A Constellation of Courts

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At the end of his life, Philip II made great diplomatic efforts to bring to an end the military conflicts in which Spain was involved. He negotiated a peace treaty with France and sought rapprochement with his Protestant enemies. However, the most expensive conflict of all was the civil war in the Netherlands, a war that for the Northern provinces had become a struggle for independence. In the past, several solutions had been considered, among them the idea of creating a separate principality or of ceding the rebellious provinces to a friendly prince.¹ In order to free his son of the war in the North, Philip ultimately put into effect a plan that had been discussed before at the Spanish court: the Netherlands would be given to his daughter Isabella, as her dowry. Philip hoped that this would bring the Northern provinces to recognize the new sovereigns. This would logically lead to the unification of the country under the authority of the infanta and her future husband, archduke Albert.

However, it was never intended that the cession would lead to the creation of an independent state. On the contrary, all earlier projects foresaw that the Netherlands would remain firmly rooted in the Spanish-Habsburg constellation, and the solution on which Philip finally settled also included arrangements that prevented the new princes from turning their backs on the king of Spain. Moreover, several conditions guaranteed that even future generations of Flemish princes would

remain loyal to the Spanish-Habsburg cause. Still, although the treaty made a change in religious ideology impossible, archducal sovereignty would almost inevitably lead to the emergence of a different perspective on how the Spanish Monarchy should deal with its problems. Moreover, Madrid would be obliged to take full account of this perspective, as it was no longer the opinion of subordinate governors general that could be recalled when their personal viewpoint was at odds with the king’s, but of sovereign princes.

One method to avoid discrepancy between Madrid and Brussels was to surround the Archdukes with advisers that shared the king’s vision and could, if need be, restrain them from developing a policy contrary to Spanish interests. At the same time, these advisers should keep Madrid informed about any development at court and in the provinces. As local institutions, due to their privileges, were usually controlled by the Flemish and Burgundian elite, the court was an important structure from which royal agents operated. Therefore, close attention was paid to its composition. This ‘technique’ of counterbalancing the power of the head of the Brussels government by the presence of royal confidants, especially when the head of government was not a Spaniard, had already been applied before, in the case of archduke Ernest of Austria, although with varying success. Later in the seventeenth century, it would be repeated at least one more time, when archduke Leopold-Wilhelm was appointed governor-general of the Netherlands in 1647.

In the case of Albert and Isabella, the Spanish agents at their court gained even greater importance. Although Isabella’s half-brother, Philip, had approved the cession of the northern territories, he soon regretted his father’s decision. Events in the Netherlands, and in particular Albert’s defeat at Nieuwpoort, convinced him that the archduke needed an assistant by his side in case he should die or be


unable to govern in person. At the same time, it soon became clear that the Archdukes would not have children, which thwarted the solution Philip II had given to the Flemish problem. The Netherlands would eventually return to the Spanish crown, and the new king was of the opinion that the reincorporation should not occur at the passing of one of the Archdukes, but, on the contrary, as soon as possible. From 1601 onwards, the Spanish Council of State discussed different scenarios, but Albert resisted any arrangement that would affect his reputación or that of his wife. Philip first advocated the election of Albert as king of the Romans, thus providing for an elegant exit to the Holy Roman Empire.\(^5\) Next, he proposed supporting Isabella’s rights to the English throne, so that once the Archdukes became sovereigns of England, they could be convinced to give up the Netherlands in order to avoid the Flemish provinces becoming part of the English heritage at their deaths, and thus falling under the sway of a non-Habsburg monarch.\(^6\) When he realized that Albert and Isabella would not easily agree to abandoning either their inheritance or their sovereign status, he took a series of measures that would prevent the Netherlands from being separated from Spain in the event of one of the Archdukes dying without issue. At the same time, he tried to increase his hold on the archducal government. The Spanish courtiers in Brussels played an important role in this process, and it is precisely the composition of this ‘Spanish faction’ that will be discussed here.

\(^5\) Henri Lonchay, Joseph Cuvelier and Joseph Lefèvre (eds.), *Correspondance de la Cour d’Espagne sur les affaires des Pays-Bas au xviiie siècle*, 6 vols. (Brussels, 1923-1937), 1: 50-51, 55, 57 (hereafter cited as *CCE*).

\(^6\) *Consulta* of the Council of State, Valladolid, 17 November 1601, in Mariano Alcocer y Martínez (ed.), *Consultas del Consejo de Estado*, (Valladolid, 1930-1932), 1: 164 (hereafter cited as *Consultas*): “El medio de la subcesion [of England] es muy suabe para boluer a incorporar aquellos Estados [the Netherlands] con la Corona de Vuestra Magestad.” See also Instructions from Philip III to Baltasar de Zúñiga concerning the English succession, Madrid, 28 February 1601, in *CCE*, 1: 63-64, 71, 86-87 (as in note 5). The Spanish Council of State even had a book written on the rights of the infanta to the English throne, which was to be printed and distributed in England among “personas de buena intención” (*Consultas*, 1: 110). Another project of these initial years, debated in 1602, planned a marriage between the Spanish infanta Ana Mauricia and the French heir to the throne, with the Netherlands as dowry, this in case the Archdukes should remain childless. See Valladares, “‘Decid adiós a Flandes’,” 48 (as in note 1); Alicia Esteban Estríngana, “Los estados de Flandes. Reversión territorial de las provincias leales (1598-1621)” (as in note 2).
Before analyzing the positions the Spaniards occupied at the archducal court in Brussels, it would be interesting to know the proportions of local office-holders – that is, those of Flemish and Burgundian origin – to courtiers of Spanish origin. In order to calculate this ratio, several lists of the archducal court personnel can be used. Three of them reproduce the composition of the court of Albert as governor-general and date from 1595 and 1598. Two other lists were drawn up in 1605: one was sent to the town council of Ghent in preparation for the Archduke’s planned visit, another was probably compiled to provide the city government of Brussels with a list of members of the court entitled to exemptions from civic taxes. A sixth list dates from 1611 and contains the names of the servants given mourning clothes on the occasion of the obsequies held in Brussels in honor of queen Margaret of Austria. For the period from 1612 to 1618, the pay lists of the Brussels court, the so-called libros de razón, give per tercio the complete wage-sheets of the court personnel.

7 Archives Générales du Royaume (henceforth AGR), Audience, no. 23/10, fos. 61r-65r. The second list from 1595 is AGR, Audience, no. 33/4, fos. 61r-72v. As the names on this list correspond almost entirely to the description of the court provided by Juan Roco de Campofrío at the moment Albert left Madrid for the Netherlands, one may conclude that it must have been drawn up at the beginning of Albert’s 1595 journey to the Netherlands. Although Roco de Campofrío mentions two courtiers that do not appear on the list, this omission can be easily explained: neither the count of Solre nor Maximilian von Dietrichstein traveled with the archduke; Solre went from Flanders to Metz in order to join the court there, Dietrichstein probably awaited the arrival of the archduke in Brussels. See Eloy Hortal, “La casa del archiduque Ernesto,” 201 (as in note 3); Juan Roco de Campofrío, España en Flandes: Trece años de gobierno del archiduque Alberto, 1595-1608, ed. Pedro Rubio Merino (Madrid, 1973), 70.

8 Archivio Segreto Vaticano (henceforth ASV), Fondo Borghese, ser. 1, no. 913, fos. 352r-356r (old numbering: fos. 340r-344r). This list reflects the composition of Albert’s court during his journey to Spain in 1598, as the writer records among the “personajes que vienen con el Archiduque” the presence of “dos señoras viudas y seis damas las cuales an de ir siruiendo a España a la Regina y Reyna [sic].” In other words, the list dates from after the death of Philip II. It is conceivable that this list was compiled during Albert’s sojourn in Ferrara in November 1598, where Pope Clement VIII officiated at his marriage by proxy. This would explain its presence in the Vatican Archives.

9 AGR, Audience, no. 33/3. The list was sent to the city of Ghent on 25 February 1605.

10 AGR, Audience, no. 33/4. This list was drawn up by Pedro and Antonio de Mendoza, respectively greffier andveedor y contador de la caballeriza, on 6 and 9 March 1605.

11 AGR, Conseil d’État, no. 157/2. Queen Margaret died on 3 October of that year.
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personnel. A similar document survives for the months January to April 1622, concerning the personnel serving the archduchess after the death of her husband. In combination with the 1624 list of Albert's criados reformados – dismissed servants granted a life pension – and the engravings of the funeral procession of the archduke by Jacques Francquart, this document offers a splendid overview of the Brussels household at the end of the archducal reign.

However, when comparing numbers, it is important to bear in mind that the summaries of the court personnel drawn up in 1598 and 1605 reflect the court on a journey. They only list the people actually traveling with the Archduke(s). They therefore include neither the servants that stayed at the palace in Brussels, nor the office-holders who were absent for one reason or another. Obviously, the 1595 and 1598 lists also omit the servants of Isabella. The 1611 overview and the engravings of the 1622 cortege, in their turn, only include the people that actually took part in the funeral ceremonies, or that had been expected to do so. The numbers these documents mention thus refer to the minimum size of the court. The libros de razón and the second list of 1605, in contrast, give a more complete survey of the court, although the wage-sheets do not contain the honorary offices, such as the capellanes de honor, nor the offices that where financed by other means, such as, for example,

12 AGR, Chambre des Comptes, nos. 1837 and 1838. The denominations libros de razón and livres de raisons derive from the Italian business term libri della ragione (account books). See Peter Burke, The Italian Renaissance: Culture and Society in Italy (Cambridge, 1987), 198-199. A financial year at court was divided into three tercios (thirds) of four months each (January-April, May-August and September-December).

13 AGR, Audience, no. 20, fos. 16r-27v.


15 The higher offices were, however, almost always mentioned. For example, the 1598 list includes don Francisco de Mendoza, mayordomo mayor of the archduke, who did not travel to Spain, but stayed in the Netherlands to command of the Army of Flanders. Gilles du Faing in his account of the journey, also lists Mendoza among the “dames, seigneurs et cavaliers qui firent le voyage aux mariages de leurs Majestez et leurs Altèzes Sérénissimes,” but at least added that “lequel ne fit le voyage, ains demeura aux Pays-Bas pour service.” See Louis-Prosper Gachard and Charles Piot (eds.), Collection de voyages des souverains des Pays-Bas (Brussels, 1882), 4: 459.

16 Indeed, the engravings of Francquart mention several servants who, given their particular position at court, should have participated, but were prevented by reasons of practicality or health. Pedro de Mendoza and Manuel de Arinzano, for example, “ne cheminèrent pas à cause de leurs indispositions.” See Francquart, Pompa funebris, plate xxv (as in note 14).
the Spanish guards, the gardeners of the archducal palaces, or much of the staff of the stables, whose wages were paid out by its own furriera.17

Table 1 reflects the composition of the archducal court at six different moments with an interval of more or less six years, using the list of the 1598 journey, the 1605 exemption list, the clothing list of 1611, the wage-sheet of the first tercio of 1617,18 and a combination of the 1622 wage-sheet with the 1624 list of criados reformados. The different departments of the court are examined separately. The archducal guards are not included: the guards of archeros and alabarderos did not include any Spaniards, while very little is known about the Spanish guard. As for the calculation of the Spanish courtiers, the numbers are, of course, minima. Only the office-holders clearly of Spanish origin have been counted. Finally, one should take into account that, apart from the unidentified Spaniards, the remaining group not only includes Flemish and Burgundian courtiers, but also German, French and Italian servants.

It is not my intention to repeat Diederik Lanoye’s analysis of the presence of Spanish courtiers at all levels of the archducal household.19 I would only like to point out that certain departments had a relatively high percentage of Spanish servants during the entire archducal reign, namely the Casa and the Cámara. The powerbase of the Spaniards thus lay here. Other sections were more oriented towards local people: the stables, and above all the Capilla. This is hardly a surprise, given the musical tradition of the Netherlands in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries that influenced court chapels all over Europe, and the abundance of outstanding composers and vocalists in Flemish choirs, who were recruited by many European courts. In Madrid, the most important royal chapel was the Capilla Flamenca, and employed Flemish choristers only.20

17 The 1605 exemption roll is the only document that contains a separate list of the personnel paid by the furriera of the stables. It records the names of more than half of the servants of this department – 78 out of 148 – showing that, as regards the stables, the other lists are very incomplete.
18 AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1838, fos. 244v-245v and 254v-264v.
19 Diederik Lanoye, “The Structure and Composition of the Household of the Archdukes,” in Thomas and Duerloo, Albert and Isabella, 107-119 (as in note 1). However, Lanoye bases his study on fewer sources and presents just one general overview that does not reflect the numerical evolution of the Spanish presence at specified intervals.
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Table 1. Spaniards at the archducal court

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<td>148</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>437</td>
<td>169</td>
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</table>

Table 1. Spaniards at the archducal court

T = total number of courtiers; S = number of Spanish courtiers; % = percentage of Spaniards

21 The Vatican list contains 220 offices and 216 names, with don Fernando de Saavedra mentioned twice: once as gentilhombre de la casa and once as caballerizo. Thus, the archducal retinue consisted of 215 individuals. Four people are listed only once, but held two offices: Juan de Frías, capellán (Capilla) and secretario de la cámara (Cámara); Diego Ruiz, capellán (Capilla) and maestro de los pajes (Caballeriza); Hernando de Zavala, furrier and aposentador de palacio (both Casa); and Miguel de Pianza, salsero and mayordomo del estado de la boca (both Casa). Because the table also reflects the divisions between the court departments, the office-holders that belonged to two different sections are counted twice. In that way, the table contains 218 (and not 215) individuals. In addition, the list also includes 15 people that accompanied the court (fo. 356r), namely 3 nobles, 2 captains of the archducal guard, the caballerizo mayor (who also appears among the staff of the Caballeriza) and the above mentioned anonymous ladies. These people are not included in the table. In reality, the archducal court was even bigger, as the document, when naming the gentilhombres de la boca, states the presence of “otros caualleros que se an reciuido de nueuo que no uan aquí scriptos” (fo. 353r).

22 The 1605 exemption roll lists 606 offices, including 155 archducal guards and 5 pensionarios, while the office of another 9 servants is unmentioned.

23 The 1611 overview enumerates, besides 83 notables (members of central and provincial councils, etc.) and their 31 servants, a total of 723 members of the court: 415 courtiers, 172 servants of courtiers, and 136 guards. Of the 415 court offices, 342 officeholders are named, the other 73 appearing anonymously.

24 The 1617 combined wage-sheets of the capilla and the criados list 419 servants holding 422 offices: don Rodrigo Niño Lasso de la Vega was simultaneously mayordomo mayor, sumiller de corps and caballerizo mayor, while don Diego Mexía, gentilhombre de la cámara, was also primer caballerizo.

25 The wage-sheet of the first tercio of 1622 includes 251 names, of which 2 belonged to the guards, 87 to the Casa, 52 to Albert’s Cámara and 45 to Isabella’s, 23 to the Capilla, and 42 to the Caballeriza. The 1624 list contains 137 names, 128 being those of courtiers (64 of them from the Casa, 24 from Albert’s Cámara and 40 from the stables) and 7 widows of former cooks of the Archdukes.
It is also clear that, in general terms, the total number of Spaniards at court decreased over the years. Whether this evolution is due to the efforts of Albert to limit the influence of Spanish courtiers and to stress a certain degree of sovereignty and independence is, however, doubtful. One should always bear in mind that from 1602/1603 onwards the Archdukes were well aware of the fact that the Netherlands were bound to return to the Spanish crown. The major part of their reign is characterized by their efforts to create favorable military and political circumstances for this reincorporation, although Brussels and Madrid many times disagreed on the terms of this policy. If they did not concur with Madrid’s viewpoint that this reintegration should occur as soon as possible, it was mainly because they feared a complete and definite loss of reputación. The incorporation of a higher number of Flemish and Burgundian courtiers from 1613 – at the beginning of that year Albert became seriously ill and almost died – and especially from 1616 – the year the Provincial States swore allegiance to Philip III – should therefore be interpreted from this perspective. By attaching the local nobility and members of the city councils to the court, the Archdukes were trying to prevent them from opposing the reversion of the Netherlands. In short, they were not so much binding the Flemish notables to their own person, as to the king’s.

