

# Benavides's 'Scipio' ensemble and collaborative entrepreneurial action in Brussels tapestry around 1660

Newly discovered documents in the Algemeen Rijksarchief, Brussels, reveal details about the genesis of a major series of tapestries commissioned by Don Luis de Benavides Carrillo de Toledo following his appointment as Governor General of the Spanish Netherlands in 1659. They shed light on the ways in which four leading tapestry makers used the commission to respond to challenges to their domination of the market.

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**D**ON LUIS DE BENAVIDES CARRILLO DE TOLEDO, Marquis of Caracena (1608–68), who served as Governor General of the Spanish Netherlands from 1659 to 1664, was an aficionado of tapestry. The probate inventory made after his death in 1668 includes no fewer than 141 tapestries.<sup>1</sup> Thirty-nine formed an impressive ensemble of the *Deeds and Triumph of Scipio* made in Brussels. Of exceptionally high quality, the series numbered fourteen large historiated tapestries, eight *suprafenêtres*, four *entrefenêtres*, seven overdoors and six armorial tapestries.<sup>2</sup> Scholars have recognised the exceptional nature of this monumental ensemble, of which twelve complete pieces and three fragments of borders have been identified in public collections or have surfaced in the art trade (Fig.2).<sup>3</sup>

The historiated pieces repeat the compositions of the famous set *Deeds and Triumph of Scipio* designed by Gianfrancesco Penni (1488/96–1528) and Giulio Romano (1499–1546) before 1532–35, several versions of which were woven in Brussels in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.<sup>4</sup> Signatures on the known Benavides tapestries show that the ensemble was a joint venture involving four Brussels *tapissiers* who together dominated the Brussels tapestry world: Jan van Leefdael

1. Detail of Fig.3.

(d. 1668), Gerard van der Strecken (1603–77), Hendrik I Reydam (d. 1669) and Everard Leyniers (1597–1680).<sup>5</sup> One of the tapestries, the *Ascent of the Capitoline Hill*, incorporates the date 1660,<sup>6</sup> suggesting that Benavides commissioned the ensemble shortly after his appointment as Governor General of the Spanish Netherlands in 1659.

The absence of readily available archival data, as well as the tendency to focus on Benavides himself, have until now left many gaps in our knowledge of the project's beginnings and its impact on tapestry production in seventeenth-century Flanders. The commission was granted at a time when the Brussels *tapissiers* were having to rethink and refine their entrepreneurial actions and strategies in response to developments on the Brussels and European tapestry markets. For instance, from 1656 the young Brussels *tapissierspand* (a designated sale and exhibition building) had been acting as a credit institution, providing easy access to cheap and reliable credit,<sup>7</sup> but the industry was challenged by both the increasing numbers of counterfeit tapestries made in Antwerp<sup>8</sup> and the rise in popularity of classicist cartoons

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1 V. Ramírez Ruiz: 'Las tapicerías en las colecciones de la nobleza española del siglo XVII', unpublished Ph.D. thesis (Universidad Complutense de Madrid) 2013, pp.270–81.

2 V. Ramírez Ruiz: 'La Historia de Aquiles según P.P. Rubens en el conjunto de tapicería de Don Luis de Benavides, Marqués de Caracena (1608–1668)', unpublished working paper (2011), p.8, available at <http://millennium.arts.kuleuven.ac.be/swt/Ramirez%20Achilles%20Benavides.pdf>, accessed 2nd January 2019; and *idem*, *op. cit.* (note 1), p.626.

3 E.R. d'Astier de Vigerie: *La belle tapisserie du Roy (1532–1797) et les*

*tentures de Scipion l'Africain*, Paris 1907, pp.178–81; N. Forti Grazzini: *Gli arazzi. Il patrimonio artistico del Quirinale*, Rome 1994, I, p.208; G. Delmarcel, et al.: *exh. cat. Collection Toms. De fils et de couleurs. Tapisseries du XVIe au XVIIIe siècle – Sammlung Toms. Von Garnen und Farben. Wandteppiche vom 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert*, Payerne (Abbatiale et Musée de Payerne) 1997, pp.25–26; N. Forti Grazzini: 'Le storie di Scipione', in G. Bertini and N. Forti Grazzini, eds.: *exh. cat. Gli Arazzi dei Farnese e dei Borbone. Le Collezioni dei Secoli XVI–XVIII*, Colorno (Palazzo Ducale) 1998, p.128; G. Delmarcel: *Flemish Tapestry from the 15th to the 18th Century*, Tiel 1999, pp.252–53; *idem*: 'Tapestry in the Spanish Netherlands, 1625–60', in T.P. Campbell, ed.: *exh. cat. Tapestry*

*in the Baroque: Threads of Splendor*, New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art) 2007, p.205; and Ramírez Ruiz, *op. cit.* (note 1), pp.270–81.

4 The exception is the *Conference between Scipio and Hannibal* in Warsaw. For the series by Penni and Romano and later editions of it, see d'Astier de Vigerie, *op. cit.* (note 3); P. Junquera de Vega and C. Herrero Carretero: *Catálogo de tapices del Patrimonio Nacional. Volumen I: Siglo XVI*, Madrid 1986, pp.176–193; Forti Grazzini 1994, *op. cit.* (note 3), I, pp.206–45; T.P. Campbell: 'Italian designs in Brussels, 1530–35', in *idem*, ed.: *exh. cat. Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence*, New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art) 2002, pp.341–49; and I. Buchanan: *Habsburg Tapestries*, Turnhout 2015, pp.199–211.

