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GRAEME SMALL

## The Scottish Court in the Fifteenth Century A view from Burgundy

Looking at the world of the Scottish court in the fifteenth century, the view from Burgundy was often far from positive. The exile of the Lancastrian royal family in Scotland in 1461, for example, was portrayed in the official ducal chronicle of George Chastelain as a miserable experience. Chastelain records an incident wherein Margaret of Anjou was forced to beg, from a tight-fisted Scots archer, for the loan of a groat to make her offering at Mass<sup>1</sup>. Scottish royal records show that the treatment the queen received was rather more generous, and we may suspect that Chastelain's colourful account was influenced by literary topoi of long pedigree<sup>2</sup>. Froissart's chronicles from the previous century supplied a rich vein of such material<sup>3</sup>. Recounting Jean de Vienne's ill-fated expedition to Scotland in 1385, the chronicler describes the discomfort of Burgundian knights *who had been used to handsome hotels, ornamented apartments, and castles with good soft beds: My fair sirs*, Froissart has Vienne chide them, *you cannot always be at Paris, Dijon, Beaune or Chalon*<sup>4</sup>. The image of a harsh, peculiarly uncourtly world that lay north of the Tweed was, in fact, older than Froissart. Contrasts between the *barbarous rudeness* of the Scots and the *sweet civility* of French-speaking courtiers had already been starkly drawn by Anglo-Norman historians such as William of Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon<sup>5</sup>. Writers of the English »twelfth-century Renaissance« may themselves have followed classical traditions which viewed the north with a mixture of trepidation and disgust. It was in the work of Vegetius that a southern Scot, Walter Bower, found support for his view that highlanders were headstrong barbarians, although all Scots were sufficiently northern to be tarred with that brush in southern literature<sup>6</sup>. Scotland had won a notable

1 Georges CHASTELLAIN, *Œuvres*, ed. by Joseph KERVYN DE LETTENHOVE, vol. 4, Brussels 1863, p. 300.

2 George BURNETT, *The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*, vol. 7, Edinburgh 1884, p. 60–62, 80.

3 Philippe CONTAMINE, *Froissart and Scotland*, in: Grant SIMPSON (ed.), *Scotland and the Low Countries 1124–1994*, East Linton 1996, p. 43–58.

4 Peter HUME BROWN (ed.), *Early Travellers in Scotland*, Edinburgh 1891, p. 7–15, at p. 11–12.

5 Rees DAVIES, *The First English Empire*, Oxford 2000, p. 113–141; John GILLINGHAM, *The English in the Twelfth Century: Imperialism, National Identity and Political Values*, Woodbridge 2000, p. 18, 43, 105.

6 Donald WATT (ed. & trans.), *A History Book for Scots. Selections from Scotichronicon*, St Andrews 1998, p. 276, contextualised in: Martin MACGREGOR, *Gaelic Barbarity and Scottish Identity in the Later Middle Ages*, in: Dauvit BROUN, Martin MACGREGOR (eds), *Mìorun Mòr Nan Gall, The Great Ill-Will of the Lowlander? Lowland Perceptions of the Highlands*, Glasgow 2007, p. 7–48.

place in the late medieval literature of the Francophone world as a setting for Arthurian tales, but it was *la sauvage Escoce* which captured the chivalric imagination and coloured perceptions of reality. The image was, in many respects, the inverse of the ordered world of the court.

Needless to say, Scottish kings did have an ordered court long before our period, even if the evidence is patchy and sustained development is consequently difficult to trace. One of the earliest surviving European household ordinances relates to Scotland, describing in detail the roles of a number of officers and the domestic arrangements they attended to<sup>7</sup>. The extent to which this early ordinance was implemented, and whether or not it reflected English practices of the later thirteenth century, rather than indigenous traditions, is hard to say. The terms of the ordinance were of limited relevance by 1326, when Robert I complained to Parliament that he did not have the means to sustain a household *becoming his station*<sup>8</sup>. The revival of the Scottish royal court, which followed David II's return from English captivity in 1356, does not appear to have been sustained under the early Stewart kings (Robert II and Robert III), and from 1406 to 1424 the captivity of James I in England precluded significant development of the royal court, just as it may have boosted the development of the courts of certain magnates of the realm, as we shall see.

By the time the first accounts of courtly travellers to Scotland begin to appear, around the middle of the fifteenth century, significant changes to the royal court had occurred. The anonymous Burgundian account of the marriage of Mary of Guelders to James II, in 1449, still bore the imprint of Francophone preconceptions, but the author also expressed a degree of admiration for the Scottish king's court, notably the intricate and visibly expensive *entremets* which accompanied the service of the dishes of the banquet, and the degree of protocol surrounding their presentation<sup>9</sup>. The Austrian nobleman Jörg von Ehingen, who visited James II's court in 1458, recalled that *much honour was shown to me in hunting, dancing and feasting*, which was more than he found to say about the courts of Henry VI of England or Charles VII of France<sup>10</sup>. Towards the end of the century, the testimony of the Spanish ambassador, Pedro de Ayala, to the court of James IV suggests that Scotland may even have entered the mainstream of international court culture<sup>11</sup>. The Spaniard was struck by

7 Mary BATESON (ed. & trans.), *The Scottish King's Household and Other Fragments*, from a Fourteenth-Century Manuscript in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, in: *Miscellany of the Scottish History Society*, vol. 2, Edinburgh 1904, p. 1–43; Cf. Malcolm VALE, *The Princely Court. Medieval Courts and Culture in North-West Europe 1270–1380*, Oxford 2001, p. 9, 34, 41.

8 Michael PENMAN, *David II (1329–1371)*, East Linton 2004, p. 34.

9 Mathieu d'ESCOUCHY, *Chronique*, ed. by Gaston DU FRESNE DE BEAUCOURT, vol. 1, Paris 1863, p. 180.

10 Malcolm LETTS (ed. & trans.), *The Diary of Jörg von Ehingen*, London 1929, p. 40. Ehingen was a former servant of James II's brother-in-law, Sigismund of Tyrol, and notes he received several gifts at the Scottish court. It is also possible he was the *cuidam Teutonico Austrie* who received the gift of a (livery?) collar on James II's instructions from James Shaw, chamberlain in Stirlingshire, as Ehingen was then part of Austria; BURNETT, *The Exchequer Rolls*, vol. 7 (as in n. 2), p. 33.

11 Translated in HUME BROWN, *Early travellers* (as in n. 4), p. 39–49.

the fact that a court-nobility lived around the prince at his expense, much as Pero Tafur had been when he described the court of Duke Philip the Good of Burgundy in the 1450s<sup>12</sup>. Ayala even made a direct – albeit rather mysterious – connection between Scotland and Burgundy for his principals, Ferdinand and Isabella. The Spanish audience was informed that the dukes of Burgundy had chosen the cross of St Andrew as their emblem *in memory of the succour which Scotland sent to the Duke*. The Scottish court was capable, some of the time at least, of impressing visitors – one of the principal functions of such gatherings<sup>13</sup>.

Modern historians have tended to reverse Ayala's perception of the direction in which cultural influences travelled between the courts of Scotland and Burgundy in the fifteenth century. According to one recent commentator, indeed, this was the »most >Burgundian< period in Scottish history«<sup>14</sup>. And yet, as we shall see, work done thus far on the patchy and problematic sources does not permit many firm conclusions about the development of the Scottish court, let alone the impact of external influences upon it. To anticipate, it will be argued here that conditions in later medieval Scotland were comparable, in certain key respects, to those which permitted the flourishing of a court society in the Burgundian Low Countries, and it is perhaps at this level that the most meaningful comparisons can be made for now. But it is far from clear that we know enough about the Scottish royal court to privilege the influence of specifically Burgundian *vecteurs* (carriers or conductors), *croisements* (encounters) and *transferts* (transfers) – the key themes of our colloquium – over those of other provenance, notably from England or royal France.