THE POWERBASE OF THE SPANIARDS AT COURT

When analyzing the composition of the archducal court and the division of offices between Spaniards and locals, Lanoye argues that, although the court had a very strong Spanish configuration at the beginning of their reign, the Archdukes gradually replaced Spanish office-holders with Flemings or Walloons. At the same time, important offices otherwise occupied by Spaniards were left vacant. In this way, the Flemish nobility strengthened its powerbase at court, while at a lower level the different departments slowly acquired a more local character. Lists of courtiers confirm this general evolution towards a more Flemish court. Nevertheless, there were key positions that the Spaniards never gave up. They can be divided into four different sets.

26 CCE, 1: 417-418 (as in note 5).
Leading office-holders

The first nucleus of Spanish offices comprised the management of the court. Only a very limited group of people bore full responsibility for the proper functioning of the archducal household, the structure of which followed the Burgundian etiquette introduced in Spain by Charles v. Four court departments – the Casa (Palace), the Cámara (Chamber), the Capilla (Chapel) and the Caballeriza (Stables) – were directed by their respective administrators, namely the mayordomo mayor (High Steward), the sumiller de corps (First Gentleman of the Bedchamber), the capellán mayor (High Chaplain) and the caballerizo mayor (High Marshal). Besides these four sections, the three companies of archducal guards, usually but incorrectly considered part of the stables, constituted a fifth court department, although it had not one, but three commanders. These leading positions at court obviously put the holders in a potentially powerful position. Their duties allowed them to have direct and almost unlimited access to one or both sovereigns. This daily contact was an important element of their power, as the Archdukes were the source of almost all favors that were accorded at court. It allowed them to solicit mercedes for members of their patronage network. Moreover, they enjoyed large autonomy when candidates for offices of a lower rank were selected. They could even engage and discharge such servants as they did not have to take an oath, the so called criados no jurados. All this gave them the opportunity to exercise a kind of patronage and to build a network of clients. When they combined their position with other functions at court or in the administration of the Army of Flanders, they were even, to some degree, able to influence the archducal decision-making process.

In theory, there was no hierarchical relation between the heads of the three domestic departments (mayordomo mayor, sumiller de corps and caballerizo mayor). In his analysis of the Brussels court, the papal nuncio Guido Bentivoglio even stated that all three of them claimed precedence. In other words, they were theoretically autonomous. Conflicts of competence were to be resolved in consultation. In practice, however, the mayordomo mayor was held in higher esteem and

29 Guido Bentivoglio, Relaciones del cardenal Bentivollo, translated by Francisco de Mendoza y Céspedes (Madrid, 1638), fo. 54v. The analysis of the court forms part of his Relación de Flandes; que toca a las Provincias suijetas a la obediencia de los serenissimos archiduques, which fills fos. 47r-80v of his book.
30 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fo. 61r.
therefore occupied the first rank. This was not so much the consequence of the pre-eminence of his office, as of the fact that he was responsible for the internal organization of the court, for the court regulations, and for discipline among the court personnel. Moreover, he administered justice to the members of the court and punished the crimes that were committed within the walls of the palace. In fact, these were his main duties at court, while he usually left the daily administration of the Casa in the hands of the mayordomo semanero (steward in waiting). At the same time, he operated as a contact person between the Archdukes and the outside world, which also contributed to his prestige. Indeed, all embassies and representatives had to address themselves to him first. Finally, he controlled access to the private apartments of the archduke when there were no public audiences or official ceremonies, such as the lever and the couche, or public repasts.

During the archducal reign from 1598 to 1621, three out of five court departments were almost continuously headed by Spanish courtiers. For instance, Spanish influence was very strong in the Casa, although the position of mayordomo mayor remained vacant for a large period. When the archduke was appointed governor-general of the Netherlands, Philip II chose don Francisco de Mendoza, Admiral of Aragon, as the successor of don Juan de Ayala, who had been Albert’s ayo and mayordomo mayor since he arrived in Spain in 1570, but who had died shortly before. At the same time, Mendoza became de facto the second in command in the Army of Flanders, being appointed general of the cavalry in 1597. During the interim governorship of cardinal Andreas of Austria from September 1598 to September 1599, Mendoza was even charged with the military government of the country. Difficulties with Andreas, the envy of more eminent army officers, the defeat at Nieuwpoort imputed to the poor performance of the archducal cavalry, his imprisonment after the battle, his efforts to negotiate a peace with the Republic without the approval of the king of Spain, and the loss of

31 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fos. 27r-29v.
32 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fo. 54v.
33 José Martínez Millán, “El archiduque Alberto en la corte de Felipe II (1570-1580),” in Thomas and Duerloo, Albert and Isabella, 27-37, esp. 30 (as in note 1); Roco de Campofrío, España en Flandes, 6 (as in note 7).
34 Alicia Esteban Estríngana, Guerra y finanzas en los Países Bajos católicos: De Farnesio a Spínola, 1592-1630 (Madrid, 2002), 91. In theory, the maestre de campo general Pierre-Ernest of Mansfeld ranked above him, but he had retired to the duchy of Luxemburg, of which he was the governor, and did not play an active role in the Army of Flanders anymore.
Grave in September 1602, led to his fall from favor. In October he was recalled to Madrid and subsequently banished from court. 35 Although in the summer of 1604 there were apparently plans to send him back to the Netherlands, he never resumed his function at the Brussels court. 36 Nevertheless, his name continues to appear on the archducal payroll until the first tercio of 1612, albeit as “ausente”. 37

This peculiar situation was probably a result of the attempts made by Philip III to increase his influence at the Brussels court. From the summer of 1600 onwards, the king and the Council of State in Madrid conceived the plan to send a Spanish confidant to Albert in order to assist him in his task as supreme commander of the Army of Flanders and to replace him during the periods of his physical incapacity. This arrangement was motivated by the outcome of the Battle of Nieuwpoort, during which the archduke narrowly escaped being taken prisoner, and was wounded in the head. 38 Pressure increased with Albert being seriously ill, and unable to perform the tasks of government, in February 1601 and throughout the summer of 1602. 39 The siege of Ostend even came to a complete standstill as a consequence of his indisposition. Madrid argued that if the archduke should be unable to govern, it was important to have somebody in Brussels that could take over. As Mendoza was at that time still Albert’s mayordomo mayor, this assistant would be appointed mayordomo mayor of Isabella. 40 However, it was important that the reputación of the Archdukes as sovereign princes of the Netherlands remained intact. Although the archduke resisted the

35 Consultas, 1: 30 (as in note 6); “Cartas del archiduque Alberto a don Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas, marqués de Denia y duque de Lerma, desde 1598 hasta 1611,” in Colección de Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España, vols. 42-43 (Madrid, 1863), 42: 276-574, 43: 5-232; especially 42: 431 (hereafter cited as Codoin 42 or 43). See also Antonio Rodríguez Villa, Don Francisco de Mendoza, Almirante de Aragón (Madrid, 1899).
36 Luis Cabrera de Córdoba, Relaciones de las cosas sucedidas en la corte de España desde 1599 hasta 1614 (Salamanca, 1997), 223.
37 AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1837, fo. 39r.
38 Roco de Campofrío, España en Flandes, 270 (as in note 7); Isabella to the duke of Lerma, Ghent, 12 July 1600, in Antonio Rodríguez Villa, ed., Correspondencia de la infanta archiduquesa Doña Isabel Clara Eugenia de Austria con el Duque de Lerma y otros personajes (Madrid, 1906), 18-20.
39 Consultas, 1: 257 (as in note 6).
40 Consultas, 1: 37, 53, 60, 62 (as in note 6); CCE, 1: 49-50 (consulta of the Council of State, 13 August 1600); 80-84 (consulta of the Council of State, 26 September 1601) (as in note 5). See also Esteban Estringana, Guerra y finanzas, chapter 2 (as in note 34).
plan mainly because of his reputation, in February 1602 he partially yielded and accepted an assistant at the head of the army. Nevertheless, it was not until October 1603 that Ambrogio Spínola arrived in Brussels as supreme operational commander of the troops besieging Ostend. By that time, Mendoza was already in disgrace, but Spínola neither replaced him as Albert’s *mayordomo mayor* nor was named *mayordomo mayor* of Isabella. There were practical reasons for this decision. Spínola’s main task was to command the troops at Ostend. In order not to interfere with his authority, Albert ceased to observe the progress of the siege on the spot and took to following it from his residences in Brussels, Bruges or Ghent. This meant that the positions of supreme commander and *mayordomo mayor* became incompatible, as the latter had to be present at court. But Madrid also wanted to avoid giving any occasion for the Archdukes to be seen as a puppet government directed by Philip III through the Genoese general.

Between 1603 and 1613, the position of *mayordomo mayor* was therefore left vacant. Burgundian etiquette provided no solution for the absence of this office. The day-to-day management of the *Casa* was probably undertaken by the *mayordomos*, who relieved each other in a rotation system that was also applied in the *Cámara* and the stables. The role of the *mayordomo mayor*, however, was not only to administer the *Casa*, but also to supervise the other court departments, a task that was too important to put into the hands of lower court officers. Alternative arrangements therefore had to be made. After the departure of don Francisco de Mendoza, don Gerónimo Walter Zapata, son of a German nobleman and *veedor general* (inspector-general) of the Army of Flanders, at Albert’s request took his place *ad interim*. Zapata was a former page of Rudolf II and had been a member of the Council of War in the Netherlands since 1593, loyally serving archduke Ernest. In 1595 he became *pagador general* (paymaster-general) of the army, and during Albert’s absence in 1598-99 he formed part of the council that assisted cardinal Andreas of Austria. As *veedor general* since 1600, Zapata superintended the finances of the army. Being directly responsible to the king, he was completely independent of its supreme

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43 The lists of 1605 and 1611 do not mention the name of the *mayordomo mayor*.  
44 AGR, *Manuscrits divers*, no. 821, fos. 29v-32r, 61v-62r.
commander, the archduke himself.\textsuperscript{45} Hence, he was one of the most powerful men at court and a potential supervisor of archducal policy.

However, Zapata soon became Albert’s confidant in the army and a reliable executor of his directives.\textsuperscript{46} The decision to integrate him into the archducal court might even have been an attempt by Albert to strengthen his personal position at a moment when Philip III was questioning his capacity to govern. Moreover, by doing so he prevented the king of Spain from imposing a candidate of his own. Nevertheless, Madrid soon undermined Zapata’s position. It first opposed the combination of the offices of \textit{mayordomo mayor} and \textit{veedor general}, as impacting negatively on Zapata’s work in the army.\textsuperscript{47} Moreover, in 1603 he was accused of fraud and fell into disgrace. In April of that year Philip III recalled him to Spain without even consulting the archduke. Albert complained bitterly, but without getting any answer from Madrid on this matter.\textsuperscript{48}

After Zapata’s departure, Philip III apparently seemed determined to send his own candidate to Brussels. In fact, rumors circulated at the Spanish court that don Sancho de la Cerda, marquis of La Laguna de los Cameros, who was about to leave for the Netherlands in order to console with Albert on the passing of his mother, would stay there and succeed Mendoza and Zapata as \textit{mayordomo mayor} of the archduke.\textsuperscript{49} Events prevented this plan from being put into practice. In May 1603 the Council of State in Madrid decided that don Baltasar de Zúñiga, the Spanish ambassador to the archduke, who at that moment was reporting to the king in person on the situation in the Netherlands, should not return to Brussels. Instead, he was to head the Spanish embassy in Paris. La Laguna succeeded him at the court of the archduke and was therefore out of the running as \textit{mayordomo mayor}.\textsuperscript{50} It seems that from that moment on, Brussels blocked any attempt to appoint a new candidate.

\textsuperscript{45} Geoffrey Parker, \textit{The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1576-1659} (Cambridge, 1978), 282-283.
\textsuperscript{46} Cabrera de Córdoa, \textit{Relaciones}, 174 (as in note 36).
\textsuperscript{47} “Consulta sobre la asistencia del veedor general y el contador de Flandes al ejercicio de sus officios,” Valladolid, 1 September 1601, in \textit{Consultas}, 1: 159-160 (as in note 6).
\textsuperscript{48} Codoin, 42: 450, 455-456 (as in note 35); Cabrera de Córdoba, \textit{Relaciones}, 202 (as in note 36). Albert’s later attempts to obtain a \textit{merced} (favor) for his former \textit{mayordomo mayor} all failed. See Codoin, 42: 569; Codoin, 43: 7, 23, 74.
\textsuperscript{49} Cabrera de Córdoba, \textit{Relaciones}, 183 (as in note 36).
mayordomo mayor of the archduke and that the most senior mayordomo became acting mayordomo mayor.51 When, for example, the Venetian ambassador Giorgio Justiniani traveled to Brussels in December 1604, he was received by Maximilian count of Saint-Aldegonde, baron of Noircarmes, “maggior domo maggior” of the Archdukes.52 Noircarmes was still at the head of the Casa when the English ambassador Sir Thomas Edmondes visited the court in May 1605 as a consequence of the Treaty of London. Indeed, on that occasion he organized the production of a new livery for 260 servants, musicians and soldiers from several court departments.53 On the other hand, both 1605 lists place him among the mayordomos and give no name for the function of mayordomo mayor.54

Given the increasing concentration of power, over the years, in the hands of don Rodrigo Niño Lasso de la Vega, it is not impossible that Albert’s sumiller de corps already started to act as a semi-official mayordomo mayor after his return from Spain in 1605.55 On the other hand, his frequent journeys to Spain – in 1608, 1609 and 1611 – weigh against this. In any event, at the beginning of 1613 Lasso received his formal appointment as mayordomo mayor, a position he would hold for the next seven years.56 At his death, at the beginning of October 1620,57 the Archdukes replaced him with their confidant, Ambrogio

51 See also Dries Raeymaekers, One Foot in the Palace. The Habsburg Court of Brussels and the Politics of Access in the Reign of Albert and Isabella, 1598-1621 (Leuven, 2013). This book was published seven years after this paper was presented at the Constellation of Courts Conference, and several years after the final version of this paper was submitted to the editors.
52 Gustave Hagemans, Relations inédites d’ambassadeurs Vénitiens dans les Pays-Bas sous Philippe II et Albert et Isabelle (Brussels, 1865), 68.
53 AGR, Conseil d’État, no. 157/1, fo. 1v: Noircarmes is called “maître de leur hostel.” This livery is depicted in Jan Brueghel the Elder’s Wedding Banquet presided over by the Archdukes, painted around 1612-1613 (Madrid, Museo del Prado, inv. 1442).
54 AGR, Audience, no. 33/3, fo. 5v; AGR, Audience, no. 33/4, fo. 67r.
55 In 1604 Niño Lasso de la Vega traveled to Spain several times in order to inform the king about the situation in the Netherlands. See Codoìn, 42: 472 (as in note 35); Consultas, 2: 22 (as in note 6); Armand Louant (ed.), Correspondance d’Ottavio Mirto Frangipani, premier nonce de Flandre, 1596-1606 (Rome, 1942), 3: 457, 472; Cabrera de Córdoba, Relaciones, 216 (as in note 36); Hagemans, Relations inédites, 67 (as in note 52).
56 AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1837, fo. 104v: wage-sheet of the first tercio of 1613, Brussels 24 April 1613; Bentivoglio, Relaciones, fo. 54v (as in note 29).
57 Niño Lasso de la Vega died in Brussels on 5 October of that year. See the letter of the marquis of Bedmar to king Philip III (Brussels 11 October 1611) in CCE, 1: 569 (as in note 5).
Spínola. However, before accepting the offer, the Genoese general asked for the approval of Philip III, who accepted the nomination on the one condition that he would always attend first to his duties as commander in chief of the Army of Flanders.\footnote{See the consulta of the Spanish Council of State, 16 January 1621, in CCE, 1: 574 (as in note 5); Antonio Rodríguez Villa, Ambrosio Spínola, primer marqués de los Balbases: Ensayo biográfico (Madrid, 1904), 379.}

The second department, the Cámara, was divided into two sections: the service of Albert and that of Isabella. The sumiller de corps directed the first section. This post was assigned in 1595 to Maximilian von Dietrichstein, son of Adam von Dietrichstein, who was an imperial diplomat in the service of Ferdinand I, Maximilian II and Rudolf II, and since 1560 caballerizo mayor to empress Maria of Austria, Albert’s mother.\footnote{José Martínez Millán and Santiago Fernández Conti (eds.), La monarquía de Felipe II: La casa del Rey (Madrid, 1998), 2: 699.} Several of Maximilian’s sisters served in different royal households in Spain,\footnote{Hypolitha von Dietrichstein was dueña de honor of Isabella and Catalina Micaela until 1585; Beatriz was dama of Isabella until her death in 1597; and Maria was dueña de honor of queen Anna. See Martínez Millán and Fernández Conti, La monarquía de Felipe II, 2: 675, 680, 692 (as in note 59).} and Maximilian himself became caballerizo mayor of archduke Ernest of Austria in the Netherlands.\footnote{AGR, Audience, no. 33/4, fo. 59v; Joseph Lefèvre (ed.), Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays-Bas, 2nd part (Brussels, 1960), 4: 233, 235, 241, 242, 247-249, 252, 259, 272, 279-281, 284; Hortal Muñoz, “La casa del archiduque Ernesto,” 196 (as in note 3).} His career lasted only a few years. During Albert’s absence in 1598-99, the anti-Spanish faction in Brussels headed by cardinal Andreas of Austria, temporary governor-general until the return of the Archdukes, started to defend a more on Castile orientated policy which soon affected the interests of the Spanish Monarchy, defended by the commander in chief of the Army of Flanders, Admiral Francisco de Mendoza. This foretaste of the possible consequences of looser ties between Madrid and Brussels shocked Philip III, who tackled the archduke on the question. After the arrival of the Archdukes in the Netherlands, this so-called ‘Austrian faction’ was eliminated, and Maximilian von Dietrichstein probably returned to the Empire.