5 For these entrepreneurs, see K.

Brosens: 'Charles Le Brun's "Meleager and Atalanta" and Brussels tapestry c.1675', *Studies in the Decorative Arts* 11 (2003–04), pp.15–23; and *idem*: *A Contextual Study of Brussels Tapestry, 1670–1770: The Dye Works and Tapestry Workshop of Urbanus Leyniers (1674–1747)*, Brussels 2004, pp.65–74; see also [www.projectcornelia.be](http://www.projectcornelia.be), accessed 14th January 2019.

6 G. Delmarcel: 'The deeds of Scipio Africanus', in G. Eberhard Cotton, ed.: *The Toms Collection: Tapestries of the Sixteenth to Nineteenth Centuries*, Lausanne and Zürich 2010, p.99.

7 K. Brosens, K. Alen and A. Slegten: 'Claiming commerce, quality and credit: raisons d'être of the Antwerp and Brussels *tapissierspanden* (16th–18th century)', *Textile History* 49 (2018), pp.5–21.

8 *Ibid.*







newly imported from France.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, with the beginning of the personal rule of Louis XIV in May 1661, French tapestry production apparatus was poised for a strong revival.<sup>10</sup>

**2. A table showing all the known extant tapestries of the Benavides Deeds and triumph of Scipio series.**

<b>Historiated tapestries</b>	<p><i>The continence of Scipio</i> (Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne; Fig.5).</p> <p><i>Capture of the camp and mercy for the vanquished</i> (Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne; Fig.6).</p> <p><i>Conference between Scipio and Hannibal before the Battle of Zama</i> (Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne; Figs.1 and 3).<sup>11</sup></p> <p><i>Oxen and elephants</i> (Museo de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires), 470 by 829 cm.</p> <p><i>Banquet of Scipio after the triumph</i> (Museo de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires), 476 by 694 cm.<sup>12</sup></p> <p><i>Captive rulers</i> (Detroit Institute of Arts), 317 by 558 cm.</p> <p><i>Ascent of the Capitoline Hill</i> (Royal Castle, Warsaw), 470 by 800 cm.</p> <p><i>Conference between Scipio and Hannibal</i> (Royal Castle, Warsaw), 470 by 211 cm.<sup>13</sup></p> <p><i>Scipio and Hasdrubal dining with Syphax</i> (Private collection; sale, Sotheby's, London, 29th October 2003, lot 236), 459 by 366 cm.</p>
<b>Armorial tapestries</b>	<p>Schloss Fasanerie, Eichenzell, 345 by 276 cm.<sup>14</sup></p> <p>Anglesey Abbey, Cambridgeshire (The National Trust), 345 by 276 cm.<sup>15</sup></p>
<b>Overdoor</b>	<p><i>Sol</i> (Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne; Fig.4)<sup>16</sup></p>
<b>Border fragments</b>	<p>Two fragments of side borders (Private collection; sale, Sotheby's Paris, 9th November 2012, lot 20), each 379 by 66 cm.</p> <p>Fragment of upper border showing Benavides's emblem, a putto astride an eagle and looking through a spyglass (Private collection; sale, Wannes Art Auctions, Genoa, 2nd December 2015, lot 620), 57 by 146 cm.</p>

Four previously unpublished documents in the Algemeen Rijksarchief, Brussels, provide a more nuanced understanding of the Benavides project, its genesis and the nature of the collaborative networks that existed in Brussels tapestry production in the mid-seventeenth century. They allow it to be more precisely dated and reveal that the commission (or commissions, since the pieces were not all commissioned at the same time) had a decisive impact on the entrepreneurial strategy of Van Leefdael, Van der Strecken, Reydam and Leyniers.

The first document is a contract concluded on 1st November 1659 between the partners Van Leefdael and Van der Strecken on the one side, and Cornelis du Gardijn on the other.<sup>17</sup> Du Gardijn was a silk dyer based in Antwerp, but his name is of French origin ('*du jardin*').<sup>18</sup> The source alludes to an older contract in which Van Leefdael and Van der Strecken had undertaken to produce an edition of the *Story of Scipio and Hannibal* for Benavides. Unfortunately, the November 1659 document does not reveal any further details about the older contract, such as its date, nor does it provide any details about the tapestries themselves, such as the number of pieces or their dimensions. It is clear from the November 1659 contract, however, that the older agreement specified that the silk for the tapestries would have to be dyed twice to achieve a strong, enduring colour. Du Gardijn, who, according to a note in the margin of the document, had previously dyed silk for an edition of the *Landscapes* for Benavides,<sup>19</sup> was employed to dye all the colours in the *Scipio* tapestries 'as permanently as possible', dying them 'twice, three, four or even seven times if necessary', until the silk 'could not possibly be dyed any better' ('*nijet beter geveert en connen worden*'). Since it was unclear how long this procedure would take, neither the costs nor the delivery date is specified in the contract. For the rest, the *tapissiers* stipulated that Du Gardijn must arrange for a dyer to travel to Antwerp to dye the 'beautiful crimson'. It seems that there was then no silk dyer in Antwerp (or Brussels) who was capable of producing such a colour.<sup>20</sup> Another clause of the contract states that Van Leefdael and Van der Strecken must present the dyed silk to Benavides for his approval before embarking on the weaving of the tapestries. Benavides probably, therefore, commissioned the *Scipio* tapestries shortly before 1st November 1659; the weaving would begin in 1660, once the new dyer had been installed and the silk delivered. The document also suggests that Van Leefdael and Van der Strecken coordinated the commission, bringing Reydam and Leyniers in as business partners to ensure rapid production. Ultimately the contract reveals that for Benavides and the *tapissiers* quality was of paramount importance.

