

SCIENTIFIC REPORT ESF SHORT VISIT TRAVEL GRANT: PALATIUM

Thanks to the short visit travel grant of the European Science Foundation, granted by the Steering Committee of the Research Network Programme *PALATIUM. Court residences as Places of Exchange in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe, 1400-1700* I was able to give a **work in progress presentation** at the conference *Felix Austria. Political Culture and Artistic Patronage between Habsburg Court Networks in European Context (1516-1715)*, hosted by the Fundación Carlos de Amberes in Madrid. For the first time I presented my PhD project, titled *The battle scene as political allegory for the court and civilians in 17th century Europe: the case of Peter Snayers (1592-1667)* (funded by the Research Foundation Flanders and supervised by Prof. dr. Katlijne Van der Stighelen, Prof. dr. Koen Brosens and Prof. dr. Werner Thomas, all three affiliated to the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) to an international group of specialists. To fit the programme properly I focused on the various functions of battle paintings in courtly residences and applied these to my case study, the Brussels court painter Peter Snayers. Unfortunately, this study is impeded by a lack and/or scarcity of sources. This lack of 'knowledge' is applicable to the provenance of Snayers's topographical battle paintings (who were his patrons?) as well as to the courtly residences of the known patrons (where and how were his works meant to be displayed?). I've discussed the cases and the related problems of: 1) the few preserved inventories of the burnt down Coudenberg Palace in Brussels and the residences of Mariemont and Tervuren; 2) the commission of Octavio Piccolomini, duke of Amalfi, whose battle paintings by Snayers never reached his residence in Náchod because of default; 3) the commission of Prince Claude Lamoral I de Ligne, whose family archive is not publicly accessible to date; 4) the commission of Diego Mexía Felipez de Guzmán, marques of Leganés, whose inventory dated February 1655 doesn't list his large collection of paintings per room.

The results of this short stay are threefold: 1) I received very useful feedback of specialists on my research; 2) the papers of other researchers were enriching for my own; 3) I was able to exchange ideas and discuss research methods with specialists and young researchers in the same field of study or other ones (networking).

Especially Prof. dr. Koen Ottenheim (Universiteit Utrecht) gave me 'eye opening' **feedback**. In my talk I presented the idea of S.N. Orso (*Philip IV and the decoration of the Alcázar in Madrid, 1986*) that battle iconography in Spanish courtly residences became outdated or even *old fashioned* around the mid seventeenth century. Although further research about this phenomenon is required, I stated that possible explanatory factors are 1) the development of art connoisseurship (the quality of art and the name of the artist became more important than the actual content of the works of art) and 2) the declining of the power of the Spanish army. Prof. dr. Ottenheim suggested another reason too: diplomacy. Illustrating this with Dutch examples such as the Oranjezaal in Huis Ten Bosch (Den Haag) or the Paleis op de Dam (Amsterdam) he showed that very often the triumph of the Prince or the city is explicitly depicted in contrast to the defeated enemy, who remained unspecified. The very fact that hostile diplomats and/or ambassadors were received in audience in the with battle iconography decorated halls could indeed be a suitable explanation for this phenomenon. Of course, it wasn't particularly conducive to have paintings on the wall which explicitly showed the defeat of the ambassador's and/or diplomat's leader. With the permission of Prof. dr. Ottenheim I will develop this idea in depth in **the article, that I will write starting from my paper and that I will submit to be published in the proceedings of this conference** (series *Seminarios internacionales de Historia* of the Fundación Carlos de Amberes). Prof. Ottenheim also referred to useful articles about the castle of

Buren (the Netherlands), and more specifically about its *nieuwe lange galerij*, commissioned by Prince Frederik Hendrik in the '1640s and decorated with thirteen battle paintings by Gerrit van Santen and Jan Breecker, which I intend to work out as a case study too.

Secondly, the **excellent papers of other researchers at the conference were enriching for my own**. In general I have to say that this meeting was not only instructive for a 'beginner' in court culture like myself, but as an art historian it was enriching to see how important interdisciplinary research is for a full understanding of it. That's why for me the opening lecture by Prof. dr. Krista De Jonge (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven), in which she gave a richly documented *status quaestionis* of different studies about court residences and related aspects (such as court life, ceremonial aspects, import of exotica, etc.), was very useful. Also many other papers gave food for thought (and for further reading) because of various interfaces with my own research: 1) the use of a specific iconography to express propagandistic messages, for example Dr. Renate Holzschuh-Hofer's (Project Hofburg/Bundesdenkmalamt, Vienna) paper about the politics of Charles V and Ferdinand I; 2) explicit references to war not only in the arts but also in gardens, for example Dr. Jochen Martz's (Project Hofburg, Nürnberg) talk about the gardens of the Hofburg, which were divided into three stages including one referring to the confusing times of war. Although other papers are to be cited too (such as the ones by Annemarie Jordan Gschwend (CHAM, Lisbon) or Elvira González Asenjo (Museo del Traje, Madrid)) I explicitly want to mention the interesting topic of Esther Münzberg's (München) paper: the princely horse. Because horses, war, power and qualities of a King's great leadership are key words applicable to my own project as well I definitely will follow up her research output closely.

Last but not least, the third result of attending this conference was the opportunity to **exchange ideas and research methods with international specialists and young researchers** in the same field or other ones. As Peter Snayers worked for the Archduke Leopold Wilhelm (1614-1662) (but probably not as an 'official court painter') and his entourage in Brussels, I was very interested in the talk of Dr. Renate Schreiber (Independent scholar, Vienna). It was enriching to discuss with her not only her fantastic book about the Archduke, but also her findings about a possible 'picture gallery' with a view onto the gardens of the Brussels Coudenberg Palace (finished ca. 1650-1651). We agreed on keeping in touch about our research results and our next encounter will be at the book presentation of Prof. em. dr. Hans Vlieghe's biography of David II Teniers, a key figure for both our researches, in February 2011 in the Antwerp Rubenshuis. Other examples of interesting and useful exchanges of ideas were (among others) the ones I had with Dr. Ingrid Ciulisova (Slovak Academy of Sciences, Bratislava) and Dr. Fabian Persson (Linnaeus University, Kalmar). The first gave me advice about gaining access to the Harrach Collection (Rohrau, Austria), which comprises of at least four topographical battle paintings by Snayers; with the latter I discussed the necessity (and the pleasure) of doing archival research and efficient ways of saving and classifying photos of archival documents. Dr. Arianna Ciula (European Science Foundation, Strasburg) told me about the *Centrum voor Teksteditie en Bronnenstudie* (Ghent), which could be useful for various archival documents, which I've found in the Brussels archives. Finally sharing experiences with other young researchers about our topics and methods, about the problems and possibilities of/for finding funding or getting articles published was of course enriching as well.