Dietrichstein was replaced by don Rodrigo Niño Lasso de la Vega, who would direct the Cámara for more than twenty years, until his death in 1620. It is not clear whether there was opportunity to appoint his successor Charles-Emmanuel de Gorrevod before the passing of
archduke Albert in July 1621. The description of his funeral procession of 1622 does not mention a *sumiller de corps*, and nor does the list of Albert’s courtiers that were granted a pension, a document that was drawn up in 1624. Nevertheless, this list is not conclusive evidence, as it is highly likely that only lower-level functionaries received financial support from the court.

Isabella’s chamber was headed by doña Juana de Jasincourt (Jeanne de Chassincourt). She was a former *dama* of the infanta’s mother, Isabel de Valois, and had accompanied her to Spain after her marriage to Philip II in 1559. She stayed on in Spain after the death of her mistress in 1568, and in 1570 was appointed to the household of queen Anna of Austria. When the latter died in 1580, Jasincourt was incorporated into the joint household of the princesses Isabella and Catalina Micaela. After the marriage of the youngest of the sisters to the duke of Savoy in 1585, Jasincourt was transferred to the joint household of prince Philip and the infanta Isabella, whom she finally accompanied to the Netherlands in 1598, receiving her promotion to *camarera mayor* during the final months of Philip II’s reign. She served Isabella in this capacity until her own death in the spring of 1614, although from 1610, if not before, she was being assisted by her niece, doña Catalina Livia. Jasincourt was followed in office by Antonia-Wilhelmina of Arenberg and the countess of Saint Vitrés, who continued to serve Isabella after archduke Albert’s death.

The court chapel was briefly headed by a non-Spaniard between 1603 and 1605, when the duties of *capellán mayor* were performed by Karel Maes, dean of Antwerp Cathedral and brother of the rising star Engelbert Maes, future president of the Privy Council, during

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64 The last payment to Jasincourt was made on 31 January 1614 and included her salary for the last tercio (September-December) of 1613. She died on 25 January 1614. On 24 May of that year, 13,000 guilders were paid to the executors of her will (AGR, *Chambre des Comptes*, no. 1837, fos. 219r and 257r; no. 1838, fo. 32v).
65 Bentivoglio, *Relaciones*, fo. 55r (as in note 29).
66 AGR, *Audience*, no. 20, fo. 17r.
the absence of the holder of the position, don Pedro de Toledo, as the
diplomatic representative of the Archdukes in Rome.\(^{68}\) Maes, however,
ever bore the title, although he was formally appointed *limosnero mayor* on 2 May 1603, a few days after the departure of don Pedro for
the Holy See.\(^{69}\) Toledo, *sumiller de la cortina* and therefore one of the
first-rate chaplains of Albert since 1595,\(^{70}\) became head of the chapel in
October 1596,\(^{71}\) when he replaced Pedro de Alarcón, who had directed
the chapel since Albert came to Brussels in 1595 and who had died in
Antwerp on 28 August 1596.\(^{72}\) Toledo would lead the chapel until the
end of the Archdukes’ reign. In the autumn of 1619 he was sent to
Madrid to remind the king of the necessity of keeping up payment for

\(^{68}\) Don Pedro de Toledo was appointed at the end of March or the beginning of April
1603 and was recalled on 29 January 1605. The death of Pope Clement viii delayed his
return to the Southern Netherlands. Finally, Toledo left Rome on 22 May 1605. See L.
V. Goemans, “Het Belgische Gezantschap te Rome onder de regeering der aartshertogen
Albrecht en Isabella (1600-1633),” *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 7 (1908), 350-358;
tite année, 5, no. 23 (1922), 41-46; Victor Brants, “Pedro de Tolède,” *Biographie
nationale* (Brussels, 1901), 16: 801-803.

\(^{69}\) Neither list from 1605 mentions a *capellán mayor*; and indeed “el licenciado Carlos
Maes” is referred to only as *limosnero mayor* (AGR, *Audience*, no. 33/3, fo. 1r; AGR, *Audience*, no. 33/4, fo. 66r). On Christmas Day, 1605, Maes was appointed bishop of
Ypres, and in 1610 he became bishop of Ghent. See Michel Cloet (ed.), *Het bisdom

\(^{70}\) Jules Chifflet, *Aula Sacra Principum Belgii, sive Commentarivs Historicvs de Capellae
Regiae in Belgio Principijs, Ministris, Ritibus atque Vniuerso Apparatu* (Antwerp:
Officina Plantiniana, 1650), 41. In a letter to Aldobrandino, papal Secretary of State, written
in April 1597, the papal nuncio in Brussels, Ottavio Mirto Frangipani, refers to him
as “uno de primi camerieri ecclesiastici di questa Alt[...].” See Louant, *Correspondance*, 2:
88-89 (as in note 55).

\(^{71}\) And not in 1605, as stated by Lanoye, “Structure and Composition,” 108 (as in
note 9). See Chifflet, *Aula Sacra*, 41 (as in note 70). Chifflet’s version is confirmed by
other documents. Indeed, don Pedro de Toledo appears in a letter from Albert to the
duke of Lerma, written on 19 July 1602, as “mi limosnero y capellán mayor” (*Codoin*,
42: 424, as in note 35). The apostolic brief of Clement viii, dated 13 August 1602,
permitting don Pedro to translate some relics from the Netherlands to Spain, also refers
to him as “eleemosinario maiori Principum Flandriae.” See Goemans, “Het Belgische
Gezantschap,” 350 (as in note 68).

\(^{72}\) Chifflet, *Aula Sacra*, 41 (as in note 70); Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes*, 7: “Y
las [plazas] de clérigo de su cámara [of Albert’s] en […] Don Pedro de Alarcón, hijo del
señor de Valverde, al qual se dio tambien el officio de cappellán [sic] y limosnero mayor”
(as in note 7). A letter of recommendation written by Albert on 10 November 1606 to
the duke of Lerma, confirms this: “y son los [años] que me ha servido once” (*Codoin*,
43: 20, as in note 35).
the provisions of the Army of Flanders. He died at San Lorenzo de El Escorial on 7 September 1620. Only then did the Archdukes appoint a non-Spaniard as capellán mayor, namely François de Rye, member of an eminent but impoverished Burgundian family, nephew of Archbishop Ferdinand de Rye of Besançon and future Bishop of Caesarea. De Rye had arrived in Brussels in 1606, representing the Chambre des Nobles of the States General of Franche-Comté. Very soon he became sumiller de la cortina of the archducal chapel. He would remain capellán mayor and limosnero mayor until the death of his uncle in 1636, having been his coadjutor with the right of succession since the end of 1621. He finally died in Brussels on 17 April 1637 while preparing his journey to Besançon.

In fact, the stables were the only department of the archducal court that was for most of the time directed by a local nobleman. This had not been the initial intention of Philip II. His plan in 1595 was to send Albert's caballerizo mayor don Luis Enríquez de Almansa to Flanders, but this younger son of the marquis of Alcañices requested the king not to have to accompany the archduke, in light of his old age. Instead, he was promoted mayordomo at the Spanish court and was created count of Villaflor. As his substitute, Philip appointed the count of Solre, Philippe de Croy, who was captain of the royal archeros de corps in Madrid and had since 1590 been governor of the duchy of Artois.

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73 CCE, 1: 544 (as in note 5).
75 For this reason the infanta repeatedly asked the pope to exempt Rye from the registration rights of his coadjutorship. See Bernard de Meester (ed.), Correspondance du nonce Giovanni-Francesco Guidi di Bagno, 1621-1627 (Rome, 1938), 2: 135, 332.
76 He was appointed bishop on 9 January 1623 and consecrated in the Brussels court chapel on 17 May 1626. See P. Gauchat, Hierarchia Catholica Medii et Recentoris Aevi, vol. 4: 1592-1667 (Munster, 1935), 126; De Meester, Correspondance, 2: 742 (as in note 75).
77 Chifflet, Aula Sacra, 67 (as in note 70). Rye was appointed sumiller de la cortina at some point in 1611. His name does not appear on the list of the court members that received mourning clothes at the occasion of the obsequies of queen Margaret of Austria in that year, but he does figure in the wage-sheet of the first tercio of 1612 (AGR, Manuscript divers, no. 1837, fo. 37v).
78 Chifflet, Aula Sacra, 41, 62, 119 (as in note 70).
79 Roco de Campofrío, España en Flandes, 7 (as in note 7).
80 Ibidem; Martínez Millán and Fernández Conti, La monarquía de Felipe II, 2: 145 (as in note 59).
This was no great risk. Solre had fought under Farnese and had proven himself a loyal servant of the king.\(^{81}\) Indeed, the royal historiographer Luis Cabrera de Córdoba described him as a “hechura del Rey,” a creature of the king.\(^{82}\) By 1610 Solre had become one of the firmest advocates of the reincorporation of the Netherlands into the Spanish Monarchy.\(^{83}\)

Once the Archdukes became sovereign princes of the Netherlands, the presence of a Flemish nobleman at the head of the stables turned out to be a potentially important factor in the image-building of the court. Indeed, Burgundian etiquette assigned a prominent role to the caballerizo mayor. Once the court left the palace, he ranked above the mayordomo mayor and the sumiller de corps, at least for the duration of the journey.\(^{84}\) Moreover, in times of war, that is, during the first half of the archducal reign, the staff of the stables formed the personal retinue of the archduke, and the caballerizo mayor became his first assistant. As such, he carried the archducal standard, which he had to show and defend at all times,\(^{85}\) and was assigned the room nearest to Albert’s. During the siege of Ostend, for example, Solre’s lodgings were pitched at the entrance of Fort Albertus, where Albert resided when personally directing operations, and where the general staff assembled twice a day.\(^{86}\) Moreover, tradition required that he ride just before the Archdukes during the Joyous Entries, and that he direct the entrance

\(^{81}\) Victor Brants, “Solre (Philippe de Croy, premier comte de),” *Biographie nationale* (Brussels, 1921-1924) 23: 126-129. In 1599, Solre was created a knight of the Golden Fleece by king Philip III.


\(^{84}\) Christina Hofman, *Das Spanische Hofzeremoniell von 1500-1700* (Frankfurt am Main, 1985), 87.

\(^{85}\) In the Battle of Nieuwpoort on 2 July 1600, the only battle in which the archduke participated directly, the Dutch captured the archducal standard, but the count of Meghen was able to recover it from the enemy, saving Albert a considerable loss of reputación. See Jules de Saint Genois (ed.), *Dagboek van Jan de Potre, 1549-1602*, Maetschappy der Vlaemsche Bibliophilen, 3rd ser., 5 (Ghent, 1861), 200.

\(^{86}\) Stadsarchief Antwerp, *Verzameling Iconografie*, no. 1c.15/24.
of the court into the different cities, informing local authorities of the procedure to follow. In the duchy of Brabant, he also held the ducal sword (l’estoc d’armes) in his hands and displayed it to the public. This way, at least outside the palace, it appeared that the court was directed by a local nobleman and not by a foreigner, thus creating an important bond between court and subjects, and mitigating the image of the Archdukes as vassals of the Spaniards. The fact that Solre also enjoyed the confidence of the Flemish States General strengthened this image. Later, in 1604, when the Flemish population’s discontent with the archducal government had reached its peak, the Archdukes would stress even more the role of Solre as their and the country’s confidant by sending him to Spain in order to defend the interests of the Netherlands.

Solre would remain caballerizo mayor until his death in February 1612, while staying in Prague after attending the wedding of archduke Matthias of Austria, king of Hungary and Bohemia. Between 1612 and 1615 no caballerizo mayor was appointed. Finally, at the beginning of 1615 don Rodrigo Niño Lasso de la Vega added the title to his already impressive curriculum, thus crowning and consolidating his rise at

88 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fo. 68r-v; Edmond Geudens, “‘Blijde Inkomst’ der aartshertogen Albertus en Isabella te Antwerpen in 1599,” Bijdragen tot de geschiedenis, bijzonderlijk van het aloude hertogdom Brabant 10 (1911), 120-140, esp. 130: “ende ten lesten de Grave van Solre, als grand escuier oft grooten stalmeester, dragende het sweert bloothoofs, als te Loven ende te Brussel.” At the funeral of archduke Albert, the caballerizo mayor, duke Ottavio Visconti, held the archducal crown. See Francquart et al., Pompa funebris, plate 52 (as in note 14).
89 In 1598 the States General sent him to Spain, together with representatives of the cities and the clergy, in order to congratulate the infanta upon the Cession of the Netherlands. See Brants, “Solre,” 126 (as in note 81). During the States General of 1600, Albert appointed Solre as one of the negotiators to fix the tanteo (war budget) in concert with the Flemish deputies. See Louis-Prosper Gachard (ed.), Actes des États Généraux de 1600 (Brussels, 1849), 204, 468. At that time, Solre even pleaded for the creation of a ‘national,’ and thus, a non-Spanish army, formed by Flemish and Walloon soldiers and paid for by the Provincial States. See Alicia Esteban Estríngana, Madrid y Bruselas: Relaciones de gobierno en la etapa postarchiducal, 1621-1634 (Leuven, 2005), 90-92; Codoin, 42: 242-276, esp. 263-272 (as in note 35).
90 Louant, Correspondance, 2: 272, 276, 290, 346, 350 (as in note 55).
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court. Indeed, from that moment onwards, Lasso combined the functions of *mayordomo mayor*, *sumiller de corps* and *caballerizo mayor*. At his death in 1620, Ottavio Visconti, count of Gamalerio, replaced him at the head of the stables.

Apart from the five court departments, the three companies of archducal guards constituted relatively independent units within the court structure. Their captains only obeyed the *bureo*, having a high degree of autonomy concerning the internal organization, the recruitment of new members, the preservation of discipline, the administration of justice, and the leaves of absence. The *archeros de corps* consisted of fifty archers, a lieutenant and a captain, supported by their personnel. The *alabarderos* numbered five detachments of eighteen halberdiers each, commanded by five corporals, a sergeant, a lieutenant and a captain. After 1610, the number of archers was reduced to forty, and that of halberdiers to eighty-four, corporals included. Following the Burgundian tradition, all archers were subjects of the Archdukes born in the loyal territories of the Southern Netherlands and Burgundy. Candidates from the Northern Netherlands and the prince-bishopric of Liège were excluded. The halberdiers were recruited in the Holy Roman Empire. Their commanding officers were all local noblemen. The *archeros* stood under the command, successively, of Guillaume II de Bauffremont, baron of Sombernon (died 1599), Robert de Ligne, baron of Barbançon (died 1614), and margrave Christian of Emden. Count Frederick van den Bergh and, after his death in 1618, his son Albert, stood at the head of the *alabarderos*. Both corps were important to the

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92 His name appears on the wage-sheet of the first *tercio* of 1615. AGR, *Chambre des Comptes*, no. 1837, fo. 397v.
95 The *archeros de corps* of the Spanish king numbered sixty members, plus personnel. See Hortal Muñoz, “Las guardas palatino-personales,” 459 (as in note 94)
96 ASV, Fondo Borghese, Serie i, no. 913, fo. 356r; AGR, Audience, no. 33/4, fo. 67r; AGR, *Chambre des Comptes*, no. 1837, fo. 268v; no. 1838, fo. 256v; AGR, Audience, no. 20, fo. 18v. Between the death of Barbançon and the entrance into office of Emden on 5 March 1614, Frederick van den Bergh was acting captain of the *archeros* (AGR, *Chambre des Comptes*, no. 1837, fo. 268v). Until 1610 Emden was commander of a German regiment and fought, for example, in the Battle of Nieuwpoort. See B. Cox,
public profile of the archducal court, as they accompanied the court every time it left the palace.

