

The earliest documented work of Marinus van Reymerswale

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MARINUS VAN REYMERSWALE (1490–1546) is a well-known name in the world of early sixteenth-century painting, but as an artistic personality he remains little understood. His work appears to have centred on a few key themes that survive in several copies and variants, which are often discussed in terms of their relation to compositions by Quinten Massys (1466–1530). There is a persisting difficulty in identifying his paintings that entered collections prior to the nineteenth century, when his name was recovered.¹

The artist, who for some time in 1531 resided in the town of Reymerswale in Zeeland,² has not been associated with either an illustrious circle of patrons or appeared in any documents that would securely connect him to Antwerp for a more consistent period of time.³ While uncertainties continue to surround the historical details about Van Reymerswale,⁴

his works reveal a specialised painter who probably worked in close proximity to the Massys workshop around the time of Massys's death in 1530. His dated surviving works were produced between 1533 to 1545 and employ efficient production techniques, a prerequisite for supplying a growing market for large-scale paintings.⁵ However, his pictures that feature the financial and administrative professions remain largely absent from contemporary inventories.⁶

The earliest record of a painting by Van Reymerswale that has been identified to date is from 1576. The testament of Jacoba Willemsdochter, widow of Joachim Cornelissen and town secretary of Sint Martensdijk, mentions a 'rentmeester' (steward) painted by 'M[ee]ste[r] Marinus tot Reijmerswale'.⁷ It was suggested that this refers to the *Parable of the unjust steward* now in Vienna (Fig.1).⁸

In 1590 a painting by Van Reymerswale and a copy thereafter was recorded in the estate of the Antwerp painter Bernart de Ryckere, showing that van Reymerswale's paintings were copied only a few decades after

his death. De Ryckere's estate lists it as an 'old money changer'.⁹ It is unclear whether this refers to a variant of the *Tax collectors* (c.1530?; State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg) or a composition with only one figure.¹⁰ The same is true for the *Toll keeper* (sometimes referred to as *Customs officer*), believed to have hung in the office of Melchior Wijntgis, the mint master of Zeeland.¹¹ It is not clear whether it refers to a single figure, as the descriptions suggest, or a variant of the theme today known as the *Tax collectors*. Given that the Munich variant of the so-called *Money changer and his wife* (1538; Alte Pinakothek, Munich) has a dedication to a toll keeper,¹² it cannot be excluded that it referred to an altogether different composition. Moreover, these subjects are rarely identified as works by Van Reymerswale in the seventeenth century. As Lorne Campbell pointed out, this may be due to the fact that Massys was not only known as the author of the *Money lender and his wife* (1514; Musée du Louvre, Paris), the model from which Van Reymerswale's variants of the so-called *Money changer and his wife* derive, but that he had also been associated with the *Tax collectors* since the seventeenth century.¹³

Recently, it was proposed that the original version by Massys is the painting from Hagley Hall.¹⁴ This identification is based on the account from 1616 of the painter Hans van den Bossche, who recalled seeing a painting in the collection of Jacques Dassa, which had belonged to the former Antwerp mayor Nicolas Rockox.¹⁵ However, this painting was probably neither a version of the *Tax collectors* nor indeed a work by Massys, but rather an unidentified variant of Van Reymerswale's so-called *Money changer and his wife*, depicted in the interior view of Rockox's house by Frans Francken the Younger (Fig.3).¹⁶ The interior shows several identifiable paintings, among them a fairly accurate reproduction of one of Van Reymerswale's versions of the theme. This painting must have existed, for the cartoon used to prepare the 1538 version now in the Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, shows the same woman's headdress, which subsequently was altered during the painting process in this and the following versions.¹⁷ Peter Paul Rubens appears to have made drawings after the Prado version.¹⁸ The testimony of a painter who recalled seeing a 'money changer' or 'tax collector' in the Rockox's house highlights the strong association of the theme with Massys already in the early seventeenth century.