The foundations of court society in the Burgundian Netherlands are commonly located in the nature of the relationship between the ruler and the nobility of his many domains; in the presence of a dense urban network in the Low Countries which met the many needs of the court; and in the resources of the dynasty which provided the means to pay for the luxury and display associated with the prince's entourage. By comparing Stewart Scotland with the Valois Burgundian dominions in all three areas, it is possible to see why a court society evolved around Scottish kings, from James I to James III, in ways which were recognisable to well-travelled foreign contemporaries.

The relationship between the ruling Valois Burgundian dynasty and the nobilities of their dominions is given a largely positive role to play in the story of the court's evolution. The advent of Burgundian power in Flanders in 1384 may well have seemed a blessing to the noble kin-groups, saving them from the growing power of the great cities and their wealthiest inhabitants<sup>15</sup>. However, such was the gulf between

12 Andrew BROWN, Graeme SMALL, *Court and Civic Society in the Burgundian Low Countries, c. 1420–1530*, Manchester 2007, p. 91–94.

13 Werner PARAVICINI, *The Court of the Dukes of Burgundy. A Model for Europe?*, in: Ronald ASCH, Adolf BIRKE (eds), *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility. The Court at the Beginning of the Modern Age, c. 1450–1650*, Oxford 1991, p. 69–102.

14 Alasdair MACDONALD, *Chivalry as a Catalyst of Cultural Change in Late Medieval Scotland*, in: Rudolf SUNTRUP, Jan VEENSTRA (eds), *Tradition and Innovation in an Era of Change*, Frankfurt a. M., Oxford 2001, p. 151–174, at p. 154 n. 11.

15 John ARMSTRONG, *Had the Burgundian Government a Policy for the Nobility?*, in: John BROMLEY, Ernst KOSSMAN (eds), *Britain and the Netherlands*, vol. 2, Groningen 1964, p. 9–32.

the Valois dukes and the nobles of their many domains that one form of potential subjugation gave way to another, through the erosion of noble privileges and the forcible suppression of noble resistance by ducal power. Until the accession, in 1477, of the Habsburg dynasty in the Low Countries, there were very few occasions when political differences summoned up aristocratic coalitions of note against the ruler. In Armstrong's arresting phrase, »Burgundian power was something of a syndicate in which people took stakes so as to share in the fortunes of the house«<sup>16</sup>. The centre of that »syndicate« was most obviously the court, where the dukes sought to integrate the nobility, and where service of the prince afforded noblemen access to high office, financial reward, prestige and political influence, perhaps even a measure of control<sup>17</sup>. The court swelled in consequence, its growth calibrated in the household ordinances recording the lists of those eligible to serve *par terme*, rising to well over one thousand noble office-bearers by 1474<sup>18</sup>. Although some regional nobles were better integrated than others at the ducal court<sup>19</sup>, nonetheless, the latter was a valuable instrument for drawing together the social elite of the disparate dominions of the prince, supported, for those of the very highest standing, by membership of the Order of the Golden Fleece.

Given the power of the aristocracy within the localities, through bonds of kin and lordship, Scottish kings had strong incentives to draw the ranks of their nobility around themselves at court too. But the *rapport de force* between the ruler and his noble subjects was rather different in Scotland, and any metamorphosis of the armigerous classes into a court aristocracy was bound to be slower and more complex there. In the reigns of the early Stewarts, Robert II (1371–1390) and Robert III (1390–1406), powerful noble groupings emerged with strong territorial interests, led in some instances by lesser members of the Stewart family, in others by the heads of other great noble houses, notably that of Douglas. Like all regional magnates, these men had households which fulfilled many of the functions of princely courts, as centres of government, or as settings for display, for example<sup>20</sup>. It is remarkable to note, in this connection, that the vast majority of known aristocratic initiatives in the patronage of literature in the fifteenth century can be located in these smaller establishments, rather than at the royal court<sup>21</sup>. The »courtization« of the nobility could

16 John ARMSTRONG, *The Golden Age of Burgundy. The Dukes that Outdid Kings*, in: Arthur DICKENS (ed.), *The Courts of Europe. Politics, Patronage and Royalty, 1400–1800*, London 1975, p. 55–75, at p. 60.

17 Steven GUNN, Antheun JANSE, *Introduction. New Histories of the Court*, in: ID. (eds), *The Court as a Stage. England and the Low Countries in the Later Middle Ages*, Woodbridge 2006, p. 1–12, at p. 4.

18 PARAVICINI, *The Court of the Dukes of Burgundy* (as in n. 13), p. 76.

19 ID., *Expansion et intégration. La noblesse des Pays-Bas à la cour de Philippe le Bon*, in: Bijdragen en mededelingen betreffende de geschiedenis der Nederlanden 95 (1980), p. 298–314; Mario DAMEN, *The Nerve Centres of Political Networks? The Burgundian Court and the Integration of Holland and Zeeland into the Burgundian State, 1425–1477*, in: GUNN, JANSE, *The Court as a Stage* (as in n. 17), p. 70–84.

20 E.g. Michael BROWN, *The Black Douglasses, East Linton 1998*, p. 161–165.

21 Sally MAPSTONE, *Was there a Court Literature in Fifteenth-Century Scotland?*, in: *Studies in Scottish Literature* 26 (1991), p. 410–422.

therefore occur away from the entourage that surrounded the king, with the result that Scotland may have resembled the kingdom of France under Charles VI more, say, than the Burgundian dominions under Philip the Good. The greater Scottish magnates are seen as »overmighty subjects« in some modern accounts, and during the reigns of weak kings, or in the many years of minority government, the independence of powerful aristocratic families and coalitions certainly became a marked feature. When a Scottish king resolved (or was forced) to confront such challenges, he did not always win. The attack of James I (1406 [1424]–37) upon the Albany Stewarts in 1425 was followed by his own murder at Perth twelve years later at the instigation of his uncle, the earl of Atholl, whose household contained former Albany servants. On that occasion the royal entourage failed to perform the most basic function required of any court, namely assuring the prince's safety. According to a contemporary account the conspirators included the king's own chamberlain, who left the doors to the chamber unlocked and broken, and placed planks across a ditch for the assassins to enter the king's lodgings<sup>22</sup>. Walter Bower further records that *there was no-one in the king's entourage who gave him any help or who set about avenging his death at that time except Sir David of Dunbar*<sup>23</sup>. The murder of the most powerful lord in the kingdom, William, eighth earl of Douglas, at the hand of James II (1437–60) in Stirling Castle in 1452 may not have persuaded the aristocracy that the king's court was a safe place to gather, but it was an important moment in the restoration of royal authority. The fact that James III (1460–88) died confronting a coalition of noble opponents was proof enough that convincing challenges could still be mustered. In recent decades, it has been argued that the normal state of affairs between fifteenth-century Scottish kings and the powerful regional nobility was one of co-operation<sup>24</sup>. However, whether we emphasise conflict or consensus, neither scenario really favours the emergence in Scottish political culture of an integrated service nobility residing at the king's court, frequently and in large numbers, subject to a hierarchy that emphasised the pre-eminence of the ruler.