In addition to the *archeros* and *alabarderos*, Albert also disposed over a third guard that is hardly mentioned in the literature. As commander in chief of the Army of Flanders, he was protected by two troops of cavalry, one of lancers and another of harquebusiers, all of whom were Spaniards, as was their commanding officer since 1595, don Rodrigo Niño Lasso de la Vega. While *archeros* and *alabarderos* fulfilled a more ceremonial role, the *lanceros* and *arcabuceros* were the real bodyguards of the archduke. For example, they fought at his side during the Battle of Nieuwpoort, and prevented the archduke from being captured by the enemy. On that occasion, Lasso was seriously injured and was almost left for dead on the battlefield. As captain of these two units, he also formed part of Albert’s council of war. Thus he was an important confidant of Albert long before he reached the highest position at court.

**Control of court finances**

The second cluster of powerful positions at court controlled by Spanish courtiers included the offices involving financial administration. Indeed, the management of the court was not an exclusive competence of the *mayordomo mayor* and his colleagues at the head of the court departments. An important part of the court administration was reserved for the so-called *buro* (Office). Every day this institution authorized the expenses of the different paymasters, and every month it verified their accounts. The wage-sheets of the court personnel were inspected at the end of every *tercio*. The *buro* also supervised the daily provision of wine, food, candles, firewood and medicines to the departments and members of the court, as these were expensive items that could easily

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97 Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia de Felipe II*, 3: 1545 (as in note 82); Bentivoglio, *Relaciones*, fo. 54v (as in note 29); Alonso Vázquez, *Los sucesos de Flandes y Francia del tiempo de Alejandro Farnese*, Colección de Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España 74 (Madrid, 1880), 380.
98 Sara Veronelli and Félix Labrador Arroyo (eds.), *Diario de Hans Khevenhüller, embajador imperial en la corte de Felipe II* (Madrid, 2001), 528; Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes*, 271: “Don Rodrigo Niño Lasso, capitán de la guardia de su Alteza, que le hallaron entre los muertos tan mal herido, que se juzga estava sin vida, y al no dar señales de vivo, le libró de que no le acavassen de matar” (as in note 7).
99 See note 12 above.
be used for private purposes. When the court set out on a journey, it hired the mules that were necessary for the transportation of the furniture and the other requisites of the Casa. Apart from this financial responsibility, the bureo was also in charge of the implementation of the internal decrees and directives on the functioning of the court that were issued by the Archdukes. Finally, it had legal jurisdiction over the members of the court. When functioning as a law-court, it was presided over by the mayordomo mayor.100

The bureo was composed of the mayordomos, the tesorero de la cámara, the contralor and the greffier. The ordinary meetings were conducted by the most senior mayordomo, who also had the authority to summon extraordinary sessions. Decisions were mainly taken by him and the other mayordomos. In fact, neither the contralor nor the greffier had the right to vote, but the contralor could raise objections. This difference in influence was also expressed in a physical way. During the meetings, the mayordomos gathered around the main table, while the tesorero, the contralor and the greffier were installed around a second table.101 Their function was more administrative. The contralor verified daily the so called livres de dépenses in which the mayordomo semanero noted the sums that had been entrusted to the comprador (the person responsible for the purchase of provisions) and the oficiales de boca (the various heads of the service of the palace), and checked whether they had spent the money correctly. Afterwards, he entered the expenses in the day-book and the register by name.102 The tesorero calculated, although in collaboration with the mayordomo semanero, the expenses and drew up the necessary lists. Finally, the greffier wrote the receipts and certificates, organized the wage-sheets and the list of town houses that were rented for the court members.103

When one examines the origin of the office-holders that formed part of the bureo, it becomes clear that it had a strong non-Flemish or even Spanish configuration. Among the lower personnel, only contralor Charles de Hertoghe was Flemish. He is first mentioned in both lists of 1605 and was probably engaged in 1598, Pedro de Mendoza having been contralor during the period that Albert was governor-general.104

100 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fos. 29v-30r, 32r-35v, 44v, 46r, 56r-v, 58r.
101 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fos. 32r-35v.
102 Hofman, Das Spanische Hofzeremoniell, 84-85 (as in note 84).
103 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fos. 29v-30r, 32r-35v; Hofman, Das Spanische Hofzeremoniell, 85 (as in note 84).
104 ASV, Fondo Borghese, Serie I, no. 913, fo. 353r; AGR, Audience, no. 33/3, fo. 12r;
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Mendoza was later appointed greffier, which he stayed until at least 1622. Hertoghe would also survive the archduke and ended his career as a councilor of Finance. The position of tesorero or maestro de la cámara, on the contrary, was never occupied by a local. When Albert left Spain in 1595 it was assigned to Joseph Hartelieb, who died in 1605. He was succeeded by Juan Jacomo Fleccamer (Fleckhamer), who occupied the post only during a very brief period. As early as 1607 he had been replaced by Antonio Rovelasca, previously the Archdukes’ sumiller de la cava. Rovelasca was a member of an Italian merchant family that had operated from Milan, Seville, Antwerp and Madrid since the first half of the sixteenth century. Antonio resided at the Spanish court from at least 1581, a year in which he and his brother Giovanni Batista, together with the Flemish merchant Giraldo Paris, negotiated the Lisbon pepper contract with Philip II, a monopoly that was prolonged in 1585. He was introduced into Spanish court circles through Paris, but also through Jehan Lhermite and Pedro van

AGR, Audience, no. 33/4, fo. 67v. In 1598, he held the office of contralor together with Manuel de Arinzano.

105 AGR, Audience, no. 20, fo. 20v. His name does not appear in the 1624 list of criados reformados of archduke Albert.

106 Francquart et al., Pompa funebris, plate 25 (as in note 14), describes him as “contrôleur de la Maison Conseiller et Comis des Finances.”

107 The accounts of the Chambre des Comptes of Lille register his name in 1596, 1597, 1598, 1599, 1600, 1602 and 1603 (Finot, Inventaire, 5: 350, 358, 363, 370, 377; 6: 10, 13; as in note 74), while the 1605 lists also mention a Josephe Hertevliet (AGR, Audience, no. 33/3, fo. 12r; AGR, Audience, no. 33/4, fo. 67v). The 1606 list of textiles delivered at the Brussels court in order to make a new livery for the court servants on the occasion of the arrival of the English ambassador refers to him as “feu nostre tresorier et maitre de la chambre Josepso Hartelieb.” It also mentions “Jean Jacomo Fleccamer a present nostre tresorier et maitre de nostre chambre” (AGR, Conseil d’État, no. 157/2, fos. 31v-32r).

108 This would explain why the 1605 account of the Chambre des Comptes only mentions the function of tesorero without naming the holder of the office (Finot, Inventaire, 6: 24; as in note 74). Unfortunately, the account of 1606 has been lost, which makes it impossible to confirm whether at that time Fleccamer was still tesorero, or whether he had already been replaced by Rovelasca. This was probably the case, as in October 1606 Fleccamer became secrétaire d’État aux affaires d’Allemagne. See Edgar De Marneffe, “La Secrétairerie d’État allemande aux Pays-Bas,” in Mélanges d’histoire offerts à Charles Moeller (Louvain and Paris, 1914), 2: 141-148, esp. 146. Fleccamer was a former ayuda de cámara of Albert’s. ASV, Fondo Borghese, Serie 1, no. 913, fo. 352v; AGR, Audience, no. 53/3, fo. 10r (among the ayudas de cámara: Juan Diego Flegamer); AGR, Audience, no. 53/4, fo. 67v (Joan Diego Flecamer).

Ranst, since 1591 both ayudas de cámara of Philip II and subsequently of Philip III,\textsuperscript{110} and ended up in the household of the Archdukes.\textsuperscript{111} Rovelasca held the office of tesorero until 1623.\textsuperscript{112}

As for the mayordomos, it is not quite clear how many there really were. Most of the sources mention four. Lozano’s manual describing the etiquette of the Brussels court provided the mayordomo mayor with four assistants, and the lists of courtiers from 1598 and 1605 also each contain four names.\textsuperscript{113} During the Twelve Years’ Truce this number seems to have increased to eight or more. Indeed, the wage-sheets in the libros de razón listed eight mayordomos for the years 1612 to 1616. From the summer of 1616 to that of 1617 there were nine of them, and from the second tercio of 1617 to the first of 1618 the names of no fewer than ten mayordomos appear.\textsuperscript{114} Nevertheless, Guido Bentivoglio, who wrote chapter III of his Relaciones in 1613, still recorded four mayordomos.\textsuperscript{115} The sources appear to contradict one another, but a closer look at the wage-sheets shows that not all office-holders served simultaneously. In 1612, for example, four of the eight mayordomos listed in the wage-sheets were absent, namely the count of Isenghien, don Pedro Ponce de León, the marquis of Montenegro, and don Diego de Ibarra.\textsuperscript{116}

\textsuperscript{110} Martínez Millán and Fernández Conti, La monarquía de Felipe II, 2: 547 (as in note 59). Between 1570 and 1571, Van Ranst had already been ayuda del barbero de corps (ibidem, 548).


\textsuperscript{112} Finot, Inventaire, 6: 33 (1607), 38 (1608), 59 (1612) (as in note 74); AGR, Audience, no. 20, fo. 16r.

\textsuperscript{113} AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fo. 29v; Gachard and Piot, Collection de voyages, 4: 460 (as in note 15); AGR, Audience, no. 33/3, fos. 5v-6r; AGR, Audience, no. 33/4, fo. 67r. The Vatican list only mentions three majordomos, namely Ibarra, Isenghien and Formensant (ASV, Fondo Borghese, Serie i, no. 913, fo. 340r).

\textsuperscript{114} AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1837, fos. 39r (1612), 104v, 160v and 220v (1613), 268v, 305v and 367v-368r (1614); no. 1838, fos. 41v and 97v-98r (1615), 128v, 180r-v and 218r-v (1616), 256r-v, 292v-293r and 337r (1617), 372r (1618).

\textsuperscript{115} Bentivoglio, Relaciones, fo. 54v (as in note 29).

\textsuperscript{116} AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1837, fo. 39r.
The next year, there were again four absentees: Isenghien, Ponce de León, Montenegro and the count of Boussu. The same phenomenon occurred in the years 1614 to 1618. Thus, it seems that at the Brussels court there were always more than four noblemen holding the title of mayordomo, but not all of them served the archduke at any one time. The others were granted leave of absence.

This arrangement must have been implemented much earlier than 1609, and it is even possible that there were eight mayordomos from the beginning of the archducal reign. Don Diego de Ibarra, for example, was appointed mayordomo in 1595, and was still holding the office in 1622. His name furthermore appears in the list of 1598 and in the libros de razón between 1613 and 1618. On the other hand, the wage-sheet of 1612, the lists of 1605 and 1611 and the description of Albert’s funeral do not include him. It is nevertheless completely unimaginable that somewhere between 1595 and 1612, and again between 1619 and 1622, Ibarra would have lost his title, regaining it in 1613 and again in 1622. On the contrary, it is much more plausible that he held the office continuously from 1595 to 1622, and that his absence in the lists of 1605, 1611 and 1612 was due to the journeys he frequently made to Spain. This means that in 1605 there were at least five mayordomos: the four that are mentioned in the 1605 lists, plus Ibarra.

The case of the count of Isenghien, Jacques Philippe Vilain de Gand, is identical. He is referred to as mayordomo for the first time in 1598 and held the title until 1622. The 1605 lists and the libros de razón mention him, although in the wage-sheets from 1612 to 1618 he is marked “ausente.” However, his name does not appear in the 1611 list. In fact, this document, in which the count of Saint-Aldegonde, Philippe de Mérode, Ferdinand d’Andelot and the count of Marles are given as mayordomos, should be completed with the names of the absentees, namely Ibarra, Ponce de León, Isenghien and Croÿ. The 1611 document clearly confirms once more that only the libros de razón give

117 AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1837, fos. 104v, 160v.
118 Roco de Campofrío, España en Flandes, 70 (as in note 7); AGR, Audience, no. 20, fo. 18r.
119 ASV, Fondo Borghese, Serie 1, no. 913, fo. 352r; AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1837, fos. 39r, 104v, 160v, 219v, 263v-264r, 268r, 305v, 367v, 397v; no. 1838, fos. 41v, 97v, 128r, 180r, 218r, 256r, 292v, 337r, 372r.
120 ASV, Fondo Borghese, Serie 1, no. 913, fo. 352r. He died in 1628.
121 AGR, Audience, no. 33/3, fo. 5v; AGR, Audience, no. 33/4, fo. 67r; AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1837, fos. 39r, 104v, 160v, 220r; no. 1838, fos. 41v, 97v, 128r, 180r, 218r, 256r, 292r, 337r, 372r.
a complete overview of all the office-holders, and that the lists of 1605 and 1611 only mention the mayordomos actually on duty.

Bearing all this in mind, it becomes clear that, at least for the years from 1595 to 1611 and from 1619 to 1621, one can only analyze the composition of the quartet of mayordomos on duty. Until probably 1609, half of them were Spaniards or members of families originating in the Aragonese kingdom of Naples: don Luis de Ávalos, the most senior, and don Diego de Ibarra in 1598, don Pedro Ponce de León and Gerónimo Carafa, the Neapolitan marquis of Montenegro in 1605. In 1611, on the contrary, all four were local noblemen, headed by the count of Saint-Aldegonde. This was probably no more than a coincidence. Between 1613 and 1617 the libros de razón again mention one Spaniard, don Diego de Ibarra. In 1617 a second Spanish mayordomo appeared, don García de Pareja, the ambassador extraordinary of Philip III who was sent to Brussels at the beginning of that year in order to thank the archduke for having organized the oath of allegiance of the Flemish provinces to the king in 1616. He would stay in Brussels until the end of 1617.

While local office-holders had a certain – and from 1609 a great – influence on the decisions of the bureo, they were almost completely kept out of the financial transactions at court. Payments at court followed a strict procedure. Above all, the mayordomo mayor had to approve the transaction. Then, the secretario de la cámara would write out a payment order, which would be verified by the greffier. Finally, the tesorero would pay the creditor. The names of the holders of three out of four offices have already been mentioned: the mayordomos mayor Mendoza, Zapata and finally Lasso; the greffier Pedro de Mendoza, and the tesoreros Joseph Hartelieb and Antonio Rovelasca. The secretario de la cámara was also a Spaniard. In 1595 this office was assigned to Juan de Frías. He was recalled by Philip III after he had exposed the abuses of a servant of the army’s pagador general Gabriel de Santisteban, and returned to Madrid in 1604. His replacement was Diego Ruiz, who

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122 Gachard and Piot, *Collection de voyages*, 4: 460 (as in note 15).
123 See note 114; *CCE*, 1: 495, 497, 499, 509 (as in note 5).
124 Roco de Campofrío, *España en Flandes*, 7 (as in note 7); Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia de Felipe II*, 3: 1545 (as in note 82); Louant, *Correspondance*, 2: 263 (as in note 55).
125 *Consultas*, 1: 370 (as in note 6); Codoin 42: 477, 483 (as in note 5). At his arrival in Madrid, Frías served as oidor of the Real Chancillería de Valladolid and later, in 1613, was promoted councilor of the Consejo Real. See Cabrera de Córdoba, *Relaciones*, 528 (as in note 36).
did not last long. By 1611 Antonio Suárez de Argüello was holding the office, and he continued to do so until at least 1622.\textsuperscript{126}

The Spaniards not only dominated the central administration of the finances of the archducal court. At a lower level they also held most of the offices that handled the money coming from the bureo in order to provide the departments with the supplies they needed. The despensero mayor, for instance, the man responsible for the distribution of the raciones among the different sections of the Casa (the so called oficios de boca) and the administrative head of the kitchen, was at all times a Spaniard: Bernardo Gómez in 1598, Juan del Poyo in 1605, Cristóbal de Lonzón from 1612 to 1622.\textsuperscript{127} The same was true of the comprador, the official charged with the acquisition of the provisions for the kitchen. In 1598 this position was occupied by Miguel de Guevara, who was succeeded before 1605 by his former assistant, Pascual Navarro.\textsuperscript{128} At the end of May 1615, Navarro’s aide Lucas Hernández would, in his turn, replace his master.\textsuperscript{129} The section of the Casa that handled not money, but precious objects, was the salsería, the service in charge of the silver and pewter plates and dishes. The salsero mayor was even held personally responsible for the loss of any of them.\textsuperscript{130} No local servant ever occupied this position. From 1598 to at least 1618 Miguel de Pianza – possibly of Italian origin – held the office, being succeeded by his assistant Tomás de la Riva at the end of the archducal reign.\textsuperscript{131} In fact, the only section in Flemish hands involving precious objects was the tapicería, whose head, the tapicero mayor Herman Vermeren, outlived the archduke.