A second document suggests that the tapestries were finished by September 1661. On 10th September 1661 Reydam wrote a short statement praising the work of two of his weavers, Jacques Coenot and Jan de Melter, who had been working for him since about 1650.<sup>21</sup> Reydam wrote that they had most recently woven heads and figures in the Benavides tapestries, and that the results were excellent.<sup>22</sup> It is reasonable to assume that these

<sup>9</sup> K. Brosens: 'Nouvelles données sur l'Histoire de Cléopâtre de Poerson. Le réseau Parent et la tapisserie bruxelloise à la française', *Revue belge d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'Art* 74 (2005), pp.63–77; *idem*: 'Brussels/Paris/Brussels: Charles de La Fontaine et la diffusion des modèles des tapisseries de Charles Poerson à Bruxelles, 1650–1675', *Revue belge d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'Art* 76 (2007), pp.43–60; and *idem*: 'Flemish production, 1660–1715', in Campbell, *op. cit.* (note 3), pp.441–44.

<sup>10</sup> P.F. Bertrand: 'Tapestry production at the Gobelins during the Reign of Louis XIV, 1661–1715', in Campbell, *op. cit.* (note 3), pp.344–51;

and C. Bremer-David: 'Manufacture royale de tapisseries de Beauvais, 1664–1715', in *ibid.*, pp.407–19.

<sup>11</sup> For the historiated pieces in Lausanne, see Delmarcel, *op. cit.* (note 6), pp.96–107; and *idem*: 'Les actes de Scipion l'Africain', in M. Campagnolo, *et al.*, eds.: exh. cat. *Héros antiques: La tapisserie flamande face à l'archéologie*, Geneva (Musée d'art et d'histoire) 2013, pp.47–54.

<sup>12</sup> For the pieces in Buenos Aires, see A. Maulhardt: 'Los tapices flamencos de Escipión el Africano en las colecciones del MNBA y el MNAD', *Acervo: Estudios Patrimoniales Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes* 1 (2015), pp.11–21.

<sup>13</sup> For the pieces in Warsaw, see M. Hannel-Bernasikowa: *Gobelins XV–XIX wieku w zamku królewskim na Wawelu / Tapestries at the Wawel Royal Castle. 15th–19th Centuries*, Krakow 2000, pp.137–41 and 237–99.

<sup>14</sup> Delmarcel 2010 *op. cit.* (note 6), p.99.

<sup>15</sup> H. Wyld: 'Portière with the arms of Don Luis de Benavides' *National Trust Collections* (2011), see [www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/516754](http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/516754), accessed 12th February 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Delmarcel 2013, *op. cit.* (note 11), p.54.

<sup>17</sup> Algemeen Rijksarchief, Brussels (hereafter BAR), Notariaat Generaal van Brabant (hereafter NGB), 2482 (1st November 1659).

<sup>18</sup> Cornelis du Gardijn is not mentioned in A. Thijs: *Van 'werkwinkel' tot 'fabriek'. De textielnijverheid te Antwerpen (einde 15de–begin 19de eeuw)*, Brussels 1987. One David du Gardijn, possibly a son of Cornelis, was active as a silk dyer in the late 1660s, see A. Thijs: 'De Antwerpse kamelotververij "De Drie Croontkens"', *Vlaamse Stam* 3 (1967), p.272.

<sup>19</sup> This series may be identified with a seven-part Brussels set of *Landscapes* listed in Benavides's 1668 probate inventory; see Ramirez Ruiz 2011, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.9.

<sup>20</sup> This is confirmed in A. Thijs:



3. *Conference between Scipio and Hannibal before the Battle of Zama*, from the *Deeds and triumph of Scipio* series, by the Van Leefdael, Van der Strecken, Reydam and Leyniers consortium. 1660–61. Wool, silk, and gold- and silver-wrapped thread, 471 by 842 cm. (Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne).