We should not conclude that the emergence of a »court society« around the king was an impossibility. Despite their relative weakness, the Stewarts – unlike the Valois dukes of Burgundy – were crowned kings. On the international stage the monarch enjoyed an aura which, under the right conditions, could be used to enhance the standing of his court. One obvious example would be the entry of the Scottish royal family into the international marriage market during the fifteenth century, beginning with the union of James I's daughter, Margaret, and Louis, Dauphin of France, in 1436, and continuing with the marriages of Margaret's siblings to foreign spouses, not least James II to Mary of Guelders, Philip the Good's niece, in 1449<sup>25</sup>. Such

22 Lister M. MATHESON (ed.), *Death and Dissent in Two Fifteenth-Century Chronicles*, Woodbridge 1999, p. 37.

23 WATT, *A History Book for Scots* (as in n. 6), p. 284.

24 Historiographical summary in Stephen BOARDMAN, Michael LYNCH, *The State of Late Medieval and Early Modern Scottish History*, in: Terry BROTHERSTONE, David DITCHBURN (eds), *Freedom and Authority. Scotland, c. 1050–1650. Historical and Historiographical Essays Presented to Grant G. Simpson*, East Linton 2000, p. 45–59.

25 Fiona DOWNIE, »She is but a woman«. *Queenship in Scotland, 1424–1463*, Edinburgh 2006, esp. p. 32–80.

alliances distinguished the king's court from internal rivals and exposed it to external influences. Furthermore, Scottish kings did retain considerable rights of patronage which could be used to channel the attention of an acquisitive nobility in the direction of the court, much as happened in Burgundy. Some of that patronage was usurped in periods of royal weakness by powerful magnates (the main royal residences of Edinburgh, Stirling and Dumbarton lay in the hands of leading magnates on James I's accession, for instance)<sup>26</sup>. However, if royal patronage was not sufficient to turn earls into courtiers, it could certainly attract lesser figures to the king's court: men such as John, first Lord Carlisle, keeper of the royal castles of Threave and Lochmaben, master of the Queen's stable, the king's ambassador, and a frequent presence in the entourage of James III<sup>27</sup>. Finally, it helped that the Scottish nobility subscribed wholeheartedly to an international chivalric ideology which it shared with several of its kings<sup>28</sup>. The common bond could be turned to royal advantage under the right circumstances. It has recently been argued that James II's attacks on the Sinclair and Douglas families in the early 1450s aimed not only to root out potential rival sources of authority in the kingdom, but also to establish a monopoly over chivalric culture<sup>29</sup>. Kings were not alone in dubbing to knighthood, but a dubbing performed by the king was more prestigious than others, and knights in royal service attracted the greatest preferment<sup>30</sup>. Tournaments, which were usually instigated by leading nobles in the middle of the fifteenth century, had become royal affairs by the end of it<sup>31</sup>. Through the control of opportunities for chivalric advancement and the expression of knightly values, by exercising limited patronage effectively, and through the accumulation of prestige thanks to regular and sustained contacts with other rulers, the Stewart dynasty placed its court at the centre of Scottish political society.

A second feature of the development of the Burgundian court in the fifteenth century was its location within a dense urban network which could cater for the needs of large princely households. By Philip the Good's reign a »double evolution« had occurred<sup>32</sup>: first, a shift from country to city<sup>33</sup>; and second, the established promi-

26 Michael BROWN, James I, East Linton 2000, p. 51–52.

27 Alfred BROWN, 'The Scottish »establishment« in the Fifteenth Century', in: *The Juridical Review* 23 (1978), p. 89–105, at p. 98–99. Royal patronage has been studied in: Trevor CHALMERS, *The King's Council, Patronage and the Governance of Scotland 1460–1513*, University of Aberdeen PhD thesis 1982 (not consulted); Alan BORTHWICK, *The King, Council and Councillors in Scotland, c. 1430–1460*, 2 vols, University of Edinburgh PhD thesis 1989.

28 Michael PENMAN, *Christian Days and Knights. The Religious Devotions and Court of David II*, in: *Historical research* 75 (2002), p. 249–272, at p. 261–265.

29 Katie STEVENSON, *Contesting Chivalry. James II and the Control of Chivalric Culture in the 1450s*, in: *Journal of Medieval History* 33 (2007), p. 197–214.

30 EAD., *Chivalry and Knighthood in Scotland, 1424–1513*, Woodbridge 2006, p. 41–62.

31 However, it should be noted that the creation of a royal chivalric order in Scotland could not form part of such a policy, for there is no substantial evidence that James III founded an »Order of the Thistle«: EAD., *The Unicorn, Saint Andrew and the Thistle. Was there Ever an Order of Chivalry in Late Medieval Scotland?* in: *Scottish Historical Review* 83 (2004), p. 3–22.

32 Marie-Thérèse CARON et al., *La cour des ducs de Bourgogne (1369–1477). Consommation et redistribution*, in: Maurice AYMARD, Marzio ROMANI (eds), *La cour comme institution économique*, Paris 1998, p. 31–41.

33 Élodie LECUPPRE-DESJARDIN, *La ville des cérémonies. Essai sur la communication politique dans les anciens Pays-Bas bourguignons*, Turnhout 2004, p. 384.

nence of particular cities as ducal residences, notably Brussels, Bruges and Lille<sup>34</sup>. The dukes rarely exercised *droit de gîte* by the middle of the fifteenth century, residing instead in renovated or entirely new palace complexes, often paid for by municipalities. Those courtiers who did not live with the ruler – and there were surely many – found lodgings in hostelries or in rented accommodation, or else acquired their own residences fairly close to the prince's: trends which made inn-keepers influential people, which benefited urban property-owners, and which tended to create Burgundian ›stamping grounds‹ within cities. The consumption patterns of the princely court and its associated establishments had a significant impact on sectors of the urban economy, not least in luxury goods which were acquired from a number of centres across the Low Countries, especially Bruges, but also in more mundane areas such as the sale of meat, fish and bread. Catering for a court population which could amount to hundreds of people was not easy in smaller towns, and these began to figure less and less on ducal itineraries. Politically, too, the prolonged presence of the ducal court in cities became significant. A measure of integration between civic and court elites has been traced in many large urban centres, affording the dukes some control over city politics and giving leading townsmen the opportunity for social and material advancement (and usually adding to the fiscal burden placed on the wider populace in the process). The great cities of the Low Countries could live without the court by the middle of the fifteenth century, but the inverse of that statement would be increasingly difficult to justify<sup>35</sup>.

Clearly the Scottish court was not surrounded by an urban infrastructure to match that of its Burgundian counterpart, a fact which did not escape contemporaries from the Low Countries and northern France<sup>36</sup>. Pedro de Ayala simply stated that Scottish kings did not commonly live in cities<sup>37</sup>. One might be tempted to accept the Spaniard's opinion given that towns were indeed small and the economy in Scotland was ›abnormally focussed on rural activity‹<sup>38</sup>. However, the general patterns which emerge in the evidence of royal charters suggest that Ayala may not be right<sup>39</sup>. Under the first Stewarts, the three main towns of Edinburgh, Stirling and Perth together accounted for around half of the locations occupied by the king and his court, where charters were issued. For Robert II, these towns amounted to slightly more than half of all known cases, for Robert III, slightly less<sup>40</sup>. The reign of James I witnessed significant change: over ninety percent of royal charters were issued in the main towns of Edinburgh, Stirling or Perth<sup>41</sup>. The figure remains above eighty percent

34 For this and what follows see: BROWN, SMALL, Court and Civic Society (as in n. 12), p. 7–20.

35 Peter STABEL, For Mutual Benefit? Court and City in the Burgundian Low Countries, in: GUNN, JANSE (eds), The Court as a Stage (as in n. 17), p. 101–117.

36 [Georges CHASTELLAIN,] Livre des faits de messire Jacques de Lalaing, in: Id, Œuvres (as in n. 1), vol. 8, p. 167–170.

