3 *sous* a day per mouth (the mouths of horses and men being considered equal) were sufficient 'pour eulx gouverner honestement'.⁵⁹ Against that background, the ordinances of 1438 and 1449 stipulated that the revenues from the ducal domains should no longer be diminished by additional gifts, compensations and even pensions. The duke seemed to share this view and announced, albeit grudgingly, that 'tous les offices de brellans, serganteries et aulters . . . donnez ou transportees a oficiers at aultres gens . . . ils soient mis et appliquez a son demaine et plus ne soient donnez, ne transportez en quelque maniere que ce soit'.⁶⁰ It is, however, symptomatic of the duke's attitude and of the situation at court that he did not abide by such commitments and circumvented in several cases his own policies. In 1454 for example he donated

⁵⁵ In accordance with Mousnier, two main forms of office selling can be distinguished. In the case of public venality the prince himself is selling the offices in order to line the public treasury. Private venality occurs in the case where the prince transmits an office to one of his trustees instead of granting him allowances, salaries or pensions, and allows the beneficiary to sell the office and to keep all outcomes linked to it: Mousnier, *La vénalité des offices*, p. 13. See also: Guenée, *Tribunaux et gens de justices*, p. 171; Mattéoni, *Servir le prince*, pp. 289–90.

⁵⁶ Guenée, *Tribunaux et gens de justices*, p. 172.

⁵⁷ ADN, B 1607, fol. 108v.

⁵⁸ ADN, B 1607, fol. 176v.

⁵⁹ Schwarzkopf, 'Zum höfischen Dienstrecht', pp. 434–45 and n. 42. It is relevant in this context that the 'commensaulx et domestiques comptés par des écroes' were exempt of the *marc*, the urban tax in Dijon, since they 'ne pourroient bonnement vivre et entretenir leur messages'.

⁶⁰ Schwarzkopf, 'Zum höfischen Dienstrecht', pp. 439–40; Kruse, 'Hofordnungen', pp. 158–9; ADN, B inv. 1605, fol. 224; RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fols 159–159v.

Goessen van der Meulen the clerkship of the bailiwick of Bruges after Jean Coustain, at that moment chamberlain and *sommelier* in the ducal household, resigned in his favour.⁶¹ With this nomination, the duke deliberately ignored, apparently in order to maintain good relations with his employees at court, former ordinances stipulating that such vacant offices in Flanders had to be returned into the hands of the duke, so that these would be farmed out to the highest bidder.

Gifts and Indemnities

The examples quoted relating to the accumulation of offices suggest that in this particular case venality and gift-giving were two sides of the same coin because the donation of an office was also an instance of the prince's *libéralité* or generosity. Ideologists like Guillaume Fillastre highlighted Philip the Good's generosity where it concerned their requests for all kinds of gifts, nominations to offices, promotions or ducal interventions on their behalf.⁶² Sharing in the spoils at court was therefore considered as one of the attractive components of service in the ducal households and the long listings of gifts and indemnities in the general accounts offer us a vivid impression of the extent of the princely *largesse* or benevolence. Gift-giving was indeed extremely important since it played a crucial role in the formation and confirmation of the social and power relations at court. The gift not only constituted the material expression of the duke's gratitude for delivered services. Such favours must be placed in the more general context of the continuous flow of expressions of respect, loyalty and submission to the ducal power and were a token of both the duke's gratitude and sovereignty.⁶³ Top-down gift-giving also defined the power relations at court; it created obligations of service and confirmed the recipient's status of dependency. The munificence of the prince was for that reason neither based on an official commitment, nor was it linked to specific duties and services. Because the value of the gift was a reflection of the social status and ranking of the recipient, it was considered a vehicle moulding social hierarchy at court and the pivot on which personal relationships between the dukes and his servants turned.⁶⁴ The gift was, as Carol Chattaway accurately phrased it in her article on the court of Duke Philip the Bold, 'something freely given or given without any precisely defined return . . . being specified in advance', meaning that instead of counter gifts or immediate services, clear signs of trustworthiness and loyalty were expected.⁶⁵

⁶¹ ADN, B 1607, fol. 98v.

⁶² M. Prietzel, 'Guillaume Fillastre d.J.: Über Herzog Phillip den Guten von Burgund. Texte und Kommentar', *Francia*, 24/1 (1997), pp. 83–4, 113. Guillaume Fillastre was initially active as a diplomat for Philip the Good, but fulfilled a key-role at court from 1457 as one of the main councillors of the duke. During the last fifteen years of the duke's reign, he was the most important ideologist and defender of ducal policies. He lost his position when Charles the Bold came to power. His position at court undermined, he ended his career as bishop of Tournai.