concerns with quality arose in part from the uncertainty that plagued the tapestry market. A high-profile trial in 1621–26 in which the Brussels *tapisiers* Jacob Geubels II (d. in or before 1633) and Jan Raes (1574–1651) were charged with having details in their pieces painted instead of woven,<sup>23</sup> may have lingered on in the collective memory. Moreover, the second quarter of the seventeenth century had witnessed fraud on a larger scale, generating unrest for decades. Around 1620 Brussels tapestry producers were accusing their Antwerp colleagues of weaving the Brussels city mark into their pieces to deliberately mislead patrons.<sup>24</sup> Another allegation was that Antwerp entrepreneurs were selling editions that amalgamated pieces from Antwerp and Brussels. These practices – which were not denied by the Antwerp entrepreneurs – and the resulting uncertainty they provoked in potential clients posed a serious risk to the Brussels industry.<sup>25</sup> Protests from Brussels tapestry producers had no effect. Unmoved by the accusations and taking full advantage of the freedom that the city offered them, Antwerp tapestry entrepreneurs continued their fraudulent practices.<sup>26</sup> This led to the establishment of a *tapisseriespand* in Brussels in 1655–56.<sup>27</sup> The Brussels institution was expected to support local tapestry producers in their efforts to reclaim the exclusive qualities of Brussels

tapestry, which had long been characterised by outstanding quality of execution. The prestigious Benavides project offered Brussels *tapisiers* a unique opportunity to demonstrate these standards.

That the business partners succeeded in delivering the quality demanded by Benavides is clear from a third document, drawn up on 3rd January 1662.<sup>28</sup> It is a two-part contract between Benavides and the consortium of Van Leefdael, Van der Strecken, Reydam and Leyniers. From the first part of the contract it is clear that Benavides commissioned three more series from the *tapisiers*. These were the *Seasons*, which consisted of four narrow tapestries (each measuring 4.7 by 1.4 metres) intended to serve as *entrefenêtres*, seven small pieces depicting the *Planets*, each 1.4 by 1.7 metres (Fig.4), which can therefore be identified with the seven *suprafenêtres* listed in Benavides's 1668 probate inventory and eight small *Flowerpots* (1.4 by 1.4 metres) that are listed in the inventory as *overdoors*.<sup>29</sup> Each of the nineteen

'Antwerpse karmozijnververs', *De Vlaamse Stam* 6 (1970), p.285.

21 BAR, NGB, 4439 (10th September 1661).

22 It is not clear why Reydam wrote this recommendation. Perhaps Coenot and De Melter were planning to move abroad in 1661. Recommendations of this kind could sometimes play a role in applications for fiscal benefits, but Coenot and De Melter obtained no such benefits until 1679 and 1690, respectively; see BS, Registers der Tresorije (cited hereafter as RT), 1303 (13th November 1679) and 1305 (6th February 1690).

23 For this trial and its impact on

tapestry production, see S. Schneeberg-Perelman: 'Peintres retoucheurs des tapisseries au XVIIe siècle: Procès de Jean Raes et Jacques Geubels contre G. Reynbout 1621–1626', *Cahiers bruxellois* 5 (1960), pp.270–88; and K. Brosens: 'Erudition and originality: Jordaens' tapestry series with themes from classical antiquity', in I. Schaudies and J. Vanderauwera, eds.: exh. cat. *Jordaens and the Antique*, Brussels (Royal Museums of Fine Art) 2012, pp.249–53.

24 Stadsarchief, Antwerp (hereafter AS), Gilden en Ambachten, 4047 and 4048; AS, Privilegekamer, 713 (31st

March 1620); and J. Denucé: *Antwerpsche tapijtkunst en handel*, Antwerp 1936, pp.42–59.

25 K. Brosens: 'Quality, risk and uncertainty and the market for Brussels tapestry, 1450–1750', in N. De Marchi and S. Raux, eds.: *Moving Pictures. Intra-European Trade in Images, 16th–18th Centuries*, Turnhout 2014, pp.19–36.

26 Interestingly, in their reply, the Antwerp entrepreneurs made no effort to deny these accusations. They noted drily that their Brussels colleagues also marketed mixed editions. They defended their use of the letters 'BB' by stating that this

was not a city mark, rather it designated a workshop, see AS, GA, 4048; and Denucé, *op. cit.* (note 24), p.51. See also F. Donnet: 'Documents pour servir à l'histoire des ateliers de tapisserie de Bruxelles, Audenarde, Anvers, etc.', *Annales de la Société d'Archéologie de Bruxelles* 10 (1896), pp.278–79.

27 BAR, *Officie Fiscaal van de Raad van Brabant*, 13, fols.142–43 (11th March 1655); and BS, RT, 1297 (10th June 1656).

28 BAR, NGB, vol.4440 (3rd January 1662).

29 Ramírez Ruiz 2011, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.8.





4. *Sol* from the *Deeds and triumph of Scipio* series, by the Van Leefdael, Van der Strecken, Reyndams and Leyniers consortium. 1662. Wool and silk, 180 by 147 cm. (Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne).

tapestries cost thirty guilders per ell. The contract further notes that all the pieces served to perfect the '*histoire de scipion et hannibal*' that the *tapissiers* had already made and delivered, and that they were to be woven in accordance with the provisions set down in the contract for the *Scipio* tapestries.<sup>30</sup> The second part of the contract reveals that Benavides also commissioned twenty-four armorial tapestries (*reposteros*) from the partners. These may not have been included in the list of *Seasons*, *Planets* and *Flowerpots* because of differences in price and execution; the *reposteros* were priced at twenty-six guilders per ell – cheaper but far from inexpensive. Each was to be woven with the finest silk and gold and silver thread, to measure 3.3 by 2.8 metres, excluding the 'narrow borders'.<sup>31</sup>