37 HUME BROWN (ed.), Early Travellers (as in n. 4), p. 46.

38 Edgar LYTHER, Economic Life, in: Jennifer BROWN (ed.), Scottish Society in the Fifteenth Century, London 1977, p. 66–84, at p. 67.

39 For a discussion of the problematic nature of charter evidence, particularly witness lists, see: BROWN, The Scottish ›establishment‹ (as in n. 27), p. 92–93.

40 Stephen BOARDMAN, The Early Stewart Kings. Robert II and Robert III (1371–1406), East Linton 1996, p. 92–93, 284–285.

41 For this and what follows: BROWN, James I (as in n. 26), p. 202; Christine McGLADDERY, James

under James II. By James III's reign, Edinburgh itself had become the primary location, accounting for almost all of the six hundred and fifty or so charters known to have been issued throughout the reign. Turning to the architectural evidence as an indicator of the location of the court, we find that the evidence of new palace construction in the reigns of James I and II occurs primarily away from the main towns, but, nonetheless, in reasonable proximity to them. Linlithgow in particular was not far from Stirling or Edinburgh<sup>42</sup>. In the reign of James III, substantial new work was carried out at Stirling castle<sup>43</sup>. The principal Scottish towns which hosted the court were small, certainly, but not insignificant compared to some of those which sustained princely courts in later medieval France; nor were they as troublesome to the ruler as the great cities of the Low Countries could be. An attested lack of inns outside the principal Scottish urban centres further encouraged residence in the cities, as did the availability there of alternative accommodation for courtiers and visitors, in the form of suitable houses to rent from burgesses<sup>44</sup>. As the court put down firmer roots in an urban setting, interaction between wealthier townsfolk and the court developed. Mercantile financiers – so important to the ability of the Burgundian dukes to fund their activities – were really only to be found in the Scottish capital<sup>45</sup>. Suppliers to the Scottish court of cloth and spices included leading Edinburgh merchants such as David Whitehead, a member of the town's governing council of twelve under James III<sup>46</sup>. Some burgesses began that transition from non-noble to noble status via their association with the court. The Forresters of Corstorphine (near Edinburgh) provide a good example of this, entering royal service during the later fourteenth century and acquiring knighthoods in the process<sup>47</sup>. Historians detect

II, Edinburgh 1990, p. 158; Norman MACDOUGALL, James III, Glasgow 1982, p. 303; Louise FRADENBURG, *City, Marriage, Tournament. Arts of Rule in Late Medieval Scotland*, Madison Wisconsin 1991, p. 22.

42 John DUNBAR, *Scottish Royal Palaces. The Architecture of the Royal Residences during the Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Periods*, East Linton 1999, p. 5–21. Linlithgow was also an important staging post for trade in western Scotland heading east; Alexander STEVENSON, *Trade with the South, 1070–1513*, in: Michael LYNCH, Michael SPEARMAN, Geoffrey STELL (eds), *The Scottish Medieval Town*, Edinburgh 1988, p. 180–206, at p. 190. Its role as a centre of Scottish wool exports was usually third or fourth behind the major centres of Edinburgh, Aberdeen and to a lesser extent Perth (*ibid.*, p. 191).

43 DUNBAR, *Scottish Royal Palaces* (as in n. 42), p. 39–61, 107. On non-royal residences see Richard ORAM, Geoffrey STELL (ed.), *Lordship and Architecture in Medieval and Renaissance Scotland*, Edinburgh 2005.

44 Inns: Thomas DICKSON, James BALFOUR PAUL (eds), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland*, vol. I (1473–1498), Edinburgh 1877, p. CCLXXVIII–CCLXXIX. On burgesses' houses: Peter Falconer, whose house was leased to accommodate Count Geert of Oldenberg; *ibid.*, p. LXXVII; William Carrebris, a merchant whose house in Edinburgh was let out to Garter herald and his servants in 1459; BURNETT, *The Exchequer Rolls* (as in n. 2), vol. 6, p. 495; or Thomas Yare, Edinburgh merchant and municipal treasurer, who made lodgings over to English ambassadors in 1480; FRADENBURG, *City, Marriage, Tournament* (as in n. 41), p. 20.

45 MACDOUGALL, James III (as in n. 41), p. 304.

46 FRADENBURG, *City, Marriage, Tournament* (as in n. 41), p. 30. Cf. the examples John Turyng, Edinburgh merchant who, with his wife, made numerous purchases (including some in the Low Countries) for James I and his queen; BURNETT, *The Exchequer Rolls* (as in n. 2), vol. 1, p. CXLV–CLI, p. 679–680; or of Andrew Balfour, supplier to James II of furnishings and cloth; *ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 118, 297, 299, 498.

47 Elizabeth EWAN, *Townlife in Fourteenth-Century Scotland*, Edinburgh 1990, p. 134.

fertile interaction between an increasingly »sophisticated court culture« and its »rising urban counterpart« by the close of the century, most obviously in royal foundations such as Trinity College on the outskirts of Edinburgh, and in the city itself, where a song school provided prebends for burgesses and served as a centre for education in the absence of a university or inns of court<sup>48</sup>. Despite clear differences with its Burgundian counterpart, the development of the Scottish court must clearly be seen, in part at least, as a function of its increasingly urban setting.

Trinity College is thought to have been the location for the splendid Trinity altarpiece, by Hugo van der Goes, which is now in the National Gallery of Scotland. This work includes depictions of James III, Queen Margaret of Denmark, the future James IV, and (in a further indication of the cultural interaction between court and city) the first provost of the church, Edward Bonkil, merchant and member of the leading Edinburgh family who commissioned the work<sup>49</sup>. Bonkil's decision to look to Flanders was fairly typical of men associated with the Scottish court in the fifteenth century<sup>50</sup>. Indigenous resources were adequate to meet the daily needs of the king's entourage (salmon from Aberdeen, herring from Crail, for example)<sup>51</sup>, but there is little evidence of significant Scottish centres of production for the luxury goods which contemporaries associated with an international court culture. And yet Scottish kings of the fifteenth century are known to have drunk Beaune wine, taken imported spices and medicines, slept on beds adorned with gold spervers, worn imported shoes and jewellery, ridden on foreign saddles, purchased fine cloth from the Continent and surrounded themselves with a travelling collection of imported tapestries, some bearing the royal arms. All the examples we can cite in support of this brief glimpse of the material culture of the Scottish court in the fifteenth century are Flemish<sup>52</sup>. James I even sent his furs to Flanders to be cleaned, indicating that the region, and its leading commercial city of Bruges, was the obvious place to look for luxury goods<sup>53</sup>. Bruges remained a more dynamic economic centre than London, which was in any case not a favoured place of business for Scots merchants during

48 Theo VAN HEIJNSBERGEN, The Scottish Chapel Royal as Cultural Intermediary between Town and Court, in: Jan DRIJVERS, Alasdair MACDONALD (eds), *Centres of Learning. Learning and Location in Pre-Modern Europe and the Near East*, Leiden 1995, p. 299–313.

49 Lorne CAMPBELL, Edward Bonkil, a Scottish Patron of Hugo van der Goes, in: *The Burlington magazine* 126 (1984), p. 265–274.

50 ID., Scottish Patrons and Netherlandish Patrons in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, in: SIMPSON (ed.), *Scotland and the Low Countries* (as in n. 3), p. 89–103.

51 Harold BOOTON, Inland Trade. A Study of Aberdeen in the Late Middle Ages, in: LYNCH, SPEARMAN, STELL (eds), *The Scottish Medieval Town* (as in n. 42), p. 148–160, at p. 155; STEVENSON, *Trade with the South* (as in n. 42), p. 186. Some of the court's provisions came from the payment of dues in kind to the king; Athol MURRAY, The Comptroller, 1425–1488, in: *Scottish historical review* 52 (1973), p. 1–29, at p. 16.