Van Reymerswale's second major subject, St Jerome in his study, is included in early seventeenth-century depictions of collection

1. *Parable of the unjust steward*, by Marinus van Reymerswale. c.1530?. Oil on panel, 77 by 96.5 cm. (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; KHM-Museumsverband).





interiors from Antwerp at least twice.¹⁹ This suggests that one of his versions either was in the possession of an art dealer or patron involved with the artists creating these paintings or was known through connections between different dealers. These collection interiors show a variant based on the 1533 version of *St Jerome in his study* (Fig.4), which is known today through the works of a contemporary or follower of Van Reymerswale who appears to have used models from the artist's workshop.²⁰ This demonstrates that his main topics were known to late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century collectors in Antwerp, albeit not always with his name attached to them. Who else may have owned them?

Recent archival research suggests that the earliest known documented painting by Van Reymerswale is one of the two versions of the so-called *Money changer and his wife*, kept in the Prado, signed and dated 1539 (Fig.2).²¹ In 1557 it was part of the *majorat* of Pedro Dávila y Zúñiga (1498–1567), the 1st Marquis of Las Navas, recorded as 'a painting of a [money] changer and his wife next to him'.²² Since the painting is not among the works mentioned in an earlier list drawn up in April of 1554,²³ the marquis must have acquired it between 1554 and 1557, perhaps during his journey to attend the abdication of Charles V in Brussels between late 1555 and early 1556.²⁴ In the inventory of his estate of 1567 it is listed as 'a

2. The so-called *Money changer and his wife*, by Marinus van Reymerswale. 1539. Oil on panel, 83 by 97 cm. (Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid).

panel [painting] of the [money] changer' – too imprecise for identification, but the archival records of the Medinaceli family elucidate the painting's subsequent history.²⁵ The works from the collection of the marquise of Las Navas were passed on to the counts and later dukes of Santisteban del Puerto in the time of the 9th Marquis of Las Navas, Francisco de Benavides Dávila y Corella (1644–1716), also the 9th Count of Santisteban.²⁶ The inventory of the works of art bequeathed by him to his son and heir Manuel de Benavides y Aragón



3. *Banquet in the house of Nicolaas Rockox*, by Frans Francken the Younger. c.1630–35. Oil on panel, 62.3 by 96.5 cm. (Alte Pinakothek, Munich).

4. *St Jerome in his study*, by Marinus van Reymerswale. 1533. Oil on panel, 80 by 108 cm. (Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, Madrid; Bridgeman Images). del Prado, Madrid).

(1683–1748), the 1st Duke of Santisteban and 10th Marquis de Las Navas, drawn up in 1715, lists ‘two figures weighing coins, by Marini [sic]’ and confirms that the painting was by then in Madrid.²⁷ There can be little doubt that this refers to a signed version of Van Reymerswale’s so-called *Money changer and his wife*, given the attribution. The painting remained in the collection of the dukes of Santisteban, where it reappears in the inventory of Antonio de Benavides y de la Cueva (1714–82), drawn up in 1750.²⁸ Joaquina María de Benavides y Pacheco, the 3rd Duchess of Santisteban and 12th Marchioness de Las Navas, married the 13th Duke of Medinaceli. Therefore, the *majorat* of the marquisate of Las Navas and the dukedom of Santisteban were incorporated into the possession of the dukes of Medinaceli. As a result, Théophile Thoré-Bürger saw the so-called *Money changer and his wife* by Van Reymerswale in the Medinaceli collection in Madrid in 1864.²⁹ After the death of the 15th Duke of Medinaceli (1813–73), this painting passed to his son, the 16th Duke of Medinaceli (1851–79).³⁰ The general inventory of the Medinaceli collection drawn up in 1877 mentions the painting as number ‘185’, the collection label still being present on the painting’s reverse.³¹ Since the 16th duke of

Medinaceli had several descendants and his mother was still alive, his estate and collection were divided upon his death in 1879. In 1890, after the heirs had reached an agreement regarding the division of the collection, it passed on to the mother of the 16th Duke of Medinaceli, Ángela Apolonia Pérez de Barradas y Bernuy, 1st Duchess of Denia and Tarifa.³² When she died in 1903 the painting was inherited by her younger son María Fernández de Córdoba y Pérez de Barradas,

the 2nd duke of Denia and Tarifa.³³ He died in 1931 and his wife María de los Ángeles de Medina Garvey (1864–1933), the dowager Duchess of Denia and Tarifa, received his bequest. The *Money changer and his wife* finally entered the collection of the Prado as a part of her bequest in 1934.³⁴