Remarkably, the 1662 contract did not stipulate a delivery period for the forty-three tapestries, stating only that all pieces must be delivered as soon as possible – something that would have been feasible within a year. Perhaps Benavides relied on the four producers' dedication to the project? They had indeed just demonstrated their impeccable credentials

by the tapestries already delivered. Whatever the case, this third document makes it clear that Benavides ordered the additional decorative pieces for his fourteen-part *Scipio* series in January 1662, and that the ensemble was therefore produced in two stages. It also shows that the complete ensemble would number a remarkable fifty-seven pieces. Yet six years later Benavides's probate inventory lists only thirty-nine. The difference is in the number of armorial tapestries: Benavides commissioned twenty-four *reposteros* in 1662, but the probate inventory lists only six in the *Scipio* ensemble; it lists two more Brussels *reposteros* at the end of the section giving a general overview of Benavides's tapestries,<sup>32</sup> but it is impossible to determine whether these belonged to the group of twenty-four (and therefore had become detached from the ensemble). Regardless, the discrepancy of sixteen (or perhaps eighteen) between the number of *reposteros* documented in 1662 and 1668 respectively is substantial. Were these pieces lost in the relatively brief interval between the commission and Benavides's death? Or did Benavides change the commission and reduce the number of *reposteros*? Only additional archival sources can resolve this issue.

Unfortunately none of the documents names the painter or painters who must have been involved in the *Scipio* ensemble. Given the importance that all parties attached to quality, it is safe to assume that the sixteenth-century *Scipio* and *Hannibal* cartoons were improved for Benavides's edition. The historiated tapestries clearly show that the border displaying Benavides's emblem was designed especially for him. A published letter recorded in 1683 links the Teniers workshop to this initial stage of the project.<sup>33</sup> In this document David Teniers Jr (1638–85) claimed that he had painted 'all the borders for the work of the noble Marquis of Caracena' in the studio, under the supervision of his father David Teniers the Younger (1610–90).<sup>34</sup> Teniers Jr did not record when he had painted the borders, but did write that it was before his departure for Spain in April 1661.

David Teniers the Younger and his son can also be linked to both the Brussels court and the Brussels tapestry industry before 1661. They were among the painters who produced the cartoons for Archduke Leopold Wilhelm's famous edition of the *Allegory of Time* (1650; Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna), which originally consisted of fourteen pieces: six depicting the *Months* and four representing *Day*, *Night*, the *Elements* and the *Seasons*, together with four decorative tapestries described as 'pillar pieces'.<sup>35</sup> The set was designed by Jan van den Hoecke (1611–51) and produced by Gillis van Habbeke and Leyniers. It seems likely that Benavides or the Brussels tapestry producers (or both) enlisted the services of the Teniers workshop to touch up the old cartoons and/or to produce the cartoons of the additional pieces for the *Scipio* ensemble (the *Seasons*, *Planets*, *Flowerpots* and the armorial tapestries). The involvement of the Teniers workshop seems likely because few other artists working in Brussels around 1660 possessed the necessary expertise in tapestry design and cartoon painting,<sup>36</sup> and the last of the newly discovered documents, dated 1st June 1662, makes it clear that the Brussels *tapissiers* developed a new collaborative entrepreneurial strategy, in which Teniers the Younger and his workshop

30 The date of the original contract is not given in the document cited at note 17. It names the notary who drew it up ('Drooghen'), but none of the few surviving deeds drawn up by notaries of this name dates from the late 1650s.

31 '*les petits bors*', see document cited at note 28.

32 Ramírez Ruiz 2011, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.10.

33 Document cited in H. Vlieghe: 'David Teniers II en David Teniers II als patroonschilders voor de tapijtweverijen', *Artes Textiles* 5 (1959–60), p.101.

34 'alle de boerden voor het werck van Mijnheer den Marquis

*de Carasena*', in *ibid.*

35 H. Vlieghe: *David Teniers the Younger (1610–1690)*, Turnhout 2011, p.153. For the most recent discussion of the series and a concise bibliography, see K. Schmitz-von Ledebur: 'January and February', in Campbell, *op. cit.* (note 3), pp.246–52. For Van den Hoecke, see G. Heinz: 'Studien über Jan van den Hoecke und die Malerei der Niederländer in Wien', *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* 63 (1967), pp.109–64.

36 After the death of Antoon Sallaert (1594–1650) and Lanceloot Lefebure

(c.1585–c.1655), Michael Sweerts (1618–64) wrote to Brussels city council in 1656 advocating for an academy of draughtsmanship to reinvigorate tapestry design in the city, see Brosens 2004, *op. cit.* (note 5), pp.80–88; and K. Brosens and V. De Laet: 'Matthijs Roelandts, Joris Leemans and Lanceloot Lefebure: new data on Baroque tapestry in Brussels', *THE BURLINGTON MAGAZINE* 151 (2009), pp.360–67. For Sweerts, see L. Yeager-Crasselt: *Michael Sweerts (1618–1664): Shaping the Artist and the Academy in Rome and Brussels*, Turnhout 2015.