\textsuperscript{126} AGR, Conseil d’État, no. 157/3, fo. 9v; AGR, Audience, no. 20, fo. 19v. In 1606, Ruiz was still secretary (Codoín 43: 21, as in note 35). From 1612, Suárez de Argüello also held the position of Secrétaire d’État aux affaires d’Allemagne, thus administering the relations of the Archdukes with the Empire. He died in 1635. See De Marneffe, “La Secrétairerie d’État allemande aux Pays-Bas,” 146 (as in note 108).

\textsuperscript{127} ASV, Fondo Borghese, Serie i, no. 913, fo. 354v; AGR, Audience, no. 33/3, fo. 20v; AGR, Audience, no. 33/4, fo. 68v; AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1837, fo. 110v; AGR, Audience, no. 20, fo. 23r.

\textsuperscript{128} ASV, Fondo Borghese, Serie i, no. 913, fo. 354v; AGR, Audience, no. 33/3, fo. 20v; AGR, Audience, no. 33/4, fo. 68v.

\textsuperscript{129} Navarro died on 21 May 1615. AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1838, fo. 187v; AGR, Audience, no. 20, fo. 23r.

\textsuperscript{130} AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fos. 47v-48r.

\textsuperscript{131} ASV, Fondo Borghese, Serie i, no. 913, fo. 354r; AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1838, fo. 378r; AGR, Audience, no. 20, fo. 22r. On the wage-sheet of the first tercio of 1618 Miguel de Pianza still appears as salsero mayor.
In the Cámara, apart from the administrative offices discussed above, both guardajoyas y ropa of the Archdukes handled a fortune in jewels and precious stones. They supervised and negotiated the manufacture and acquisition of jewelry, golden and silver art objects and religious silverware with local goldsmiths, jewelers and merchants. Albert’s guardajoyas Joachim Denzenhear was also responsible for the gold and silver objects and ornaments of the court chapel. He served the archduke from 1595 until after 1618 and was succeeded, not by one of his assistants, but by the former ayuda de cámara Juan Laynez. At the passing of his master, Laynez was dismissed in 1624. Isabella’s guardajoyas was the Spaniard Juan Elordi de Silva, who was first mentioned in 1604 and was still serving the archduchess in 1623. In the stables, most of the resources were administrated by the veedor y contador. Of course, any financial transaction was to take place with the knowledge of the caballerizo mayor, but the veedor y contador kept the accounts and submitted them to the bureo. He also paid the wages of some of the servants of the stables. Once again, this office was held by a Spanish servant, in 1598 Cristóbal de Paredes, and from at least 1605 to 1622, Antonio de Mendoza. Finally, one should not forget the limosnero mayor, who administered up to 20,000 Flemish pounds in alms every year. He drew up the lists of people that would receive archdudal charity, for example, when the court sojourned outside Brussels. Old people, poor prisoners, sick women, orphans, poor girls who were about to marry, “gens bruslez du feu” (‘covered in burns’), and merchants “distruict par la fortune” were given priority. The Archdukes approved and signed the list, and might sometimes distribute the alms in person. Be that as it may, a high proportion of their charitable donations passed through the almoner’s hands. As the office of limosnero mayor was usually combined with that of capellán mayor, the first local clergyman in this position was to be François de Rye in 1620, aside from the short interim of Karel Maes in 1603-1605, referred to above.

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132 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fos. 36r-37r.
133 AGR, Audience, no. 33/4, fo. 61v (“Joachim de Encenar”); AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1838, fo. 374.
134 Laynez already figures as an ayuda de cámara on the 1598 list, ASV, Fondo Borghese, Serie 1, no. 913, fo. 352v.
135 Finot, Inventaire, 6: 20-21, 110 (as in note 74).
136 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fo. 71v.
137 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fo. 7r-v.
Direct contact with the Archdukes

The offices that allowed daily contact with the Archdukes or that were involved with the preparation and serving of the archducal repasts constituted a third cluster of Spanish control. Of course there were many courtiers that approached either Albert or Isabella, or even both, on a daily basis. For instance, most of the members of the Cámara did. The *barberos* shaved the archduke, the servants of the *guardarropa* helped him to get dressed and the *zapatero* put his shoes on. None of them had the right to address the archduke, and while they were serving there was always the *gentilhombre de guarda* or his substitute present. This type of contact was rather of a ‘passive’ kind. I am therefore not referring to this group of lower offices, although many of them were in Spanish hands, but to the higher personnel – except the leading offices – that assisted the Archdukes more ‘actively,’ accompanied them from morning to evening, had the right to speak freely, shared intimate moments or was frequently left alone with them, that is, without anybody else being present.

Indeed, many servants entered the private quarters of the Archdukes, the so-called *reitre*, on a daily basis: the *tapicero mayor*, the cleaners, the water-carrier, the *furrier*, etc. But all of them had to wait until their masters went to mass before they were permitted to carry out their tasks, and they were at all times accompanied by the *ayuda de cámara* on duty. Very few persons were allowed into the *reitre* while the sovereigns were actually present, not even the *Grandes*, the knights of the Golden Fleece, or the generals of the army. Access to the *reitre* was limited to the *sumiller de corps*, the *gentilhombre de la cámara* on duty, and the *ayuda de cámara* on duty. At night, the *ayuda de furriera* on duty locked the doors of the archducal quarters, only to open them again in the morning. The doors of the *reitre* and the *aposento de la alcoba*, on the contrary, were locked by the *mozo del reitre* in the presence of the *ayuda de cámara* on duty.138 In the private rooms of the archduchess, a similar procedure was in place, but carried out by the women of her retinue, especially by the *camarera mayor*, the *dueñas de reitre*, the *mozas de cámara* and the *mozas de reitre*.

A limited number of servants had the right to reside in the palace building after the closing of the gates, and even to spend the night near the private rooms of the Archdukes. In his quality of *limosnero mayor*, the *capellán mayor*, for example, disposed over a room close to

138 AGR, *Manuscrits divers*, no. 821, fos. 39v and 43r.
the archduke’s.\textsuperscript{139} The \textit{sumiller de corps} also had his lodgings next to Albert’s, and he even slept on a bed in the room next to the archducal bedchamber. His family and servants, however, lived in a house outside the palace. When he was absent, and only then, his place was taken by the \textit{gentilhombre de la cámara} on duty.\textsuperscript{140} The \textit{ayuda de cámara} on duty slept in a bed near the door of the archducal private quarters.\textsuperscript{141} Both beds were daily built and removed by the \textit{mozos del retrete}, of which the one on duty also passed the night in the palace. The \textit{gentilhombre de la cámara} on duty furthermore did not budge from the archduke’s side during his 24-hour service.\textsuperscript{142}

Of all these offices, only that of \textit{gentilhombre de la cámara} was not completely dominated by Spaniards. Indeed, while in 1598 half of the \textit{gentilhombres de la cámara} – five out of a total of ten – were local noblemen, this ratio increased to eight out of thirteen in 1605, ten out of fifteen in 1611, seventeen out of twenty-three in 1617 and finally seven out of eight in 1621. Before 1611, the \textit{ayudas de cámara} and the \textit{mozos del retrete}, on the contrary, were almost never Flemish or Burgundian servants.\textsuperscript{143} During the years of the Truce, roughly half of the offices of \textit{ayuda} and \textit{mozo} were occupied by local people. As to the service of Isabella, with the exception of the \textit{camarera mayor} almost all of the positions were in Spanish hands throughout the whole archducal reign.\textsuperscript{144}

Spaniards also directed most of the sections of the \textit{Casa}, the so called \textit{oficios de boca}. By doing so, they held control over the preparation, manipulation and presentation of the dishes, beverages and fruit that were reserved for the archducal table and for the other courtiers. Beside the \textit{salsería}, with its Spanish \textit{salsero mayor}, the \textit{cava} (wine cellar), the \textit{frutería} (fruit and marmalades) and the \textit{panetería} (the section

\textsuperscript{139} AGR, \textit{Manuscrits divers}, no. 821, fo. 7r-v. The \textit{capellán mayor} as such had no right to stay in the palace after closing time.

\textsuperscript{140} AGR, \textit{Manuscrits divers}, no. 821, fos. 60v-61v.

\textsuperscript{141} AGR, \textit{Manuscrits divers}, no. 821, fo. 63r.

\textsuperscript{142} AGR, \textit{Manuscrits divers}, no. 821, fo. 38r.

\textsuperscript{143} In 1605 only a certain Pedro de Bodens figures among the \textit{ayudas de cámara} (AGR, \textit{Audience}, no. 33/3, fo. 10r-v).

\textsuperscript{144} 1605: all 5 \textit{dueñas de retrete}, 4 of the 5 \textit{mozas de cámara} and 1 of the 2 \textit{mozas de retrete} (AGR, \textit{Audience}, no. 33/3, fos. 3v-4v); 1611: all 4 \textit{dueñas de retrete}, 5 of the 6 \textit{mozas de cámara} and at least 2 of the 4 \textit{mozas de retrete} (AGR, \textit{Conseil d’État}, no. 157/2, fo. 18r-v); 1617: all 4 \textit{dueñas de retrete}, 7 of the 8 \textit{mozas de cámara} and 3 of the 4 \textit{mozas de retrete} (AGR, \textit{Chambre des Comptes}, no. 1838, fos. 215v-216r); 1622: 4 of the 5 \textit{dueñas de retrete}, 6 of the 7 \textit{mozas de cámara} and at least 1 of the 4 \textit{mozas de retrete} (AGR, \textit{Audience}, no. 20, fos. 17v-18r).
responsible for the table linen and the bread) were all directed by non-local officials, mainly Spaniards and Italians.\textsuperscript{145} As has already been indicated, the administrative head of the kitchen, the \textit{despensero mayor} – referred to in some documents as the \textit{veedor de vianda} – was at all times a Spaniard, as were the \textit{comprador}, the \textit{guardamanger}, and all of his four assistants.\textsuperscript{146} The \textit{guardamanger} administered the delivery of provisions to the kitchen and supervised their quality and use. Indeed, no food was to be sold to any court members; all the meat, fish and poultry purchased by the \textit{comprador} was consigned to the archducal table and the \textit{estados}.\textsuperscript{147} And although the \textit{cocinero mayor} was probably of Flemish origin,\textsuperscript{148} the Archdukes’ repasts might well have been prepared by Spanish cooks only. Indeed, the kitchen consisted of two sections, one for the table of the Archdukes (the \textit{cocina de la boca}) and one for the \textit{estados} (the \textit{cocina de los estados}).\textsuperscript{149} Unfortunately, the sources do not specify to which section each cook belonged.\textsuperscript{150} Finally, the provisions of the kitchen were guarded by the \textit{ujieres de vianda}, two door-keepers of Spanish origin.\textsuperscript{151}

\textsuperscript{145} \textit{Cava}: Antonio Rovelasca (mentioned 1598 and 1605), Francisco Rodríguez Agraz (1611 to 1621) and Valeriano Rama (1622); \textit{frutería}: Juan de Cerezo (1598) and Pedro de Aguiler (1605; the lists after 1605 do not mention the position of \textit{frutero mayor}, which probably became a part of the kitchen); \textit{panetería}: Juan del Pueyo (1598), Marcos Obrero (1605), Pedro Aguiler (1611-1618; Aguiler died 30 April 1618, see AGR, \textit{Chambre des Comptes}, no. 1838, fo. 377v) and Gerónimo Gómez (1618-1622).

\textsuperscript{146} In 1598 the \textit{guardamanger} was Marcos Obrero (ASV, \textit{Fondo Borghese}, Serie i, no. 913, fo. 354v), in 1605 Cristóbal de Lonzón (AGR, \textit{Audience}, no. 33/3, fo. 20r), in 1611 Miguel de Olivares (AGR, \textit{Conseil d’État}, no. 157/2, fo. 15r), and, finally, between the end of 1612 and 1622, Martín Ruiz de Ezquerecocha (AGR, \textit{Chambre des Comptes}, no. 1837, fo. 110v). Only in 1622 was his aide Christian Vandereycken (AGR, \textit{Audience}, no. 20, fo. 22v).

\textsuperscript{147} AGR, \textit{Manuscrits divers}, no. 821, fos. 49v-50r. In fact, the \textit{portadores de la cocina}, the servants that handled the food before the cooks prepared it, were all Spaniards from 1598 to 1622.

\textsuperscript{148} Juan Fiel or Fel between 1598 and 1611, and Jean de Termone from 1612 to at least 1618 (AGR, \textit{Chambre des Comptes}, no. 1838, fo. 379v). The lists of 1622 and 1624 make no further mention of a \textit{cocinero mayor}, but simply enumerate the kitchen staff.

\textsuperscript{149} AGR, \textit{Manuscrits divers}, no. 821, fo. 49r-v.

\textsuperscript{150} Only the 1595 list, which includes 5 cooks, mentions a “cocinero del estado de los pages y ayudas de camar” among the personnel of the kitchen (AGR, \textit{Audience}, no. 33/4, fo. 64r).

\textsuperscript{151} 1598: Martín Pérez (ASV, \textit{Fondo Borghese}, Serie i, no. 913, fo. 355v); 1605: Lorenzo Carrillo and Cristóbal de Arce (AGR, \textit{Audience}, no. 33/3, fo. 15r); 1611: Cristóbal de Arce and Juan Cortés (AGR, \textit{Conseil d’État}, no. 157/2, fo. 13r); 1617: Juan Cortés and Valeriano Rama (AGR, \textit{Chambre des Comptes}, no. 1838, f 261r); 1622: Juan Cortés and Gaspar de Vega (AGR, \textit{Audience}, no. 20, fo. 21v).
However, the courtiers with direct access to the sovereigns, who most enjoyed the Archdukes’ confidence, were probably the archducal confessors. They not only molded their penitents’ consciences and, as spiritual directors, had a great influence on their personal religiosity, in each case they also intervened in public matters or even in affairs of state, as can be illustrated in the case of Albert’s confessor, the Dominican Iñigo de Brizuela. Brizuela served the archduke from 1595, when he was personally selected by Philip II, to 1621. Until 1608 his role at court seems to have been rather discreet. This changed in December of that year, when he was sent to Spain to secure royal approbation of the Twelve Years’ Truce. In 1609 he again traveled to Madrid and submitted the final proposal to royal ratification. His political weight in Madrid and Brussels increased considerably as a result of the success of both missions, and he was even appointed councilor of State. From then on, he played an important role in several key issues of the archducal reign. With good reason Bentivoglio wrote in 1613 that:

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\text{aunque por esta suerte de su cargo no tiene negocios particulares y determinados fuera de los que pertenecen a governar la conciencia del Archiduque, con todo eso casi se puede dezir, que es el suyo vn tribunal supremo, donde concurren materias de todos generos. Y el Archiduque, que va imitando, como dixe, quanto puede, en todo las acciones de Felipe Segundo, y que se conforma generalmente al estilo de la Corte de España, ha dexado facilmente ganar autoridad a este sujeto.}\]

In 1614, in view of the state of the archduke’s health, Philip III requested that the representatives of the Flemish provinces swear allegiance to him; Spínola entrusted Brizuela with the delicate task of convincing Albert of the necessity of this procedure. Later on, he took part in negotiations for the prolongation of the Truce. Brizuela had become indispensable, at least in religious matters. The French geographer Pierre Bergeron, who traveled through the Netherlands and visited the palace in Brussels in 1619, wrote of Brizuela that he “gouverne fort en la court.” Brizuela’s appointment in 1622 as a member of the Supreme Council for the Netherlands and Burgundy in Madrid reflects the political know-how

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152 Cabrera de Córdoba, *Historia de Felipe II*, 3: 1545 (as in note 82).
153 Bentivoglio, *Relaciones*, 58v (as in note 29).
154 Henri Michelant (ed.), *Voyage de Pierre Bergeron ès Ardennes, Liège et Pays-Bas en 1619* (Liège, 1875), 346.
he had built up during his years at the Brussels court. Isabella, on the contrary, chose a Franciscan as her spiritual assistant, namely Fray Andrés de Soto, whose political role was rather modest.