It is the attribution to Van Reymerswale in the inventory of Manuel de Benavides y Aragón (1683–1748), 10th Count of Santisteban and 10th Marquis of Las Navas, of 1715 and its origin in the *majorat* of the marquisate of Las Navas that secures the connection with the painting in the possession of the 1st Marquis of Las Navas in 1557. The signature on the 1539 version in the Prado must have informed its attribution, since several paintings by Van Reymerswale that entered Spanish collections in the eighteenth century were not identified as works by him.³⁵

At least one other signed painting of the so-called *Money changer and his wife* was recorded in Madrid in the nineteenth century: first in the collection of Petronila Livermore y Salas, Marchioness of Salamanca (1811–66); it was sold in Paris in 1867.³⁶ It is likely to be the signed version from 1540 that was part of the collection of Louis Carrand, which has been in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello, Florence, since 1889.³⁷ It is unclear whether or not this is the same version that Mündler saw around 1859,³⁸ since the infante Don Sebastián Gabriel de Borbón y Braganza appears to have owned



a similar painting that was on display at the Museo de la Trinidad, Madrid, and returned to him in 1861.³⁹ Therefore, the 1539 version now in the Prado (Fig.2) is very likely to be the earliest recorded Van Reyerswale known to date and a painting that corroborates the idea that his works were collectors' items already by the mid-sixteenth century.

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- 1 O. Mündler: 'P. Christophsen - Marinus', *Journal des beaux-arts et de la littérature* 5 (1863), pp.126-27.
- 2 First published by F. Lammertse: exh. cat. *De ontdekking van het dagelijks leven van Bosch tot Bruegel*, Rotterdam (Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen) 2015, p.106.
- 3 The only record tentatively connecting Marinus to Antwerp is the mention of a 'Moryn Claessone, Zeelander', apprentice of the glass painter Symon van Dale, in 1509, see P. Rombouts and T. Van Lierus: *De liggeren en andere historische archieven der Antwerpsche sint Lucasgilde: Liggeren van 1453-1615*, Antwerp 1872, p.71.
- 4 According to A. Mackor: 'Marinus van Reyerswale: painter, lawyer and iconoclast?', *Oud Holland* 109 (1995), pp.191-200.
- 5 P. Ackroyd et al.: "'The two tax collectors' by Marinus van Reyerswale: original and replica", *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 24 (2003), pp.50-63; and L. Alba, M. Jover and M.D. Gayo: 'Marinus: an approach to the painter's technique and workshop', in C. Seidel, ed.: exh. cat. *Marinus: Painter from Reyerswale*, Madrid (Museo Nacional del Prado) 2021, pp.71-85.
- 6 Mentions of an 'old money changer' in 1581, and a 'tolleneer' in 1582 were published by R.A. Mayhew: 'Law, commerce, and the rise of new imagery in Antwerp, 1500-1600', unpublished PhD thesis (Duke University 2011), pp.118-19.
- 7 Rechtelijke Archieven Zeeuws Eilanden, Goes (hereafter RAZE) 2038, fol.2 (9.10.1576). First mentioned by A. Mackor: 'De schilder Marinus belicht stadgenoot Cornelis van der Mare: Reyerswale, Zuid-Beveland en de vloed van 1530', *Historisch Jaarboek voor Zuid-en Noord-Beveland* 24 (1998), pp.77-93, at p.78; published by P.A. Harthoorn: *Pieter Corneliss van Levendale notaris in troebele tijden: Geannoteerde extracten uit protocol A (RAZE 2038) 1576-1586*, Amsterdam 2011, pp.19-20.
- 8 L. Campbell: *The Sixteenth Century Netherlandish Paintings With French Paintings Before 1600*, London 2014, II, p.659; and B. Blauensteiner: *Vom Geben und Nehmen: Untreue als Moralbotschaft?*, Vienna 2014, p.19.
- 9 P. Génard: 'Le peintre Bernard de Ryckere', *Revue Artistique* 1 (1897), p.289.
- 10 See Lammertse, *op. cit.* (note 2), p.112.
- 11 Sold at Lempertz, Cologne, *Masterpieces from the Bischoff Collection*, 8th December 2020, lot 8 (sale 1168).
- 12 'Daer is tot Wijntig te Middelborgh van hem eenen tollenaer sittende in zijn contour wesende se gordindeert en fraey ghedaen', see C. van Mander: *Het leven der doorluchtighe nederlandsche en hooghduytsche Schilders*, Haarlem 1604, fol.261v. This is also the case for the 'schilderye op paneel gescildert van Marines wesende eenen Tollenaer' listed in the inventory of Jan II van Keerberghen (Queerbergen), drawn on 16th January 1630, see E. Duverger: *Antwerpse kunstinventarissen*