52 BURNETT, *The Exchequer Rolls* (as in n. 2), vol. 4, p. 556 (tapestries), 678–682 (shoes, jewellery, spices, sperver, tapestries); *ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 382 (saddles), 616 (wine, Courtrai cloth); *ibid.*, vol. 6, p. 309 (medicine), 384, 496 (wine, spices); *ibid.*, vol. 7, p. 63 (tapestries *de Arass* which accompanied the king and queen to Stirling, Dumfries, Falkland and Linlithgow: cf. *ibid.*, p. 590, John Dolase, *textori de Arras*, who received a payment from James III *ad necessaria artis sue*), 147 (Lille and Menen cloth); *ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 467 (medicines).

53 *Ibid.*, vol. 4, p. 681.

periods of tension. Furthermore, the Flemish city was marginally closer by direct sea journey from Leith, Edinburgh's port, than the English capital<sup>54</sup>. Scottish traders were a significant presence in Bruges, second only to the French among the foreigners who became *poorters* in the fifteenth century, supported by a succession of locally-appointed brokers, such as the Metteneye family and, later, Anselm Adorne from Bruges<sup>55</sup>. Detailed insight into the import of luxury items from the Low Countries is provided by the late-fifteenth-century ledger of the Scots merchant, Andrew Halyburton, much of which concerns cloth, wine, spices, gold, and silverware, pictures, and paints<sup>56</sup>. No wonder Ayala believed the domestic interiors he saw in Scotland resembled those of France and elsewhere, save that the Scots furnishings were sometimes hand-me-downs, in keeping with an economy in which luxury items represented a greater proportion of available wealth<sup>57</sup>. Once again we are led to the conclusion that the difference between the infrastructure of the Scottish court and its Burgundian counterpart was one of degree rather than kind. It is also worth noting that the most sustained contacts between Scotland and the Low Countries in the late Middle Ages, and therefore the most obvious means for the transmission of cultural values, were via the mercantile elite, not the nobility or the ruling dynasty. Merchants – as suppliers, financiers, and importers of luxury goods – constitute a group which deserves particular attention in any future study of the late medieval Scottish court.

The ability of the Scots king to surround himself with an impressive court depended, finally, on whether he could afford to or not. Other contributors to the present colloquium have dealt with the question of how the revenues of the Burgundian dukes compared to those of their contemporaries and, clearly, Scottish kings did not rank highly among the latter<sup>58</sup>. The »remarkable and crucial difference« between the Stewarts and so many of their contemporaries was their inability to tax their subjects on a permanent basis<sup>59</sup>. Extraordinary revenues were raised in large quantities at certain points, such as the levy to pay for James I's ransom in 1424, most of which was kept to fund »what can only be described as a reckless spending spree« on items for the king's household<sup>60</sup>. Normally, however, the king was expected to live »of his own«: that is to say, from the revenue of the crown lands, custom dues, income from sheriffs and burgh farms. Estimates of how much all this amounted to vary, but none is very great: perhaps one-tenth of the revenues of the king of England<sup>61</sup>, or the equivalent of the income of »a very rich English magnate«<sup>62</sup>. Historians do warn

54 Alexander STEVENSON, *Medieval Scottish Associations with Bruges*, in: BROTHERSTONE, DITCHBURN (eds), *Freedom and Authority* (as in n. 24), p. 93–107.

55 William FINLAYSON, *The Scottish Nation of Merchants in Bruges*, University of Glasgow PhD thesis 1951, p. 175–192.

56 Cosmo INNES (ed.), *The Ledger of Andrew Halyburton, Conservator of the Privileges of the Scotch Nation in the Netherlands*, Edinburgh 1867, p. LXXII–LXXVIII.

57 HUME BROWN (ed.), *Early Travellers* (as in n. 4), p. 47.

58 See the contribution of Jean-François Lassalmonie.

59 Jennifer BROWN, *The Exercise of Power*, in: EAD. (ed.), *Scottish Society* (as in n. 38), p. 33–65, at p. 38.

60 Archibald DUNCAN, *James I*, Glasgow 1976, p. 14.

61 MURRAY, *The Comptroller* (as in n. 51), p. 13.

62 BROWN, *The Scottish »establishment«* (as in n. 27), p. 90.

against underestimating the revenues at the king's disposal, pointing to James III's ability to salt away large sums for his own use. It is also important to remember that, compared to most of his nobility, the king was usually a very wealthy man indeed. But there is little to suggest that the Scottish royal family was anything other than the poor relation of the dynasties abroad into which its members had begun to marry.

It is nonetheless possible to identify and track a number of changes throughout the fifteenth century which had a bearing on the king's ability to sustain an impressive royal court. Taxation was not an area of particular change, for regular taxes only emerged in 1581. If the crown's resources were to depend on income from land, one way of expanding revenues was simply to increase the amount of land under direct royal rule. This motivation lay behind the vigorous action which James I and James II took against leading magnates. Michael Brown estimates that James I's reign alone witnessed a doubling in the extent of crown lands<sup>63</sup>. As for James II, it was, in large part, his need to meet the financial provisions of the 1449 marriage contract that led the king to move, first against the Livingstons, then against the Black Douglasses. While William, eighth earl of Douglas, and his »great and honourable household« were being fêted at Lille by Philip the Good, en route to Rome for the Jubilee, the king was contemplating the magnate's downfall in order to meet the duke's conditions for the Guelders marriage<sup>64</sup>. To that extent, at least, relations with Burgundy had a very direct bearing on royal fortunes in fifteenth-century Scotland: the absorption of the forfeited Black Douglas lands is thought to have been worth, simply in cash rents, about one-third of the total which came from crown lands under James II<sup>65</sup>. The relative speed with which the Douglas family fell, and the fact that it did not result in a prolonged period of civil war, is also a factor relevant to royal fortunes and the further development of the court. Fifteenth-century Scotland – by comparison with France, from 1410 to 1435, for instance – was not a country wracked by prolonged and profoundly disruptive civil war<sup>66</sup>. Nor, compared to fourteenth-century Scotland, was it a country engaged in frequent and damaging conflict with its powerful southern neighbour. None of this is to suggest that Scotland could be described as the »Promised land«, as the Burgundian dominions under Philip the Good famously were by Philippe de Commines; but it does suggest that fifteenth-century Scottish kings were able to spend proportionately more on their households than some of their contemporaries and predecessors. In short, the little that Scottish kings had was growing, and a little could go further in the prevailing circumstances. The patchy evidence does not suggest spectacular increases in Scottish royal expenditure on the household, at least until the early sixteenth century<sup>67</sup>. More striking signs of growth do emerge in the fees of household servants paid out by the comptroller, which increased almost fivefold between 1449–50 and 1492–93<sup>68</sup>.

63 BROWN, James I (as in n. 26), p. XIV.

64 ID., *The Black Douglasses* (as in n. 20), p. 287.

65 Ranald NICHOLSON, *Scotland. The Later Middle Ages*, Edinburgh 1974, p. 378.

66 Cf. Michael BROWN, *Scotland Tamed? Kings and Magnates in Late Medieval Scotland. A Review of Recent Work*, in: *Innes Review* 45 (1994), p. 12–46, at p. 128.