Access to the sovereigns granted to those other than courtiers, knights of the Golden Fleece, Grandes of Spain, high-ranked officers of the Army of Flanders and presidents of the archducal councils – who all had structural moments of contact with the archduke – was supervised, as has already been mentioned, by the mayordomo mayor, who acted as a filter between the Archdukes and the outside world. He received foreign embassies or representatives, organized the public audiences and controlled access to the private rooms of the archduke. Burgundian etiquette also prescribed that nobody could enter the private rooms of the archduchess without his permission.

Accessibility of the palace

Except for the days on which certain parts of the archducal residence on the Coudenberg were opened to the public, the palace was a restricted area where even the servants of the different court sections were not allowed to circulate freely. Only a limited number of courtiers held a master key (the llave real) that opened the doors of every room in the building. The most important of them was the aposentador mayor, who carried the key of the archduke and accompanied him everywhere in the palace, together with an aide opening and closing the doors on his way. For obvious reasons, the gentilhombre de la cámara on duty also disposed over a master key. Furthermore, the mayordomo mayor, the sumiller de corps and the caballerizo mayor each held a copy, as did the ayuda de cámara and the ayuda de furriera on duty. The other sections only disposed over a llave sencilla, a key that gave access to their own department. The aposentador mayor kept strict control over the number of llaves reales that circulated and over the use their owners made of them, and reported any abuses to the bureau.

157 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fos. 28r, 55v-56r; Juan de Contreras, Norma y ceremonia de las reinas de la Casa de Austria (Madrid, 1958), 90.
158 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fos. 38r and 39v.
the archducal reign until its end, the position of *aposentador mayor* was assigned to Spanish courtiers, first Hernando de Zavala and later Manuel de Arinzano.\(^{159}\)

Circulation of courtiers and visitors in the palace building, as it was established by court etiquette, was supervised by a series of officers that were always Spaniards. Isabella’s chamber in particular was heavily guarded to prevent men from entering the private space of the archduchess’ retinue, which consisted mainly of unmarried women. In fact, her *guardajoyas* and his assistants, together with her tailor, her embroiderer and her secretary, were the only male members of her *Cámara*. Access to this part of the court was supervised by the *guardadamas*, who was the only person allowed to enter the archduchess’s *Cámara* without needing authorization from the *mayordomo mayor* to do so.\(^{160}\) This position was occupied from at least 1605 – possibly even from 1598\(^{161}\) – by Juan Fernández de Eyzaguirre, who would continue in office until his death in 1622. He was then succeeded by another Spaniard, Juan Ortiz de Zárate.\(^{162}\) The *guardadamas* was at the same time *aposentador de palacio*, and probably served as Isabella’s equivalent of Albert’s *aposentador mayor*. The doors of Isabella’s floor were guarded by the *porteros de las damas*, two doorkeepers, again of Spanish origin.\(^{163}\) The archduke’s private chambers were watched over by the *porteros de la saleta*, a palace guard, usually of six men, all of them Spaniards.\(^{164}\) All of these servants were instructed as to who was to be stopped at the

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\(^{159}\) Zavala’s name figures in the 1595 and 1598 list, while Arinzano is mentioned as *aposentador mayor* from 1605 onwards. Before 1598, he was *contralor*. Arinzano would survive the archduke (AGR, *Audience*, no. 33/4, fos. 62r-v, 68v; ASV, *Fondo Borghese*, Serie 1, no. 913, fo. 353r-v; AGR, *Audience*, no. 33/3, fo. 18v).

\(^{160}\) Contreras, *Norma y ceremonia*, 90 (as in note 157).

\(^{161}\) Fernández de Eyzaguirre was *comprador* at the court of Philip II until 1598. See Martínez Millán and Fernández Conti, *La monarquía de Felipe II*, 2: 682 (as in note 59). His son served the Admiral of Aragon. See Codoin 42: 535 (as in note 35).


\(^{163}\) Miguel Veloso and Pedro de Castañeda served as such from at least 1605 to 1622. Their aides, however, were Flemish.

\(^{164}\) 1598: Domingo de Aguilar, Martín Juárez, Bernardo Añico and Juan Solarno (ASV, *Fondo Borghese*, Serie 1, no. 913, fo. 354v); 1605: Diego Martínez, Martín Juárez, Bernardo Añico, Nicolás Correa, Martín de Mendú, Francisco Araujo and Pedro de Hinojosa (AGR, *Audience*, no. 33/3, fo. 19r); 1611: Bernardo Añico, Martín Juárez, Nicolás Correa, Francisco Araujo, Sebastián Ruiz and Alonso Palomino (AGR, *Conseil d’État*, no. 157/2, fo. 14v); 1622: Martín Juárez, Nicolás Correa, Bernardo Añico and Francisco de Ocampo (AGR, *Audience*, no. 20, fo. 22v). See also Hofman, *Das Spanische Hofzeremoniell*, 87 (as in note 84).
entrance of the space they guarded, and who was to be allowed to enter, and they had to report any incident to the mayordomo mayor.

A third restricted area at court was constituted by the different estados. Contrary to what one might assume, most of the courtiers were obliged to have their meals at home or in the city taverns. Only a limited group of courtiers enjoyed the prerogative of having dinner and supper within the palace. For this purpose, besides the archducal table five or six more tables were served. The Estado de boca received the mayordomos, the gentilhombres de la boca, and the sumiller de la cortina. The Estado de cámara was reserved for the gentilhombres de la cámara. Both estados offered meals for up to about twenty-four people a day. The Estado de ayudas de cámara was open to eight servants: the ayuda de cámara on duty, the secretario de la cámara, the guardarropa and his aides, and the ayuda de barbero de corps. The members of these estados had the privilege of bringing a page with them, and the pages were allowed to eat their masters’ leftovers. The Estado de los pájies received the archducal pages to a maximum of twelve. From 1599 onwards, the Sala de las damas de la infanta served meals to between ten and fifteen members of Isabella’s Cámara. Finally, at the court in Brussels, in contrast to most other Habsburg courts, a sixth estado functioned until the Twelve Years’ Truce: the Estado de los capitanes entretenidos, the high-ranking officers of the Army of Flanders. This estado disappears in the documents of 1611 and later. When one takes into account that the mayordomo mayor, the sumiller de corps, the caballerizo mayor and probably also the camarera mayor of the infanta did not have their meals in one of the estados, but received the same dishes as the Archdukes and were allowed to take them in their private quarters, while the ayuda de cámara on duty had his meals in the retrete after the archduke had finished eating, the total number of courtiers that were allowed to eat meals from the archducal kitchen fluctuated around a hundred, not counting the pages.165

It was at all times important to supervise access to these estados, not only from a financial point of view – the more people took their meals in the estados, the more provisions the kitchen had to buy – but also with regard to the internal security of the palace. Therefore, only the mayordomo semanero was allowed to invite occasional guests to the Estado de boca. The other estados were exclusively reserved to court personnel, and their members were strictly forbidden to bring anybody

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165 AGR, Manuscrits divers, no. 821, fos. 50v-52v.
with them. The *mayordomos de los estados*, the heads of these sections charged with the daily organization, made sure that court regulations were observed and that no unauthorized people entered the *estados* and thus the palace. All of them, with the exception of a few Flemish *mozos* that never advanced to a higher rank, were Spaniards or Italians.\(^{166}\)

**Living encapsulated**

The overview of offices held by Spaniards is not exhaustive. Many other courtiers and servants that in one way or another had daily access to the archducal rooms, or that handled personal items of either sovereign, were also of Spanish origin: the sweepers that cleaned the *retrete* (*barrenderos de la casa*), the section responsible for the lighting of the palace building (*cerería*), the *reposteros de camas* that took care of Albert’s bed, the personal laundresses: the majority of them were Spaniards, as was at least one of the personal physicians that attended on the archdukes. The point I would like to make is that the Archdukes lived in a kind of Spanish cocoon, in which most of the people they encountered on a daily basis, from the lower personnel to the most important courtiers, were Spaniards. In other words, there was a barrier around the Archdukes, made up of Spanish servants and courtiers, that separated them from the outside, local world. The gates to this inner circle were heavily guarded, and access was watchfully controlled.

This entourage was in large part maintained from the beginning of the archducal reign to its end. Indeed, except for the three groups of *gentilhombres* and their equivalents in the archducal chapel and the stables, the key offices of the system remained in Spanish hands throughout. While other vacancies at court were usually filled with locals, this was not the case with these positions. Here, Spaniards followed Spaniards. Most of the time, the newly promoted servants were already working at court, but on several occasions they were brought from Spain. This demonstrates that the powerbase of the Spaniards at the archducal court was not just carried over from Albert and Isabella’s

\(^{166}\) *Estado de boca*: Miguel de Pianza (1595-1617), Tomás de Riva (1622); *Estado de cámara*: Carlos de Pianza (1595-1624); *Estado de ayudas de cámara*: Francisco de Peña (1595-1605), Diego Martínez de Aguilar (1605), Domingo López de Sosoaga (1612-1617), Ernest du Clarr (1624); *Estado de pajes*: Lorenzo Carrillo (1598), Domingo López de Sosoaga (1605), Diego Martínez de Aguilar (1611-1622); *Sala de damas*: Francisco de Peña (1605-1616), Teodoro Marcelo (1617-1622); *Estado de capitanes entretenidos*: Juan de Aranda (1598), Oracio de León (1605).
former retinues as governor-general and princess, to be undone with the years, but was deliberately maintained in order to conserve a Spanish grip on the Brussels court.

The Spanish faction

The question now is: was this Spanish powerbase at court only an instrument of patronage and clientelism, or did it also facilitate the functioning of a Spanish political faction? Was it just a place to park servants of the king of Spain or of the Archdukes as a reward for services rendered by themselves or their relatives, or did it also try to influence archducal policy? In this context, it is important first to discuss two circumstances that made the situation of the Archdukes very different from that to be found at any other Habsburg court: the peculiar relation between the king and his sister and uncle, and the presence of the Army of Flanders in the Southern Netherlands. Both these factors determined the dynamics of court factions and influenced archducal decision-making.

The particular situation of the archducal court

As has been indicated already, Philip III never really accepted the cession of the Netherlands to his sister. He rather saw the Archdukes as princes that in a certain sense held the country in usufruct from its rightful master, and thought that his own grand strategy should override local interests. From 1601 onwards, Madrid designed a policy that foresaw the immediate reincorporation of the Northern provinces into the Spanish Monarchy. Apart from the consequences this strategy had for the standing of the Archdukes, it also put the king in a very ambiguous position. On the one hand he had to take great care not to undermine the reputación of Albert and Isabella. Otherwise, he would only confirm the Protestant view that the archducal regime was no more than a puppet government of the king of Spain. Especially during the first years of the cession, when peace negotiations with the United Provinces might still lead to a definitive resolution of the war in the Netherlands, it was important to avoid any reference to the subordinate – at least in the king's opinion – position of Brussels to Madrid. Indeed, observers reported that the States General were waiting for the birth of an archducal heir, and thus for the consolidation of Flemish autonomy.
from Spain, before opening discussions on the reunification of the Seventeen Provinces under archducal authority.\textsuperscript{167} Any suggestion that Philip had power over the government in Brussels would abort this willingness. It was therefore important, at least outwardly, to stress archducal sovereignty rather than to be seen to attack it.

On the other hand, Philip wanted ‘his’ northern subjects, and in particular the Flemish and Burgundian nobility, to know that the situation of the Southern Netherlands was exceptional and, in any case, temporary. Although the Archdukes ruled the country, he wanted to make very clear that in the end the Netherlands would return to Spain. Perhaps Philip was not yet technically and rightfully the sovereign of the country, he would be in the near future. Local elites should be made aware of this and should be stimulated to remain loyal to the royal cause. Madrid tried to get this message across as clearly as possible. Already in November 1599, for instance, the Spanish ambassador to the Archdukes, don Baltasar de Zúñiga, organized a banquet in Brussels for the knights of the Golden Fleece on the occasion of Saint Andrew’s day, the patron saint of the Order. The Council of State supported the initiative, because it was a signal “en memoria de la soberanía que reconoçen a Vuestra Majestad.”\textsuperscript{168} Now the king was of course Grand Master of the Order, and the Order itself had Burgundian roots, but it nevertheless gave evidence of little diplomatic tact to organize a celebration at a sovereign court without consulting the local rulers first. The next year, in the summer of 1600, when Albert was negotiating the subsidies that the Southern States General would grant to the archducal regime, the ambassador extraordinary don Enrique de Guzmán, sent by the king to Brussels in order to congratulate Albert on his performance at Nieuwpoort, suddenly appeared at the Brussels town hall and expressed his thanks to the representatives for the support they had given to Philip III.\textsuperscript{169} Similar interventions served the purpose of reminding people of the final destiny of the country.

Spain and the Netherlands were clearly not two completely separate worlds. Madrid defended its interests in Brussels through a variety of channels. On the other hand, the Archdukes tried to bring the Spanish government round to their own political views. In any case, events in the Netherlands – especially the course of the war against the Dutch

\textsuperscript{167} Louant, \textit{Correspondance}, 3: 244 (as in note 55).
\textsuperscript{168} \textit{Consultas}, 1: 71-72 (as in note 6).
\textsuperscript{169} Cabrera de Córdoba, \textit{Relaciones}, 79 (as in note 36); \textit{CCE}, 1: 49 (as in note 5); Gachard, \textit{Actes}, 257-259 (as in note 89).
rebels – affected politics at the Spanish court. Defeat or success in the North respectively weakened or strengthened the government in Spain. Peace negotiations with the rebels were used in a similar way. The results of Spanish policy in the Netherlands had the potential to influence the outcome of the struggle for power at the Spanish court, especially after 1611, when the faction of the duke of Lerma, Philip III’s *privado*, was showing its first signs of weakness. The Netherlands offered Lerma’s opponents an indirect way to attack his position and to undermine the king’s confidence in his favorite. It is therefore no surprise that the struggle between court factions in Madrid – first between *lermistas* and their opponents, and after the removal of Lerma from power, mainly between the former members of the anti-Lerma faction – also had offshoots at the archducal court and thus influenced the formation of factions at the archducal court. The presence of the Army of Flanders would only strengthen this factional division.

_A militarized court_

If no way was found to guarantee the integrity of the Flemish territory, then the cession of the Netherlands to the Archdukes would eventually lead to the end of a Habsburg presence in Northern Europe. The economic situation of the country did not allow the formation and maintenance of a large army to protect it from the attacks of the United Provinces and, potentially, France. Therefore, the States General in Brussels accepted the secret arrangements that the three most important citadels of the country – Antwerp, Ghent and Cambrai – would remain under Spanish command. At the same time the representatives suggested that the Army of Flanders should not be withdrawn from the Netherlands, but should stay to defend the new government.

It is important not to forget the presence of this organization, completely parallel to the local court and government, ultimately obeying the king of Spain alone. In theory, the Army of Flanders was a

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170 For an analysis of the factions at the court of Philip III and the struggle for power, see Antonio Feros, *Kingship and Favoritism in the Spain of Philip III, 1598-1621* (Cambridge, 2000).


potentially important instrument in the hands of Madrid that could be used to intervene in archducal policy. In practice, the archduke could not be deprived of the high command without affecting his reputation as a sovereign prince. Nevertheless, he would command the army not in his own name, but as the captain-general of the king.\(^{173}\)

In the past, the captains-general had been given a fairly free hand with regard to disbursements from the military treasury. On several occasions their arbitrary policy, often contrary to the interests of the Spanish Council of State and Council of Finances, had provoked a certain uneasiness in Madrid.\(^{174}\) Nevertheless, Albert could not be deprived of this competence without causing his displeasure and, even more importantly, without adversely affecting his authority. It was therefore important to surround the archduke with officers loyal to Madrid’s policy, and to limit the influence of local opinions about how the war in the Netherlands should be conducted. To attain both objects, a certain degree of integration between the army and the archducal court was pursued.