⁶³ *La cour comme institution économique*, pp. 8–9; A. Guéry, 'Le roi dépensier', pp. 1242–4.

⁶⁴ *La cour comme institution économique*, p. 9.

⁶⁵ C. Chattaway, 'Looking a Medieval Horse in the Mouth: The Role of the Giving of Gift Objects in

When we turn to the Burgundian accounts, such a narrow definition helps us to distinguish the gift from indemnity, although both are listed under the header ‘dons et récompensations’. As the regular occurrence of the word *don* in the general-receiver’s accounts entries on both gifts and indemnities indicates, they were an outcome of the duke’s *largesse*. However, since all indemnities were meant to cover the additional expenses occurred in office, they fundamentally differed from the gift which had a much broader application and should not be seen as a mere complement to the daily allowances at court.⁶⁶ It means that all *dons* in entries dealing with money, clothing, valuable objects and the like which are directly linked to specific services, represented indemnities and not gifts in the strict sense of the word. It means that the 40 pounds acknowledged to Pierre du Bois, *escuier page*, in 1458 ‘pour avoir ung cheval pour recompensation d’un autre qu’il a nagueres perdu et affole en son service’ were indemnities as was the overcoat for ‘Messire Forteguerre de Plaisance, ausmonier de mondit seigneur . . . afin que plus honorablemt il puisse servir mondit seigneur’. The same goes for the 20 pounds assigned to Claude de Rochebaron ‘pour soy aider a habiller pour aler a Romme pour aucuns affaires secrez’.⁶⁷

Gifts in the sense used here are on the other hand recognisable because they lack specific justification but are noted in the general-receiver’s accounts with the explicit comment that the transfer was made ‘par de la grace de mon dit seigneur’. It was neither obligations nor well-defined services, but the office-holder’s ‘bons et agreables services qui lui a fait chacun jour et afin qu’il ait mieux cause de continuer’ that were rewarded by the duke’s benevolence.⁶⁸ Life’s highlights, such as marriage and baptism, became ideal opportunities for the duke to bestow upon his officers and their families precious gifts or considerable amounts of money, although a simple request could also trigger the duke’s generosity.⁶⁹ The fact that his *libéralité* concurred with his expectations that the top-down flow of gifts would secure him the recipient’s loyalty and services for the future, underlines the porous nature of the thin borderline that separated gift-giving from venality. As was the case with the gift

the Definition and Maintenance of the Power Networks of Philip the Bold’, *BMGN*, 114 (1999), pp. 1–2. Her definition is fully in line with M. Maus, *The Gift* (London, 1993), p. 65.

⁶⁶ Cf.: Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, pp. 348–51; Damen, *De staat van dienst*, pp. 232–53.

⁶⁷ ADN, B inv. 1938, fol. 152v; inv. 2030, fols 337–337v.

⁶⁸ Cases with the following particular phrasing are abundant. E.g. 27 April 1458: ‘A Mahieu Dauquasnes, varlet de chambre et fourrier de mondit seigneur la somme de 232 francs de 32 gros monnaie de Flandre . . . lui a de sa grace (de mondit seigneur) donne pour une fois en faveur et pour consideration des biens et agreables services qui lui a fais et fait chacun jour et afin qu’il ait mieux cause de continuer’: ADN, B 2030, fols 304v–306. It should, however, be noted that indemnities too were granted ‘a de la grace de mondit seigneur’, but they were always specified. See, e.g., ADN, B 2030, fol. 306.

⁶⁹ Schwarzkopf, ‘Zum höfischen Dienstrecht’, pp. 435–8. Gifts on the occasion of marriages and baptisms applied to all ranks. E.g. 30 March 1458: 110 francs granted to Motin du Bois, ‘archier de corps’ and 20 golden Ecus to Jehan Marant, nicknamed ‘le grand Hennequin’, messenger of the duke, on the occasion of their weddings. Jehan de Dammes, ‘archier de corps’, received instead of the usual plate or 3 marcs in silver a donation of 21 pounds 12s. Flemish on the occasion of the baptism of his son. ADN, B 2030, fols 307–307v, 336–336v.

of offices, public money was used to strengthen the personal links between Philip the Good and his servants by offering them the perspective of a life-time career in ducal service.