67 MURRAY, *The Comptroller* (as in n. 51), p. 20.

68 ID., *The Exchequer and Crown Revenue of Scotland 1437–1542*, University of Edinburgh PhD thesis (1961), p. 225.

How the considerations we have discussed thus far shaped the growth of the Scottish court in the fifteenth century is hard to say, for the subject awaits its historian, and the sources are scant and problematic<sup>69</sup>. The kingdom was a famously »under-recorded« part of the world in the fifteenth century, but the court itself probably escaped that general rule<sup>70</sup>. A new office of comptroller was established by James I, in 1424, to receive income from crown lands and certain other sources, and to meet basic expenses for the household<sup>71</sup>. Unfortunately the accounts of the comptroller are virtually all lost<sup>72</sup>. A second office, that of treasurer, was created at the same time to receive monies from feudal dues, the profits of justice and such taxation as was occasionally levied. The surviving treasurer's accounts contain a good deal of information, including miscellaneous expenses of the king and queen, the purchase of liveries, the expenses of the royal stable and messengers, and the alms and hospitality extended to visitors. Unfortunately, nothing survives of these records before the reign of James III – indeed, just sixteen months' worth exists for that period (1473–1474) – and, again, there is nothing until the reign of James IV. The evidence of charters issued under the great seal is substantial, and may be used to draw tentative conclusions about the itinerary of the court and the attendance of leading figures, as we have seen<sup>73</sup>. However, these records are certainly less straightforward to interpret than the Burgundian *écroes*, and the task of studying them has primarily been undertaken within the context of individual reigns. With notable exceptions, the history of the court has not yet been systematically enlightened by a thorough trawling of the exchequer rolls, around two-thirds of which survive for the period 1425 to 1472<sup>74</sup>. The exchequer rolls record the monies raised and spent by the king's officers in the localities, yielding up occasional, but remarkably detailed, insights into important matters such as the movements and needs of the court, or the identity and functions of court office-bearers. Documents which would have been more directly useful to the historian of the late medieval Scottish court, notably the main series of household records mentioned in the surviving exchequer rolls (the *liber dietarum* or day books, later known as the *liber domicilii*, mentioned from 1429; the *liber emptorum* or

69 BOARDMAN, LYNCH, *The State of Late Medieval and Early Modern Scottish History* (as in n. 24), p. 53–57; Since this article was written Nicola Scott has completed a doctoral thesis on the court of James I under the supervision of Michael Penman (University of Stirling) and William Hepburn has begun doctoral research at Glasgow on the court of James IV.

70 Jennifer WORMALD, *Lords and Lairds in Fifteenth-Century Scotland*, in: Michael JONES (ed.), *Gentry and Lesser Nobility in Late Medieval Europe*, Gloucester 1988, p. 181–200, at p. 189. For a marked contrast with Burgundy, cf. what follows and Werner PARAVICINI, *L'embarras de richesse. Comment rendre accessibles les archives financières de la maison de Bourgogne-Valois*, in: *Bulletin de la classe des lettres et des sciences morales et politiques de Belgique* 7 (6<sup>th</sup> series) (1996 [publ. 1997]), p. 21–68.

71 NICHOLSON, *Scotland* (as in n. 65), p. 313; DICKSON, BALFOUR PAUL (eds), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer* (as in n. 44), p. XXII–XXIII.

72 MURRAY, *The Comptroller* (as in n. 51), p. 1.

73 Norman MACDOUGALL, *The Sources. A Reappraisal of the Legend*, in: BROWN (ed.), *Scottish Society* (as in n. 38), p. 10–32, at p. 10.

74 Athol MURRAY, *The Pre-Union Records of the Scottish Exchequer*, in: Felicity RANGER (ed.), *Prisca munimenta. Studies in Archival and Administrative History Presented to Dr A. E. J. Hollaender*, London 1973, p. 169–183.

purchase records, extant as early as 1453; and the ancillary spice, wine and stable – or avery – books) no longer survive<sup>75</sup>.

Such lacunae in the record evidence would matter less if we had a Scottish Jean Molinet or Olivier de La Marche. True, few courts were blessed with such prolific chroniclers, memoirists, heralds and letter writers as was that of Burgundy, but the Scottish narrative sources are particularly sparse, and their authors, where we know much about them, wrote at some remove from the circles of the royal court. As Norman Macdougall points out, we have just two contemporary chronicle fragments for the period 1437–1482<sup>76</sup>. There are fuller sources for the earlier fifteenth century, notably the chronicle of Walter Bower (mentioned above) and the anonymous »Liber Pluscardensis«. However, both are monastic and, although Bower played an important role in the political life of the kingdom (and left a famous account of James I's courtly accomplishments)<sup>77</sup>, it would be difficult to describe him as a practised courtier. We have already seen that literary patronage in fifteenth-century Scotland is often connected to non-royal households. With the notable exception of the verse attributed to James I, it is not until the close of our period that we begin to find sustained evidence of court poetry in royal circles<sup>78</sup>. The court of James IV, which emerges in the work of William Dunbar immediately after our period, is one in which »relative informality was a recognized and even prized characteristic«<sup>79</sup>. One imagines the same was true of the Scottish court in earlier times. But rulers set the tone for their courts, and James IV was certainly not James I in character. If it is dangerous to project backwards from the work of Dunbar into relatively recent periods of Scottish court history, how much more so to draw uncritically on stories told about the court by sixteenth-century, and later, sources. All of the above highlights the need for the careful handling of the narrative sources once the history of the Scottish court in the later Middle Ages comes to be written. As a contribution to that larger task, one or two salient characteristics of the Scottish court may be noted here, along with some related lines of research for further investigation.

It seems clear, first of all, that the royal households – that is to say, the establishments of the king, the queen and, to an extent, the royal children – lay at the core of

75 DICKSON, BALFOUR PAUL (eds), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer* (as in n. 44), p. XXXIII; MURRAY, *The Exchequer and Crown Revenue* (as in n. 68), p. 204–242; *Id.*, *The Comptroller* (as in n. 51), p. 17. Among the most important of the records now lost are those of the clerk of expenses, first mentioned in the surviving documentation for 1456 and accompanied by an assistant from at least 1492. The many surviving references in the Exchequer Rolls to the various household books afford potentially interesting insight into household organisation.

76 MACDOUGALL, *The Sources* (as in n. 73), p. 11–12.

77 Katie STEVENSON, »Recreations to refresh the spirits of his followers«. Walter Bower's Revelations on Cultural Pursuits at James I of Scotland's Court, in: *Recherches anglaises et nord-américaines (RANAM)* 40 (2007), p. 9–23. I am grateful to Katie Stevenson for sending me a copy of this article.

78 On the poetry attributed to James I, see: Sally MAPSTONE, *Kingship and the Kingis Quair*, in: Helen COOPER, Sally MAPSTONE (eds), *The Long Fifteenth Century. Essays for Douglas Gray*, Oxford 1997, p. 51–69.