37 BAR, NGB, 4440 (1st June 1662).

38 'mrs. Tapissiers van Sjine Exctie. den Marquis de Caracena', 'soo ende gelijckerwijs of sij den voors. patroonen tsaemen der handt hadden gecocht oft doen maecken', and 'soo veel stucken alser van sijn', *ibid.*

39 Forti Grazzini 1994, *op. cit.* (note 3), I, pp.206–45.

40 The pieces are owned by the Bayerische Verwaltung der staatlichen Schlösser, Gärten und Seen (BSVA. WA0085–0095). The authors are grateful to Sabine Heym for this information.

41 BS, RT, 297 (13th May 1659).



would play an important role.<sup>37</sup> The document is a contract between the business partners, who proudly refer to themselves as 'master *tapissiers* of His Excellency the Marquis de Caracena', and pledge their long-term cooperation for the production of editions of five sets. It links many of the tapestry sets and actors discussed above, including Teniers the Younger. The cartoons of four of these five sets had been in the possession of one or more of the *tapissiers* for a time and would thenceforth be pooled, 'as if they [the *tapissiers*] had jointly bought or commissioned the cartoons'. This also meant that the partners had to take joint responsibility for the cartoons' preservation and if necessary their restoration. These four sets were a ten-piece *Story of Scipio and Hannibal*, a twelve-piece *Story of Scipio and Hannibal* taller than the other *Scipio and Hannibal* cartoons, *The Acts of the Apostles*, numbering 'as many pieces as exist of them' and, finally, a six-part *Months* 'of Archduke Leopold'. These sets can be identified.<sup>38</sup>

Before this contract the *tapissier* consortium had produced sets of *Scipio and Hannibal* after the Penni and Romano designs separately. One eight-part edition bears the signatures of Van Leefdael and Van der Strecken, but not those of Leyniers or Reydam (Palazzo Quirinale, Rome);<sup>39</sup> conversely, an eleven-part edition (Neue Residenz, Bamberg) bears only the signatures

of Reydam and Leyniers.<sup>40</sup> Cartoons were of course copied and recycled over the years, but this is the first source to be found that unequivocally documents the simultaneous existence and use of multiple sets of near-identical cartoons in Brussels.

The cartoons of the *Months* listed in the contract were evidently the six that constituted the nucleus of the Archduke's fourteen-piece *Allegory of Time*. Since the edition made for the Archduke was co-produced by Leyniers, and since his business partner, Van Habbeke, had fled from Brussels by 1659,<sup>41</sup> these cartoons were probably owned by Leyniers. This may mean that the cartoons for the *Acts of the Apostles*, painted after Raphael's famous designs of 1515–16, were owned by the other two *tapissiers*, Van Leefdael and Van der Strecken. This is not certain, however, given that none of the known editions bears the signatures of Van Leefdael and Van der Strecken exclusively. The June 1662 contract provides the first archival reference to the *Acts of the Apostles* cartoons in Brussels in the seventeenth century.

5. *The continence of Scipio* from the *Deeds and triumph of Scipio* series, by the Van Leefdael, Van der Strecken, Reydam and Leyniers consortium. 1660–61. Wool, silk, and gold- and silver-wrapped thread, 471 by 557 cm. (Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne).





The document thus acquires a place in the complex ongoing debate on the history of the alleged original set of cartoons (seven of which were acquired in 1623 by the Prince of Wales, later Charles I, from an unknown source in Genoa)<sup>42</sup> and the existence of one, or possibly two, sets of working cartoons that had been used in Brussels since the early sixteenth century.<sup>43</sup> The vague wording 'as many pieces as exist of them' in the 1662 contract suggests that the Brussels *tapissiers* no longer knew where the cartoons were and that the start of the joint venture in 1662 triggered a relaunch of the series.

All subsequent editions and tapestries produced after all four sets of cartoons would be made 'for the joint benefit' of the business partners, with the exception of certain unidentified pieces that Leyniers already had on his looms in June 1662, which he would be permitted to sell on his own account. With the expansion of Benavides's *Scipio* ensemble fresh in their memories, the partners stipulated that this agreement included additional items such as *reposteros*, 'cushions, tablecloths, and coverlets' – the cartoons for which would have to be made separately, were such a commission to arise.<sup>44</sup>

The fifth and final set of cartoons included in the June 1662 contract had been 'recently purchased from the four *tapissiers*' – and was therefore already their joint property.<sup>45</sup> This consisted of four 'courtly pieces and cartoons' painted by David Teniers the Younger.<sup>46</sup> The painter had received six hundred guilders for these four cartoons, but this payment included the 'retouching' of the *Months* cartoons.<sup>47</sup> The four pieces were probably the ones representing *Day*, *Night*, the *Elements* and the *Seasons*, which, together with the *Months*, constituted the *Allegory of Time*.

The June 1662 contract shows that the four *tapissiers* tried to secure Teniers the Younger as their exclusive tapestry designer and cartoon painter, highlighting the satisfactory nature of their previous collaborative ventures. They proposed that in the event that Teniers were to conceive a set of tapestries on his own initiative, he would be obliged to present it to the partners and give them the right of first refusal. Were Teniers to be hired by a client as a tapestry designer and/or cartoon painter, he would be obliged to recommend the *tapissiers* to produce the edition.