This meant that the court of the Archdukes became the Habsburg court where the presence of military personnel was probably most strongly marked. Indeed, many of the senior officers in the army also held positions at court. A breakdown of the situation in the period from 1598 to 1605 yields astonishing results. The court and the army were directed by the same individual, don Francisco de Mendoza, mayor domo mayor, general of the cavalry, and second in command of the army. His successor at the head of the court, don Gerónimo Walter Zapata, was simultaneously veedor general from 1600 to 1603.\(^{175}\) The gentilhombre de la cámara and sumiller de corps don Rodrigo Niño Lasso de la Vega was commander of the Spanish lanceros and arcabuceros that served as Albert’s personal guard. Two mayordomos were also military men: don Diego de Ibarra was veedor general between 1593 and 1599.\(^{176}\)

\(^{173}\) Esteban Estríngana, Guerra y finanzas, 83-85 (as in note 34).
\(^{174}\) Esteban Estríngana, Guerra y finanzas, 80-81 (as in note 34).
\(^{175}\) Parker, The Army of Flanders, 282 (as in note 45). Most of the highest ranking officers of the Army of Flanders are listed in the appendices on pages 281-286.
\(^{176}\) Don Diego de Ibarra originated from a family with a long military tradition. His father was Francisco de Ibarra, councillor of War to Philip ii, who served in the Netherlands under the duke of Alva. His uncle Esteban was even Alva’s secretary and later worked for the count of Fuentes and archduke Ernest. He would end his career as secretario de Guerra. Another uncle, Pedro, was contador of the army in Milan. See José Martínez Millán and Carlos Javier de Carlos Morales (eds.), Felipe ii, 1527-1598: La configuración de la monarquía hispana (Salamanca, 1998), 406-407.
while the count of Montenegro, captain of the Neapolitan cavalry, took Amiens and later defended it against the troops of Henry IV. Among the gentilhombres de la cámara we find don Diego de Ácuña, commander of a company of cavalry, don Alonso de Cárdenas, probably occupying a lower rank, don Diego Mexía, captain of the light cavalry and probably a relative of don Agustín Mexía, maestre de campo and commander of the citadel of Antwerp, and Gastón Spinola, count of Bruay, maestre de campo and since 1597 governor of Limburg. Federico Spínola, admiral of the galleys at Sluis, and don Luis de Velasco, general of the artillery in 1600 and of the cavalry from 1603, were simultaneously gentilhombres de la boca. Don Juan de Marquelayn, one of the capellanes de oratorio of the archducal court chapel, served as head chaplain of the cavalry. The licenciado Juan de Frías, ordinary chaplain and secretario de la cámara, combined his court offices from 1600 onwards with that of superintendente de la justicia militar. Doctor Juan Roco de Campofrío, also a court chaplain, was at the same time Vicario General (head of the military almoners) and administrator of the Royal Military Hospital in Mechelen.

Other senior officers that did not hold court offices were integrated by means of their status as capitanes entretenidos cerca de la persona. Geoffrey Parker estimates that there were 52 of them in 1596, and even 138 in 1608. The most important had access to the court through the above mentioned Estado de capitanes entretenidos. Among them,

177 Cabrera de Córdoba, Historia de Felipe II, 3: 1563, 1597-1601 (as in note 82); Roco de Campofrío, España en Flandes, 177-179 (as in note 7).
178 Codoin, 42: 355-356 (as in note 35).
179 On 5 April 1600 Albert recommends him to the duke of Lerma because “nunca se le hizo merced en cosas del ejército.” See Codoin, 42: 340 (as in note 35).
180 During the Battle of Nieuwpoort, don Diego Mexía, at the time a menino of Isabella and only twenty years old, prevented the archduke from being captured by the Dutch. See Roco de Campofrío, España en Flandes, 270 (as in note 7). During the first months of the siege of Ostend, don Agustín Mexía commanded the troops on the western side of the city. See Thomas, “De val van het Nieuwe Troje,” in Thomas, De val van het Nieuwe Troje, 82-85 (as in note 41).
181 Roco de Campofrío, España en Flandes, 165 (as in note 7); Parker, The Army of Flanders, 161 (as in note 45).
182 Cox, Vanden Tocht in Vlaenderen, 62-63 (as in note 96).
183 Esteban Estríngana, Guerra y finanzas, 88, 95 (as in note 34).
184 Codoin 43: 67 (as in note 35).
185 CCE, 1: 51, 56 (as in note 5).
186 Roco de Campofrío, España en Flandes, 8 (as in note 7); Parker, The Army of Flanders, 167-169 (as in note 45).
187 Parker, The Army of Flanders, 108 (as in note 45).
the maestres de campo, the veedor general (when he was not already a member of the court), the pagador general, the contador general and the commanders of the citadels of Antwerp, Ghent and Cambrai were certainly influential. On the other hand, the court was to some extent integrated in the army structures, as important courtiers also formed part of the rather informal Council of War in the Netherlands, together with senior officers and some local commanders, such as the count of Solre, caballerizo mayor of the archduke.

On the other hand, the most important commanders of the Walloon and German regiments of the Army of Flanders also combined their military service with a position at court. Between 1596 and 1606 the baron of Barbançon, captain of the archducal archers, commanded the infantry regiment of colonel Tassis. Count Frederick van den Bergh, captain of the guard of halberdiers, also had his own regiment of German infantry until it was disbanded in 1610. During the first months of the siege of Ostend, he would take charge of the troops attacking the city from the east. Charles de Longueval, count of Bucquoy and gentilhombre de la cámara, commanded a regiment of Walloon infantry and was appointed general of the artillery in 1603. René de Châlon, gentilhombre de boca, became maestre de campo of the baron de Molain’s regiment of Walloon infantry after the death of Nicolas Catriz in 1604. From 1597 onwards, the count of Solre was also captain-general of the bandes d’Ordonnance (troops of heavy cavalry financed by the States General) until 1602. He was replaced by Charles-Alexander de Croy, count of Fontenoy and future marquis de Havré, gentilhombre de la cámara of Albert. Barbançon’s eldest brother, Charles, count of Arenberg, also gentilhombre de la cámara, was from 1599 Admiral of the Sea.
One consequence of this integration of court and army was that the king of Spain disposed over an instrument to influence the composition of the household and to eliminate individuals that held opinions contrary to those of Madrid. Indeed, while he could not dismiss anybody from the Archdukes’ service, he could recall them as officers of the army and then replace them. This happened with don Francisco de Mendoza, and again with don Gerónimo Walter Zapata, who were both called to account for errors they made as army officers, but at the same time left the archduke without a mayordomo mayor. The king thus created the possibility to send a candidate of his own to Brussels. At a lower level, Madrid sometimes ordered members of the army to report to the king personally, and obstructed their return, giving them other positions in the royal administration. This happened to, among others, Juan de Friás. All Albert could do in response was to protest, arguing that similar decisions taken without his consent adversely touched his reputación, but this did not stop Philip.

However, in the long term the integration of court and army had serious disadvantages. From the end of 1602, the Spanish Council of State reversed its policy completely. In the future, a strict separation of both institutions was pursued. In the first place, differing strategic priorities and the poor performance of Albert as captain-general convinced Philip and his councilors that it had been a mistake to entrust the supreme command of the army to a foreigner, that is, a non-Spanish commander. Poor tactical decisions had led to the defeat at Nieuwpoort. Next, instead of attacking the United Provinces from the east, as most of his Spanish generals had urged, the archduke laid siege to Ostend, a city that even Farnese had not been able to conquer. Once Ostend was invested, Albert proved unable to take the town, and his military adventure became an enormously costly enterprise. Moreover, his ill health several times prevented him from commanding the troops in person. The lack of progress in 1602 was clearly a consequence of this. The second problem derived from the first. When the archduke was not at Ostend, the army was deprived of its senior officers, whose household offices obliged them to reside at court rather than in the camp at Ostend. One of the complaints against veedor general Walter Zapata was, as has already been mentioned, his absence from the army.

As the disadvantages of the integration of court and army became ever clearer, a decision was taken in September 1603 to separate the supreme command of the Army of Flanders from the government of the Netherlands. If the senior commanders continued at court, Albert...
would hold a channel through which to maintain his influence in
the army. Therefore, the newly appointed commander in chief did
not become mayordomo mayor of the Archdukes, and the other army
officers and capitanes entretenidos were presented with a choice between
retaining their military command or their court office. At the same
time, the financial administration of the army was separated from the
entourage of the archduke. A Junta de Hacienda in Brussels would
henceforth decide upon military expenses. None of its three members
– the veedor general, the contador general and the pagador general – were
courtiers. Moreover, funds arriving from Spain were to be kept in a
trunk with three locks and, the purpose being to keep the money away
from “personas dependientes del Sr. Archiduque,” the keys were not
to be given to any confidant of Albert. In order to avoid Albert’s
influence on the junta, all three office-holders were replaced.

The presence of the Army of Flanders and the integration of senior
officers into the archducal household during the first years of the reign
of Albert an Isabella inevitably influenced the formation of factions at
court. One of the major problems of the army was the rivalry between
the different ‘nations’ (naciones), specifically between the Spanish tercios

197 The Council of State advised on 18 February 1603 “[...] que los que tienen cargos en
e el ejército que requieran asistencia personal en ellos y acudir a las ocasiones, escojan el
hacerlo o quedar siruiendo a sus Altezas, y los que agora tienen entretenimientos cerca
de la persona del Sr. Archiduque, asistan con su Alteza, pues es aquella su obligacion y
los que no furen desta calidad vayan a seruir en la infanteria, y en lo venidero se ciere la
puerta a que ningun criado de su Alteza tenga officio ni sueldo en el ejército,” but
the king was of the opinion “[que] no conuine alargar el remedio, y assi se ordene preçissamente que los que tienen oficios y entretenimientos asistan de ordinario en el
exercito y que si tubieren otras ocupaciones a que acudir, elijan dentro de quinçe dias
lo vno o lo otro.” See Consultas, 1: 315, 322 (as in note 6). However, it took a while
before the separation was complete, and apparently several officers and entretenidos
managed to maintain their position up to and even after the Truce. For example, don
Alonso Dávalos, maestre de campo of an Italian tercio, and don Juan de Meneses, both
entretenidos in 1605, were appointed gentilhombre de la boca after the Truce. Don Diego
Mexía continued to combine his position in the army with that of gentilhombre de la
cámara (AGR, Chambre des Comptes, no. 1837, fos. 39v, 105r, 306r).

198 Consultas, 1: 336-338 (as in note 6). The Council of State had Juan de Mancisidor
in mind.

199 “Han proveido por veedor general del ejército de Flandes a don Francisco Vaca y
Benavides [...], y por pagador al contador [Martín de] Unzueta, y a otro vizcaino
[Asención de Eguigerem] por contador, mudando los que allá hacian estos oficios, porque
seguian las órdenes del Archiduque, que era en mucho daño de la hacienda que se proveía
de acá para las cosas de la guerra [my italics].” Cabrera de Córdoba, Relaciones, 174 (as in
note 36). See also Esteban Estríngana, Guerra y finanzas, 86-106 (as in note 34).
viejos and the Italian, German, Walloon and Irish regiments. This rivalry affected the entire army structure, from the ordinary soldiers to the senior officers. On several occasions, Spanish officers refused to obey orders from their non-Spanish superiors. Moreover, they frequently disagreed with the archduke’s strategy. In fact, they had serious, and understandable, reservations about accepting his authority. They and their elite troops had seen many years of active service, and now they were expected to obey the orders of a newcomer with comparatively little experience of warfare in the Netherlands. As a consequence, many Spanish senior officers maintained a direct correspondence with the king of Spain, frequently complaining about the strategic and political decisions being made in Brussels. On the other hand, as commander in chief Albert had to pay special attention to the Spanish tercios, the army’s elite forces. This provoked discontent among the local regiments and the Flemish nobility, and stimulated the rivalry between the naciones, for instance, during the siege of Ostend. It would be surprising if these differences had been contained in the army and had not influenced the formation of factions at court.

Factional struggle at the archducal court

When discussing factions at the archducal court, one should take into account that the struggle between a more nationally orientated party and its Spanish counterparts was not about the ‘independence’ of the newly created state, as most of the Belgian historians of the nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth century assumed. Of course the Archdukes defended their sovereignty, not least because it was vital to their reputación, a word repeated endlessly in the sources. But they never dreamt of detaching their country from the Spanish Monarchy, and very soon the lack of an heir removed any doubt about the future of the country anyway. Albert’s main objective was the same as Philip’s: to end the war with the rebels as soon as possible and thus free his nephew and the Netherlands from a conflict that was costing the Habsburg Monarchy dearly in human and financial resources.

Of course, both rulers differed on how best to end the war. Philip wanted no less than the full recovery of the rebellious Provinces, and...
therefore insisted on major military campaigns in the Rhineland. His view was endorsed by the senior officers of the army, such as don Luis de Velasco, who thoroughly disapproved of the decision to invest Ostend and, once this had been done, wanted to end the siege as soon as possible, even if this meant simply abandoning it. Albert, aware of the instability of his authority in the South, first wanted to address the grievance of the States General and the States of Flanders by eliminating the only Protestant enclave in southern territory, thus pacifying the country and consolidating his position. He also dreamt of reconquering the North, but soon realized that only a negotiated settlement would put an end to the hostilities. Once a compromise with the United Provinces was reached, soldiers would receive their back pay, and the mutinies that were so damaging to small towns and the countryside would come to an end. Moreover, the Army of Flanders would be downsized and/or employed elsewhere.

In order to reach a settlement with the North, Albert from 1600 onwards sought a peace treaty with the Dutch States General, rather than a truce. Only a treaty would bring a long term solution. The king, on the contrary, wanted to avoid such an arrangement at any price. Instead, he opted for a ceasefire and a truce. This would avoid negotiations on the position of Roman Catholics in the Republic and on religious tolerance in the South. But most of all, Philip suspected that Albert wanted a peace treaty in order to get the Spanish troops out of the country and acquire control of the three citadels that were in Spanish hands. Solre’s plans for the creation of a national army only confirmed his conviction. In this way, the influence of Madrid on the archducal regime would inevitably diminish, as power would fall into the hands of the naturales. The experiment with cardinal Andreas, interim governor-general during Albert’s voyage to Spain, had demonstrated the danger of such policy: his attempts to govern without the Spaniards, in the first place don Francisco de Mendoza, were welcomed by the Flemish population and had occasioned the expression of anti-Spanish sentiment all over the country.

The search for a settlement with the North stimulated the formation of a Spanish faction in Brussels. During the spring and the summer of 1601, to prevent the conclusion of a disadvantageous peace, its members unfolded a major diplomatic offensive, directed by the Spanish Council

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202 CCE, 1: 75-78 (as in note 5).
203 See note 89.
204 Louant, Correspondance, 3: 54-58 (as in note 55).
of State, aimed at changing Albert’s mind. At the centre of this group was the Spanish ambassador, don Baltasar de Zúñiga, who confronted the archduke with the views of king Philip and reminded him several times that he was not to pursue a foreign policy at odds with Madrid’s. Zúñiga was assisted by Fernando Carrillo, the superintendente de justicia militar, who received orders from Madrid to supervise the negotiations of a truce, not a peace treaty, with the rebels. They were to abort the informal talks – including the proposal of religious tolerance and the departure of the ‘foreigners,’ meaning Spaniards – that the archduke and Jean Richardot, president of the Privy Council, had started with a representative of Maurice of Nassau in the summer of 1601. Attempts to convince the archduke of the virtues of a truce were made by other channels, namely by the courtiers don Diego de Ibarra and don Rodrigo Niño Lasso de la Vega. Niño Lasso de la Vega in particular seems to have been a key figure for those trying to control the archduke.