79 Sarah CARPENTER, David Lindsay and James V. Court Literature as Current Event, in: Jennifer BRITNELL, Richard BRITNELL (eds), *Vernacular Literature and Current Affairs in the Early Sixteenth Century France, England and Scotland*, Aldershot 2000, p. 135–152, at p. 138.

the Scottish court, just as they did in Burgundy, and that these households were gaining in size and definition as a result of the factors discussed earlier in this essay. The return of James I from prolonged English captivity in 1424 marked an important moment, at least from an organisational perspective. By that stage, some of the longer-established household offices had acquired specialised governmental roles relating to the kingdom as a whole: the post of chamberlain, for instance, was much more akin to that of English royal treasurer than the Burgundian household office of *chambellan*<sup>80</sup>. Other posts had become hereditary in nature, such as steward, constable and marshal. The creation of the posts of comptroller and treasurer, as well as that of Master of the Household (responsible for discipline and other matters), formed a new administrative structure that was potentially less susceptible to domination by the leading magnate families<sup>81</sup>. We can also trace the existence of many lesser offices within the household, thanks to passing mentions of occupants and titles in the records discussed above: chaplain, clerk of the king's chapel, usher of the king's bedchamber, squire of the king's bedchamber, tutor – in short, the sort of office we would expect in any well-organised court of the period. A database of these household offices and their occupants over the course of the century would be a valuable tool, enabling the historian to observe the emergence of new posts, such as captain of the guard<sup>82</sup>, or to say how far the growing royal court was drawing on servants from magnate households<sup>83</sup>. This last inquiry may be easier to pursue for Scotland than it is for Valois Burgundy, where the bright sun of the central court records can obscure the more shadowy evidence for lesser households and related networks of patronage, based on ties of kinship, lordship, and regional association<sup>84</sup>. The early part of James I's reign is one period which has yielded interesting finds in this respect, such as the entry by members of the Black Douglas household into the king's service at a high level, notably the royal secretary, John Cameron, or the king's confessor, John Fogo<sup>85</sup>. Other issues will be more difficult to address given the state of the evidence. How large was the king's entourage, for instance<sup>86</sup>? This is a difficult question to answer for many courts, perhaps, but especially so for one which left no ordinances or billeting and daily attendance lists. In 1479, James III sought a safe-conduct from Edward IV so that the Scottish king might pass through England on pilgrimage to

80 For this point and the next, see: BATESON (ed. & trans.), *The Scottish King's Household* (as in n. 7), p. 23–42.

81 NICHOLSON, *Scotland* (as in n. 65), p. 21; MURRAY, *The Exchequer and Crown Revenue* (as in n. 68), p. 208.

82 NICHOLSON, *Scotland* (as in n. 65), p. 498; MACDOUGALL, *James III* (as in n. 41), p. 99–100.

83 Cf. PENMAN, *Christian Days and Knights* (as in n. 28), p. 263.

84 Leading Burgundian noblemen had their own households, but the record evidence (which is much less frequently studied than that relating to the court) suggests they were considerably smaller and less impressive than the ruler's establishment. For an example of such a noble household, see: Paul DE WIN, *The Lesser Nobility of the Burgundian Netherlands*, in: JONES (ed.), *Gentry and Lesser Nobility* (as in n. 70), p. 95–118, at p. 101 (Adolf of Cleves). For some of the »rares débris des comptabilités privées qui nous sont parvenus« from lesser noble households, see: CARON et al., *La cour des ducs de Bourgogne* (as in n. 32), p. 35–37.

85 BROWN, *James I* (as in n. 26), p. 51; ID., *The Black Douglasses* (as in n. 20), p. 238–239.

86 Cf. DOWNIE, »She is but a woman« (as in n. 25), p. 111.

Amiens with a retinue of no fewer than a thousand persons<sup>87</sup>. Can we take this as an indication that James III's entourage really was very large; larger, indeed, than that of his contemporary, Emperor Frederick III<sup>88</sup>? Or should we simply note that James III never used that safe-conduct, and that, given the route of his journey, it is likely he was planning to surround himself with a larger escort than usual in order to impress rivals and intimidate foes?

A second broad observation for future refinement is the following: the Scottish court, to a greater extent than its Burgundian counterpart, remained an occasion or event. In this respect it resembled the courts of an earlier period in the Low Countries, where courts were commonly held at Yule and Easter<sup>89</sup>. In 1425, James I held a »lavish Christmas court« which was attended by the earl of Douglas and other leading nobles of the realm<sup>90</sup>. James II had silver necklaces bought for Christmas in 1438, and players and jesters disported themselves during the festive season in 1447 and 1448<sup>91</sup>. In the surviving fragments of the treasurer's accounts of James III's reign, there is mention of invitations to guests to attend the court for Yule, and the purchase of new garments for the king and some of his servants. The exchequer rolls, meanwhile, record payments for mummeries at court and other games in the king's chamber, at Christmas in 1466, 1476, and 1478<sup>92</sup>. Further occasions for holding court included the celebration of dates connected to the dynasty's history (the king's birthday, the commemoration of battles, coronations, and so forth), or the religious calendar (certain saints' days, notably cults linked to the monarchy)<sup>93</sup>. It has been suggested that, under David II, these events »must have formed a vital and attractive component of court life«, an opportunity »to draw the services of loyal, militarily experienced, ambitious, and perhaps even wealthy men of chivalry, as well as men of trade and career-minded churchmen«<sup>94</sup>. Extending the inquiry to later reigns would help historians understand the evolution of the royal court as an established feature in Scottish political culture.

Recent commentators have strongly emphasised the influence of Burgundy on Scottish court culture in the fifteenth century. There are, certainly, many connections, only some of which are mentioned above<sup>95</sup>. Underlying the thesis of Burgun-

87 MACDOUGALL, James III (as in n. 41), p. 143.

88 Paul-Joachim HEINIG, How Large was the Court of Emperor Frederick III?, in: ASCH, BIRKE (eds), *Princes, Patronage and the Nobility* (as in n. 13), p. 139–156.

89 VALE, *The Princely Court* (as in n. 7), p. 32–33.

90 *Scotichronicon*, Bk XVI, ch. 14, lines 11–14.

91 BURNETT, *The Exchequer Rolls* (as in note 2) vol. 5, p. 66, 266, 318.

92 DICKSON, BALFOUR PAUL (eds), *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer* (as in n. 44), p. LXXXVII, CCXXXVII–CCXLI, 46; BURNETT, *The Exchequer Rolls* (as in note 2), vol. 6, p. 423; *ibid.*, vol. 8, p. 333, 512.

93 PENMAN, *Christian Days and Knights* (as in n. 28).

94 *Id.*, *David II* (as in n. 8), p. 263–265.

95 Even before the 1449 marriage, for instance, James II's sister Mary had married Wolfert VI van Borselen (1444), and there existed in Scotland a Burgundian chapel dedicated to St Anthony, to which Philip the Good donated 120 lbs for ornaments and stained glass in 1447. I am grateful to Dr Mario DAMEN (Leiden) for this last piece of information, which will figure in a future publication on Burgundian stained glass. On Van Borselen, earl of Buchan, see *Id.*, *De staat van dienst. De gewestelijke ambtenaren van Holland en Zeeland in de Bourgondische periode (1425–1482)*, Hilversum 2000, p. 448–449.

dian influence on Scotland is a commonly-held assumption that many parts of Europe were becoming more Burgundian in this period: Scotland was »ever more European, *ipso facto* ever more Burgundian«<sup>96</sup>. As the present colloquium has shown, however, the thesis of Burgundian cultural magnetism in late medieval and early modern Europe remains to be proven rather than asserted, and the state of our knowledge of the Scottish court urges even greater caution than usual when assessing the possible impact of any supposed Burgundian ›model‹.

It is certainly possible to identify potential *vecteurs* between the Scottish and Burgundian courts. The reign of James III provides a number of examples. The Bruges burgess Anselm Adorne was an important figure who looked after Scottish interests in Flanders as we have seen, but he eventually came to serve the king, living the last years of his life in Scotland where he held lands and high office<sup>97</sup>. Earlier in his career, Adorne was connected to the court of Charles the Bold, where, for a while at least, he held the office of *conseiller*<sup>98</sup>. Adorne's role as a potential *vecteur* of Burgundian influence in Scotland is an interesting but problematic subject, however, partly because his status at the Burgundian court was relatively peripheral (the office of *conseiller* often being very specific in its application, not necessarily implying a position in the household); partly because, as James III's historian points out, he likewise enjoyed only intermittent favour at the Scottish court<sup>99</sup>. Apart from James III's mother, who is discussed below, the most ›Burgundian‹ figures of that reign were people with whom the king fell out: namely his brother, Alexander Stewart, duke of Albany, who was brought up at the court of Guelders, but enjoyed little influence in Scottish royal government before being indicted for treason in 1479; and his brother-in-law, Thomas Boyd, earl of Arran, a paragon of Scottish courtliness who came to enjoy a measure of Charles the Bold's favour, but only after he was exiled to the Low Countries. James III's reign does indeed offer a tantalising number of Burgundian connections, but whether or not these connections constitute *vecteurs*, capable of propagating a new courtly style and altering indigenous traditions, remains to be seen.