Clearly, the June 1662 document was intended to secure and consolidate the four *tapissiers*' already commanding position in the Brussels tapestry industry. The decision to pool sixteenth-century cartoons and to co-invest in new cartoons by Teniers shows a strategy aimed at exploiting the growing success of classicising trends in tapestry design, as opposed to the Baroque idiom that had dominated the 1620s to 1650s. This choice may well have been inspired both by Benavides's preference for Italian Renaissance over contemporary Flemish painters, and by the success of a number of highly effective decorative sets designed by the French academic painter Charles Poerson that had been used in Brussels since about 1655.<sup>48</sup>

It should be noted, however, that the June 1662 contract documents only an intention to agree a framework for structural cooperation. Whether the partnership materialised is unknown. Signed editions, such as a six-part *Scipio and Hannibal* set bearing the signatures of all four partners (Palazzo Labia, Venice), strongly suggest that it did.<sup>49</sup> There is also a five-part *Scipio and Hannibal* edition in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, bearing the signatures of Van der Strecken, Reydam, Leyniers and Jan's son Willem

van Leefdael (1632–88).<sup>50</sup> Willem may well have succeeded his father as a partner in the agreement several years before the latter's death – it was not unusual for a father to withdraw gradually from a business venture when a successor was primed to take over from him –<sup>51</sup> so that 1668 is not necessarily an indisputable *terminus post quem* for the edition's production. Whatever the case, Reydam died in 1669, which means that the commission should probably be dated to between approximately 1665 (when Willem van Leefdael may have joined the partnership) and 1669. A full, ten-part edition of the *Allegory of Time* in the Swedish royal collection also bears the signatures of Van der Strecken, Reydam, Leyniers and Willem van Leefdael.<sup>52</sup> This edition can also therefore be plausibly dated to 1665–69.

The arrangements set down in the contract were still holding good in the 1670s. France's relaunch of its tapestry production in Paris (1662), Beauvais (1664) and Aubusson (1665) probably encouraged the entrepreneurs to close ranks. This is suggested by a nine-part edition of the *Acts of the Apostles* (Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid) bearing the signatures of Leyniers, Willem van Leefdael and Gerard Peemans (1642–1725), the last of whom may have succeeded his father-in-law, Gerard van der Strecken, in the collaborative arrangement around 1675/77.<sup>53</sup> Since Leyniers died in 1680, this edition may be dated to the period 1675–80. As these examples make clear, the June 1662 contract enables us to date editions of *Scipio and Hannibal*, the *Acts of the Apostles* and the *Months* with some degree of precision. This emphasises once more that if we are to date tapestry projects and editions more precisely, it is essential to have an accurate picture of the lives and entrepreneurial strategies of *tapissiers*. It should be stressed that the structural collaboration between the two production groups described above related solely to the production of these sets and any future sets designed by David Teniers the Younger. Willem van Leefdael, Van der Strecken and Peemans on the one hand, and Leyniers and Reydam on the other retained the freedom to produce editions autonomously after other cartoons they had in stock. This means that the 1662 contract cannot be used to suggest approximate dates for signed editions after cartoons that did not form part of the *tapissiers*' agreement.

The decision of Van Leefdael, Van der Strecken, Reydam and Leyniers to collaborate, and their attempt to include the Teniers workshop in their project, touches on a topic that has received a good deal of attention in tapestry scholarship in recent years: the diverse ways in which collaborative ventures and the industry's organisational structure were related to the development and management of family and social networks. Several authors have shown that Brussels *tapissiers* often wove an intricate web of godparenthood ties between different tapestry production centres.<sup>54</sup> That business and social networks were intertwined is demonstrated by David Teniers Junior's and Gerard Peemans' acceptance of the role of godfather to one another's daughters, Elisabeth Maria Peemans (1675) and Marianne Teniers (1681).<sup>55</sup>

As more data becomes available that sheds light both on the godparenthood networks and on the dating of editions, it will become possible to address two key questions. First, did the expansion of social networks always precede collaborative undertakings in the industry, or vice

42 W. Hefford: 'The Mortlake manufactory, 1619–49', in Campbell, *op. cit.* (note 3), pp.175–79.

43 T.P. Campbell: 'The Acts of the Apostles tapestries and Raphael's cartoons', in Campbell, *op. cit.* (note 3), pp.192–93 and 201–02. For the series, see also J. White: *The Raphael Cartoons*, London 1972; J. Shearman: *Raphael's Cartoons in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen and the Tapestries for the Sistine Chapel*,

London 1972; and M. Evans and C. Browne, eds.: exh. cat. *Raphael: Cartoons and Tapestries for the Sistine Chapel*, London (Victoria and Albert Museum) 2010.

44 'sittecessens, tafel oft spreycleeren', see document cited at note 37.

45 'onlancx bij hen gecocht', *ibid.*

46 'vier hooftsche stucken en patroonen', *ibid.*

47 'vercleren ende opluisteren', *ibid.*

48 Brosens 2005, *op. cit.* (note 9);

and Brosens 2007, *op. cit.* (note 9).

49 N. Forti Grazzini: 'Arazzi antichi', in exh. cat. *Iriarte. Antico e moderno nelle collezioni del Gruppo IRI*, Rome (Palazzo Venezia) 1989, pp.120–33. This edition can therefore be dated to between 1662 and 1668, the year of Jan van Leefdael's death.