By the end of October of 1601, Albert finally abandoned the idea of a peace treaty and accepted the solution of a ceasefire. Around this time, the papal nuncio Ottavio Mirto Frangipani observed in one of his letters that although the archduke was the lord of the Netherlands, the

205 Consultas, 1: 134 (as in note 6); CCE, 1: 59, 68, 73 (as in note 5).
206 CCE, 1: 66 (as in note 5).
207 Ibarra was an outspoken opponent of any agreement with the Dutch rebels. In light of his political conviction it is no surprise that in 1607 Philip relied on him to keep him informed about the whole peace process and to ensure that royal interests were not prejudiced, thus trying to regain Madrid’s control over the negotiations. He was, above all, to try to prevent Albert and Spínola from recognizing the Northern provinces as independent. Ibarra initially succeeded in steering Albert not to accept this condition without compensation on matters of commerce and religion. He nevertheless did not participate actively in the negotiations, because the States General of the United Provinces would not recognize him as a representative of Philip iii, and he was ultimately unable to stop the peace process. The final reports he sent to Madrid, however, were extremely negative about Albert and Spínola, chiming with the opinion of don Pedro Franqueza. Ibarra stated that Albert was making peace with the Dutch only to revenge himself on the king for having lost the high command of the Army of Flanders and the control over its financial resources, while Spínola was above all promoting his own career at court. See CCE, 1: 253-258 (as in note 5); García García, La Pax Hispanica, 66 (as in note 83); Van der Essen, “Politieke geschiedenis van het Zuiden,” 281 (as in note 172); Feros, Kingship and Favoritism, 192 (as in note 170); Paul Allen, Felipe iii y la Pax Hispanica, 1598-1621 (Madrid, 2001), 249-252, 259-261.
208 CCE, 1: 81-84 (as in note 5).
209 CCE, 1: 88, 93-94 (as in note 5).
Spaniards were as powerful as before the cession. The complete failure of the general assault on Ostend in January 1602, with more than 2500 casualties, discouraged the archduke and was the start of a series of semi-official contacts with agents from the North in order to conclude a suspensión de armas, just as the king had urged. Later attempts by the States General to convince Albert of the advantages of a formal peace – not in the least the departure of foreign troops – produced no effect. The Spanish faction seemed to have gained full control over the archduke.

The next step in the recovery of Spanish power in the Netherlands was the separation of the government and the supreme command of the army, to which reference has already been made. By 1602 Albert was willing to accept an assistant bearing the title of general of the cavalry, the rank held by don Francisco de Mendoza before he was captured by the rebels. Philip had in mind don Luis de Velasco, general of the artillery since 1600, but the archduke preferred the Italian maestre de campo Giorgio Basta, who at the time was serving the emperor. Finally, in the spring of 1603, Velasco was promoted general of the cavalry without Albert’s consent. The arrival of Ambrogio Spínola would temporarily solve the problem, as he offered to direct the troops around Ostend. However, technically Albert was still the commander in chief of the Army of Flanders. Thereupon, Madrid took the next step and decided to replace him at the head of the army. Only somebody close to the archduke would be able to convince him of this, but the same person would also have to enjoy the full confidence of the king. Finally, this difficult task was entrusted to don Rodrigo Niño Lasso de la Vega. At the same time, Niño Lasso had to convince the archduke not to allow the convocation of the States General, which the deputies of Flanders had requested in consequence of the Dutch invasion of the county.

210 Louant, Correspondance, 3: 272 (as in note 55).
211 The general assault was the archduke’s answer to governor Francis Vere’s stratagem of agreeing to a ceasefire and pretending a willingness to enter into negotiations for the surrender of the city, solely as a delaying tactic while awaiting reinforcements. Albert considered this ploy to be against the laws of war. See Thomas, “Het beleg van Oostende,” 91-92 (as in note 41).
212 Consultas, 1: 183-184 (as in note 6).
213 Consultas, 1: 191-192 (as in note 6).
214 Codoin 42: 446-447 (as in note 35).
215 Consultas, 2: 72 (as in note 6).
Although at first Albert was not willing to accept Madrid’s settlement on the capitánía general of the army, the loss of Sluys in August 1604, one month before the fall of Ostend, finally made him comply. Albert in practice abandoned the command of the army to Spinola. Later on, Philip appointed don Agustín Mexía to the position of maestre de campo general, and once again it was Niño Lasso de la Vega who had to communicate the news to Albert. From 1605, Mexía would direct the Army of Flanders. Nevertheless, a few weeks later Albert rejected the control of the Spanish party over his government. Although Mexía had already been appointed, the archduke wrote the king that another candidate was more eligible: his full support went to Spinola, victor of Ostend. In view of the financial resources over which the Genoese general disposed, and of the willingness of Albert to delegate his authority over the army to Spinola in particular, Madrid appointed him as the new maestre de campo general of the Army of Flanders. Thus, a compromise between the king and the archduke had been reached. Although Albert abandoned the supreme command of the army, he was replaced by somebody whom he had chosen.

The arrival of Ambrogio Spinola seems to have consolidated the formation of factions at the Brussels court. Although a confidant of Albert, with his appointment Spinola entered the service of Philip III, as Alicia Esteban Estríngana quite rightly emphasizes. From the beginning, he would be more than just a military commander. Indeed, the king entrusted him with the execution of several royal plans that arranged the transfer of power in the Netherlands in case one of the Archdukes should die, the first of which dates from as early as 1606. From then on, he enjoyed Philip’s – and Lerma’s – complete confidence, and together with the Secretary of State and War, don Juan de Mancisidor, he put into practice a policy that combined the defense of the interests of the Spanish Monarchy with the archducal desire for peace and the preservation of archducal reputación. This had, by then, become less complicated than in 1600. The fall into disgrace in 1607 of Secretary of State don Pedro Franqueza – who firmly opposed any

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216 Esteban Estríngana, Guerra y finanzas, 89-106 (as in note 34).
217 Esteban Estríngana, Guerra y finanzas, 107-122 (as in note 34).
218 Esteban Estríngana, “Felipe III y los estados de Flandes” (as in note 2).
219 CCE, 1: 225-227 (as in note 5).
agreement with the rebels – and the changed climate at the court in Madrid as a result of it, clearly prepared the way for new negotiations with the Dutch.\textsuperscript{221}

At the archducal court, Spinola and Mancisidor counted on the good services of Albert’s confessor, don Iñigo de Brizuela, referred to above. Brizuela belonged to an order that enjoyed Lerma’s patronage and continued to defend him even after his removal from power.\textsuperscript{222} Together, Spinola, Mancisidor and Brizuela acted as the extension of Lerma’s clique in the Netherlands. For example, they organized the oath of allegiance that Philip III requested of the different Provincial States, thus significantly facilitating the future reincorporation of the Netherlands into the Spanish Monarchy.\textsuperscript{223}

In due time Spinola’s rise at court gave occasion to the formation of a second Spanish faction in Brussels that was clearly anti-Spinola. Indeed, the promotion to the high command of the army of a non-Spanish general who was not even a subject (\textit{vasallo}) of the king, was received well neither by the Spanish Council of State nor by the senior officers in the Netherlands, and especially not by don Agustín Mexía and don Luis de Velasco.\textsuperscript{224} During the campaign of 1604, Velasco and Spinola each tried to blame the other for the loss of Sluis. Albert was also inclined to blame Velasco, but did nothing because he suspected that the Spanish general had the king’s full backing.\textsuperscript{225} The next year, Velasco accompanied Spinola’s army to the North and contributed to the taking of Lingen, Oldenzaal and Wachtendonk, to the entire satisfaction of the commander in chief and of the king.\textsuperscript{226} This did not stop him from becoming, over the years, Spinola’s fiercest opponent and the centre of a Spanish anti-Spinola faction. He received the support of his brother-in-law, don Iñigo de Borja, \textit{maestre de campo} at Ostend and from 1606

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{221} Feros, \textit{Kingship and Favoritism}, 192-197 (as in note 170).
\item \textsuperscript{222} Feros, \textit{Kingship and Favoritism}, 261 (as in note 170).
\item \textsuperscript{223} Esteban Estríngana, “Felipe III y los estados de Flandes” (as in note 2); Henri Lonchay, “Le serment de fidélité prêté par les Belges à Philippe III en 1616,” in \textit{Mélanges Paul Frédéricq} (Brussels, 1904), 311-317.
\item \textsuperscript{224} A majority of the members of the Council would have preferred to see the marquis of Montenegro at the head of the army. \textit{Consultas}, 2: 113-116 (as in note 6). Six years later, in 1610, Velasco was still reminding the king of the fact that Spinola had been promoted over his head and that he deserved considerable compensation. See \textit{CCE}, 1: 358 (as in note 5).
\item \textsuperscript{225} Codoin 42: 497-498 (as in note 35).
\item \textsuperscript{226} \textit{CCE}, 1: 221-222 (as in note 5).
\end{itemize}
governor of the citadel of Antwerp, and of don Juan de Ribas, governor of Sluis until 1604, later commander of the citadel of Cambrai. At court, they could count on don Diego de Ibarra and, apparently, on don Rodrigo Niño Lasso de la Vega. Niño Lasso in particular became very powerful after 1609, when he not only combined the leading court offices of sumiller de corps, mayordomo mayor (1613) and caballero mayor (1615), but was also created count of Añover and appointed a member of the Spanish Council of War (both in 1609). He probably took advantage of the new political circumstances created by the Twelve Year’s Truce. In fact, many senior officers left the Netherlands and when the Jülich-Cleves succession crisis broke out, part of the army was sent to the Holy Roman Empire, thus keeping even Spínola away from the court. In 1619 Pierre Bergeron observed that “celuy qui est le favory de l’archiduc et qui gouverne et traicte toutes sortes d’affaires sous luy, c’est un comte d’Ognavel ou Agnovel, espagnol de grande maison.” His capacity of maintaining an intermediate position between the archduke and the king, and of serving as the confidant of both perhaps explains his rapid rise at court.

Factional struggle at the court of Philip III seems to have shaped and consolidated this anti-Spínola party. From 1611 the power of the duke of Lerma was being challenged by his son, the duke of Uceda, and by Fray Luis de Aliaga, Philip III’s confessor. They increasingly questioned Lerma’s international policy, and above all his decision to conclude an agreement with the king’s rebels, which had put raison d’état above the duty of the Spanish Monarchy to defend Catholicism at all times and had thus provoked its loss of prestige and power. The example of the opposition to Lerma in Spain stimulated the enemies of Lerma and Spínola in the Netherlands in their struggle for power. Indeed, the Truce had caused much discontent among Albert’s military commanders and advisers, as it cost them political and military influence, while Spínola became almost almighty. At the time, not only Velasco and Borja, but also Niño Lasso de la Vega, opposed the ceasefire

227 They were both married to daughters of Maximilian de Hénin-Liétard, count of Boussu. See Detlev Schwennicke (ed.), Europäische Stammtafeln: Stammtafeln zur Geschichte der europäischen Staaten, 24 vols. (Marburg, 1960-2007), 6: 108. It took some years before they met in opposition to Spínola. In 1607-8 they had quarreled so violently over Borja’s future spouse that they were imprisoned by the archduke. See CCE, 1: 270, 272 (as in note 5).
228 Michelant, Voyage de Pierre Bergeron, 345 (as in note 154).
229 Feros, Kingship and Favoritism, 206, 224-225, 234 (as in note 170).
of 1607 and the subsequent negotiations with the United Provinces. Soon, several members of the faction, among them Velasco and, much more marginally, Niño Lasso de la Vega, were involved in an obscure plan to attack Sluis with the knowledge of the Dutch in order to scuttle the 1609 settlement, employing the services of royal spy Diego López Sueyro. Albert discovered the plot only by chance and had Sueyro arrested, without informing Niño Lasso de la Vega. A few years later, their names turned up in the campaign against the Truce waged by the Carmelite friar Jerónimo Gracián de la Madre de Dios, household preacher to the Spanish ambassador, don Felipe Folch de Cardona y Borch, marquis of Guadaleste, and chaplain to the garrison of the citadel of Antwerp – commanded by don Iñigo de Borja – and probably introduced at court by Niño Lasso de la Vega, whose family supported the Carmelite movement. From his Brussels convent, Gracián provided Philip III and the Council of State in Madrid with reports on the deplorable situation of Catholicism and the growth of Protestantism in the Southern Netherlands, thus bringing the archduke’s religious policy and Lerma’s pax hispanica into discredit. When by 1615, as a result of the Savoy crisis, Lerma’s opponents in Madrid openly called for the Spanish Monarchy to take a more active role in European conflicts, and the faction of Uceda and Aliaga strengthened its position at court, in Brussels don Luis de Velasco and don Iñigo de Borja were forming a Spanish ‘party’ opposed to Spínola. They received the support of Guadaleste, who was a clear supporter of the political viewpoints of Uceda and Aliaga. As a consequence, Spínola countered any moves by Guadaleste to regain pre-eminence at the Brussels court, probably in an attempt to control the attacks on Lerma from the Netherlands. In this, he was supported by Philip III and Lerma himself.

230 CCE, 1: 257-258 (as in note 5).
231 CCE, 1: 360-361 (as in note 5); Miguel Ángel Echevarría Bacigalup, La diplomacia secreta en Flandes, 1598-1643 (Leioa, 1984), 148-154.
232 CCE, 1: 432 (as in note 5).
234 Guadaleste repeatedly criticized the archduke’s pacific policy. Calderón’s mission to negotiate the transformation of the Truce into a more enduring peace was even held back from him. See Joseph Lefèvre, “Les ambassadeurs d’Espagne à Bruxelles sous le règne de l’archiduc Albert (1598-1621),” Revue belge de philologie et d’histoire 2 (1923), 61-80, esp. 72, 74.
235 Esteban Estríngana, “Felipe III y los estados de Flandes” (as in note 2); Feros, Kingship and Favoritism, 210 (as in note 170).
In Madrid, the anti-Spínola faction was supported by several members of the Council of State, among them don Agustín Mexía, who had been appointed councilor to ease the pain of his missed promotion to maestre de campo general, and from 1617 onwards don Baltasar de Zúñiga, an ally of the Uceda-Aliaga faction. It was, for example, don Agustín Mexía who proposed in February 1613 that Spínola should be obliged to report on the army and its finances to the Spanish ambassador, as had been the situation before his appointment as commander in chief. Mexía insisted on the necessity of subordinating the Genoese general to Guadaleste, instead of the other way round. Only then could the king’s authority in the Netherlands be preserved. In 1620, Zúñiga for his part leaked information to the king on the secret pourparlers between the archduke and Maurice of Nassau concerning the prolongation of the Truce, thus compromising the whole enterprise.

The fall of Lerma in 1618 and the steady rise to power, not of Uceda and Aliaga, but of their former ally don Baltasar de Zúñiga, reinforced the anti-Spínola faction in Brussels and affected the position of Spínola in the Netherlands as an advocate of peace with the Dutch. In 1618, when the Council of War (abolished in 1609) was reinstalled after the death of don Juan de Mancisidor, both Velasco and Añover were appointed, together with Spínola, the count of Bucquoy, and don Fernando Girón, the Spanish ambassador in Paris. With the appointment of the marquis of Bedmar in 1618, the king seemed determined to gain control over Albert and Spínola in preparation for the reincorporation of the Netherlands into the Spanish Monarchy and the war with the United Provinces. One of Bedmar’s first tasks was to inform Spínola that after the archduke’s death the civil and military government of the Southern Netherlands would not be separated. Thus, he would serve under Isabella as her lieutenant. This decision was inspired by Zúñiga and Aliaga. Finally, in 1620, don Luis de Velasco

236 Esteban Estríngana, Guerra y finanzas, 120-121, 189 (as in note 34); Feros, Kingship and Favoritism, 210-211 (as in note 170).
237 CCE, 1: 396-397 (as in note 6). In 1615 the newly appointed veedor general don Francisco Andía de Irarrazábal would come into conflict with Spínola on this matter. See Lefèvre, “Le Ministère Espagnol de l’Archiduc Albert,” 215 (as in note 155).
238 CCE, 1: 570 (as in note 5).
239 CCE, 1: 512 (as in note 5).
240 Lefèvre, “Les ambassadeurs d’Espagne à Bruxelles,” 75-79 (as in note 234); Esteban Estríngana, “Los estados de Flandes” (as in note 2).
241 Lefèvre, “Les ambassadeurs d’Espagne à Bruxelles,” 78 (as in note 234); CCE, 1: 559 (as in note 5).
was appointed provisional commander in chief, in the eventuality of Spínola's incapacity or death, of the army that was to operate in the Palatinate; while don Iñigo de Borja became acting commander of chief of the Army of Flanders until the return of Velasco or Spínola. In Madrid, as well as in Brussels, the defenders of a strong and military active monarchy had prevailed. The Spanish faction was clearly ready for the imminent reincorporation of the Southern Netherlands into the Spanish empire.

242 CCE, 1: 569-570 (as in note 5).