There was at least one illustrious *transfert* between the Scottish and Burgundian courts in the period. Mary of Guelders, wife of James II, was undoubtedly a Burgundian princess, brought up at the court of Philip the Good and Isabella of Portugal. Her entourage contained servants from the Low Countries, such as her cook, master of the stable, and keeper of the wardrobe, and others in potentially formative positions, such as nurse or tutor. But the lesser domestic figures who accompanied Mary from her homeland do not appear to have been as numerous as those who surrounded

96 MACDONALD, Chivalry as a Catalyst of Cultural Change (as in n. 14), p. 157–158.

97 A recent summary in Alasdair MACDONALD, The Chapel of Restalrig. Royal Folly or Venerable Shrine?, in: Luuk HOUWEN, Alasdair MACDONALD, Sally MAPSTONE (eds), A Palace in the Wild. Essays on Vernacular Culture and Humanism in Late Medieval and Renaissance Scotland, Leuven 2000, p. 27–59, at p. 41–42.

98 Richard WALSH, Charles the Bold and the Crusade. Politics and Propaganda, in: Journal of Medieval History 3 (1977), p. 53–86, at p. 68–69.

99 MACDOUGALL, James III (as in n. 41), p. 190–191; for what follows see: *ibid.*, p. 128–129; p. 88–89.

a later foreign queen, Margaret Tudor<sup>100</sup>. The key figures around Mary tended to be Scottish, such as Sir David Lindsay, her chamberlain. The presence of a Burgundian queen did not serve as a conduit for high-ranking foreigners to find a place at the Scottish court, as was the case with Philip the Good's wife, Isabella of Portugal, in the Low Countries<sup>101</sup>. Isabella's role must be seen in the context of Philip the Good's Mediterranean policy and related crusading ambitions. By contrast, the Duke of Burgundy had more limited goals when arranging the Scottish marriage, his primary concern being to extend his control over Guelders rather than to build enduring links with the Scots<sup>102</sup>. All of this suggests we should be wary of overestimating the transformative impact of the Burgundian queen and her domestic entourage upon Scottish court culture in the fifteenth century.

Finally, there was also an increased number of *croisements* between the worlds of the Burgundian and Scottish courts. Jacques de Lalaing's jousts at Stirling, in the company of his uncle Simon de Lalaing and the ducal servant Hervé de Mériadec, are the most celebrated examples, and there were other jousts between Scots and Burgundians around the middle of the fifteenth century<sup>103</sup>. Once again, however, it is possible to overemphasise the impact of Burgundian court culture on its Scottish counterpart. While it would be fascinating, for example, to think that the impact of the jousts at Stirling was prolonged and deepened by the participation of William, eighth earl of Douglas, in that most Burgundian of tournaments, Jacques de Lalaing's »Pas de la fontaine aux pleurs« at Chalon-sur-Saône in 1450, the detailed Burgundian evidence does not support the hypothesis that Douglas ever fought there<sup>104</sup>. Scots were certainly exponents of the martial arts prized in court society, but they practised their skills in an international environment in which Burgundian in-

100 DOWNIE, »She is but a woman« (as in n. 25), p. 117–119, 177–179; MURRAY, The Exchequer and Crown Revenue (as in n. 68), p. 219, notes that Margaret Tudor was permitted to have 24 English attendants.

101 Monique SOMMÉ, Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne. Une femme au pouvoir au XV<sup>e</sup> siècle, Villeneuve d'Ascq 1998, p. 77–88, 278–281.

102 David DITCHBURN, The Place of Guelders in Scottish Foreign Policy, c. 1449–1542, in: SIMPSON (ed.), Scotland and the Low Countries (as in n. 3), p. 59–75, esp. p. 60–67.

103 See most recently Werner PARAVICINI, Un tombeau en Flandre. Hervé de Mériadec, in: Francia 34/1 (2007), p. 85–146, at p. 111–116.

104 STEVENSON, Chivalry (as in n. 30), p. 78–179, 115; cf. Carol EDINGTON, The Tournament in Medieval Scotland, in: Matthew STRICKLAND (ed.), Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain and France. Proceedings of the 1995 Harlaxton Symposium, Stamford 1998, p. 46–62, at p. 58–59. The anonymous author of the »Livre des faits de messire Jacques de Lalaing« and Olivier de La Marche record in great detail the names and exploits of Lalaing's challengers, all of them less high-ranking than Douglas, many in fact members of the local Burgundian nobility, but neither author mentions the earl or a Scottish party. To have omitted a prestigious foreign combatant would have been a remarkable oversight for both authors. In any case, Douglas reached Lille in mid-October 1450, where he and his entourage were welcomed before travelling on to Paris. Only then could the Scots have left for Chalon, still some distance away. Lalaing was due to finish his jousts at the end of October, but appears to have ended earlier: 15 October according to the »Livre des faits« (ibid., p. 235), 14 September according to de La Marche. Douglas may have intended to fight at Chalon, and, according to la Marche, Lalaing hoped that Scottish combatants en route to Rome would show up; if so, it seems both Douglas and Lalaing were disappointed.

fluence was far from exclusive. Indeed, during the reign of James I, thousands of Scots were the avowed enemies of Philip the Good and his English allies, fighting under a French royal banner.

Given the problematic nature of the Scottish evidence and the limited state of research to date on the subject, it would be sensible to leave the question of influences upon the development of the Scottish court as wide open as possible<sup>105</sup>. Many Scots continued to find service and reward in the kingdom of France despite the waning of the »Auld Alliance« in the fifteenth century, and their role as potential *vecteurs* cannot be overlooked: men such as William Monypenny, chamberlain of Charles VII of France and diplomat in Franco-Scottish relations; or Gilbert Hay, translator of a number of French chivalric manuals into Scots. More immediately, the influence of English royal practices on the Scottish court merits attention. We have already seen that James I's return from England led to the most significant period of household reorganisation in our period<sup>106</sup>. David II's return to Scotland in 1357, after nine years as Edward III's prisoner, was also followed by a revival of the royal court<sup>107</sup>. We may suspect that the changes wrought by these late medieval kings were less profound than those effected by a predecessor who had also spent formative years in England – David I (1124–1153) – but until they have been subjected to closer examination it is difficult to say how significant and enduring the resulting influences really were.

It may seem regressive to end there, with a call to revisit Anglo-French influences on the courts of Stewart kings. But the more fundamental point of this paper is that the impact of external influences cannot be gauged without a better understanding of the court they acted upon, in particular its changing composition, organisation, location, itinerary, material culture, and the like. Until these subjects are explored more fully, we should not assume Burgundian court culture was imported into Scotland along with the luxury goods that reached Leith from Bruges.

105 Cf. Alasdair MACDONALD's pertinent observation that the courts of James III and James IV were open to many influences, »especially from England, France, Burgundy, the Empire and Denmark«: ID., *Princely Culture in Scotland under James III and James IV*, in: Martin GROSSMAN, Alasdair MACDONALD, Arjo VANDERJAGT, *Princes and Princely Culture 1450–1650*, vol. 1, Leiden 2005, p. 147–172, at p. 147.

106 MURRAY, *The Comptroller* (as in n. 51), p. 3.

107 PENMAN, *David II* (as in n. 8), p. 200.