50 E. Ritter von Birk: 'Inventar der im Besitze des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses befindlichen niederländer Tapeten und Gobelins', *Jahrbuch der*

*kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 1 (1883), pp.226–27.

51 Examples include Jan Raes (1574–1651) and his son Jan, and Urbanus Leyniers and his son Daniel, see Brosens 2007, *op. cit.* (note 9), p.55; and *idem*: 'New light on the Raes workshop in Brussels and Rubens's "Achilles" series', in T.P. Campbell and E. Cleland, eds.: *Tapestry in the Baroque: New Aspects of Production*





6. *Capture of the camp and mercy for the vanquished* from the *Deeds and triumph of Scipio* series, by the Van Leefdael, Van der Strecken, Reydam and Leyniers consortium. 1660–61. Wool, silk, and gold- and silver-wrapped thread, 481 by 794 cm. (Fondation Toms Pauli, Lausanne).

versa? Second, was it possible for collaboration to exist without such social ties?<sup>56</sup> In the case described here, it seems that although there were many godparenthood ties within each of the two separate production groups before 1662, connections of this kind between them were few: Gerard van der Strecken became godfather to Everard Leyniers's nephew Gerard (1637–in or before 1677) in 1637,<sup>57</sup> and to Reydam's son Gerard (1658–80) in 1658.<sup>58</sup> But these relationships mainly throw into relief the unfulfilled potential of godparenthood ties to bring the two groups closer together. In the years that followed the conclusion of the cooperation contract, while the two groups developed a number of joint projects, as evidenced by signed editions, they failed to pursue any unifying godparenthood strategy. When Gerard Peemans asked Hendrik Reydam to be godfather to his son Hendrik Ignatius in 1668, it was an exception that proves the rule.<sup>59</sup>

The primacy of business interests over social dynamics was also made clear when in 1672 Van der Strecken, Willem van Leefdael and Gerard Peemans leased the *Story of Meleager and Atalanta* cartoons by Charles Le Brun (1619–90) from Jean Valdor (1616–75), a pivotal player in the world of

both French and Flemish tapestry and art between 1650 and 1675.<sup>60</sup> Nothing in the 1662 contract impeded such an initiative. But the absence of social ties also made it possible for Everard Leyniers and his son Jan (1630–86) to take over the lease of the cartoons only twelve months later – a manoeuvre that probably irritated the other group but did not lead to the termination of the 1662 agreement, as is clear from the co-signed *Acts of the Apostles* edition in Madrid referred to above, here dated to 1675–80.

The collective workshops and the agreements they made ensured that their tapestries, including those for Benavides, would be of the highest possible quality. They could therefore serve as ammunition in the ongoing campaign against the counterfeit tapestries that were threatening the collective's position in the market and by extension the Brussels industry. They also ensured that the commission culminated in a structural collaborative relationship that made it possible to capitalise on the growing success of classicising cartoons by relaunching famous sets and launching new, fashionable series. This strategy, which must have alarmed smaller *tapissiers* who suddenly found their field of action severely curtailed, was not supported or facilitated by a set of existing social ties, nor did it lead to the development of such ties. The established image of the Brussels tapestry industry as under-socialised, should not, therefore, be abandoned in favour of an over-socialised one.

and *Patronage*, New York, New Haven and London 2010, p.25.

52 J. Böttiger: *Svenska Statens Samling af väfda tapeter*, Stockholm 1896, III, pp.36–38.

53 M. Jesús and S. Beltrán: 'Los tapices del Museo Arqueológico Nacional', *Boletín del Museo Arqueológico Nacional* (Madrid) 1 (1983), pp.65–78.

54 Brosens 2004, *op. cit.* (note 5); *idem* 2005, *op. cit.* (note 9); *idem* 2007, *op. cit.*

(note 9); Brosens and De Laet, *op. cit.* (note 36); K. Brosens: 'Can tapestry research benefit from economic sociology and social network analysis?', in K. Brosens, K. Van der Stighelen and L. Kelchtermans, eds.: *Family Ties: Art Production and Kinship Patterns in the Early Modern Low Countries*, Turnhout 2012, pp.43–51; K. Brosens: 'Revisiting Brussels tapestry, 1700–1740: New data on tapissiers Albert Auwerx and Judocus de Vos', *Textile History* 43

(2012), pp.183–199; *idem*, *op. cit.* (note 25), pp.19–36; and K. Brosens, K. Alen, A. Slegten and F. Truyen: 'MapTap and Cornelia: Foundations of a slow digital art history and formal art historical social network research', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte/ Journal of Art History* 79 (2016), pp.315–30.

55 BS, parish records (hereafter PR), 257 (29th March 1675); and Vlieghe, *op. cit.* (note 35), p.79.

56 As the *Cornelia* database grows

(www.projectcornelia.be), it will be easier to explore these questions. See Brosens, Alen, Slegten and Truyen, *op. cit.* (note 55).

57 M. Vanwelkenhuyzen and P. De Tienne: 'Une famille de tapissiers bruxellois, les Leyniers', *L'intermédiaire des généalogistes* 43 (1988), p.354.

58 BS, PR, 255 (3rd March 1658).

59 BS, PR, 256 (23rd December 1668).

60 Brosens 2003–04, *op. cit.* (note 5).