Against such a background, it is remarkable that the budget cuts had serious consequences for gift-giving within the duke's household. During the reign of Philip the Good, financial specialists planned several reorganisations which aimed, among other things, at replacing payments in kind with allowances in cash. Although a general financial reform begun in 1445 was meant to accelerate this transition, it was completed only in 1458.⁷⁰ Given the efforts to improve efficiency, it is surprising that informal procedures like gift-giving were restricted but never cancelled entirely. As early as 1422, the duke proclaimed that in view of the scarcity of resources, the bestowal of gifts was temporarily to be suspended.⁷¹ From 1426 onwards, all court ordinances contain regulations limiting the giving of valuable gifts to once a year. The ordinances decreed that although the donation of minor gifts on a monthly basis was allowed, they should not exceed the value of 5 *sous*. Neither would a second request for a gift be honoured. Exceptions were, however, granted for the gifts made on the occasions of baptisms and marriages, as well as for ransoms.⁷² This is revealing in several ways. Firstly, gift-giving was accepted, so long as it remained within certain limits. Secondly, such ambiguous regulations seem to be the result of compromise; the prince and his bureaucrats had to strike a deal between traditional concepts of kingship on the one hand and the need to rationalise the household on the other. Thirdly, such measures may also be the result of the fact that daily allowances remained fixed at their original level of 3 *sous* during the reign of Philip the Good and his son Charles. Although they covered all costs, such revenues certainly did not make a man rich. It may therefore be assumed, but this remains highly hypothetical, that we are dealing here with a deliberate policy aimed at preventing the channelling effects of gift-giving being diminished. The modest level of the wages may even have triggered social and professional competition and opportunism among the duke's office-holders. This would allow the giving of gifts to be consciously used by the prince to entrench his position and to construct and change the networks on which his power rested.

⁷⁰ See for the financial reforms in 1445: M. A. Arnould, 'Une estimation des revenus et des dépenses de Philippe le Bon en 1445', *Acta Historica Bruxellensis*, 3 (1974), pp. 131–219; Sornay, 'Les états prévisionnels', pp. 35–95; Kruse, *Hof, Amt und Gagen*, pp. 135–44; Sommé, *Isabelle de Portugal*, pp. 242–5.

⁷¹ ADN, B 1602, fol. 177.

⁷² Kruse, 'Hofordnungen', pp. 156–7; Schwarzkopf, 'Zum höfischen Dienstrecht', pp. 434–5 and n. 42; Paravicini, 'Die Hofordnungen II', p. 290, and Paravicini, 'Die Hofordnungen Herzog Philipps des Guten von Burgund. Edition IV: Die verlorenen Hofordnungen von 1421/32. Die Hofordnung von 1433', *Francia*, 15 (1987), pp. 215–16; ADN, B 1605 CO 1438, fol. 222; RA Ghent, Council of Flanders, Serie F, no. 45 CO 1449, fols 143v–45v; ADN, B 3374, no. 113.505 CO 1458, fols 201v–203. Not only gifts but also indemnities were in 1438 reduced to one payment a year. In order to see if the ordinances were strictly applied M. Jean Hibert was appointed to keep a separate register of the 'dons et récompensations' which was to be transferred to the duke every month for checking.

Conclusion

To return to the main question: can the Burgundian court be considered as a modern institution in the sense that new techniques were applied in order to overcome traditional barriers? On the basis of the elements evoked here, the answer seems to be negative. Recently adopted techniques such as *survivance* and *resignatio in favorem* were used on a limited scale, but nevertheless represented effective ways of influencing the duke's appointment policies and encouraged the creation of individual networks. They helped to render the household a rather closed system where family ties and patronage were dominant. In particular, substitution of office-holders proved to be very effective and was kept in place because it satisfied the needs of both the officers and the duke, who sought a combination of loyalty, experience and expertise in his appointees. Despite the attempts to rationalise the duke's household, informal techniques such as the accumulation of offices and gift-giving were not abolished, although both practices suffered setbacks. There is nothing new about the conclusion that they were used to buy loyalty. But we should take into account that such mechanisms also survived due to the financial straits of the duke's household and the introduction of the rotation system. Finally, our short survey of gift-giving suggests that the duke's generosity was reduced to a level deemed to be more in line with his financial resources. Nevertheless, complete abolition proved impossible, which demonstrates that rationalisation and informal mechanisms were regarded as complementary forces which could be harnessed to strengthen the duke's position.