uit de zeventiende eeuw, 1627-1635, Brussels 1987, III, p.181.

- 12 Alte Pinakothek, Munich, inv. no.7. See F. Mély: 'Les Primitifs et leurs signatures: Quinten Matsys et Marinus', *Gazette des beaux-arts* 40 (1908), p.222; and Campbell, *op. cit.* (note 8), p.659.
- 13 Musée du Louvre, Paris, inv. no.1444. L. Campbell: *Early Flemish Paintings in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, London 1985, p.117.
- 14 J. Kräftner, ed.: *Der Fürst als Sammler: Neuerwerbungen unter Hans-Adam II. von und zu Liechtenstein*, Vienna 2015, pp.20-21, no.1; L. Silver: 'Massys and money: the tax collectors rediscovered', *Journal of Historians of the Netherlandish Art* 7, no.2 (2015), doi.org.0.5092/jhna.2015.7.2.2.
- 15 See J. Dencé: *De Antwerpsche 'Konstkamers': Inventarissen van kunstverzamelingen te Antwerpen in de 16e en 17e eeuwen*, Antwerp 1932, p.28. Silver, *op. cit.* (note 14), paragraph 28, proposed the identification with the 'two tax collectors' listed in the Antwerp inventory of Jan Meurs, drawn up between 26th-27th October 1652, see Dencé, *op. cit.* (this note), p.133.
- 16 Alte Pinakothek, Munich, inv. no.858. Pointed out in D. Jaffé et al., eds: exh. cat. *Samson and Delilah: A Rubens Painting Returns*, Antwerp (Rockoxhuis) and Vienna (Palais Liechtenstein) 2007.
- 17 Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, inv. no.P2102, see Alba, Jover and Gayo, *op. cit.* (note 5), pp.77-78. Preliminary results published in C. Seidel: 'Marinus, otro enigma del arte flamenco', *Ars Magazine: Revista de arte y coleccionismo* 44 (2019), pp.64-71.
- 18 Ansegius's headdress in the *Portrait of St Begga and Ansegius* (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; GG 521) is an almost exact replica of Marinus's fringed chaperon, see K. Jonckheere: *Rubens: Portraits after Existing Prototypes, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard*, 19.4, Turnhout 2016, p.180, no.56.
- 19 National Gallery, London (c.1620; NG 1287), and the so-called *Cabinet of Jan Snellinck* (Musées royaux des beaux-arts de Belgique, Brussels; inv. no.2628).
- 20 In Madrid (Museo Nacional del Prado; inv. no.P5742), Munich (Alte Pinakothek; inv. no.WAF 867) and Orléans (Musée des beaux-arts; inv. no.1440.2A), see A. Mackor: 'On Marinus van Reyerswale's "St Jerome in his study", with special attention for the Brukenthal version', *Brukenthal: Acta Musei* 12, no.2 (2017), pp.241-62, at p.256.
- 21 Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid, inv. no.P2567, see M. Parada López de Corselas and L.M. Palacios Méndez: *Pedro Dávila y Zuñiga, I marqués de Las Navas: Patricinio artístico y coleccionismo anticuario en las cortes de Carlos V y Felipe II*, Bologna 2020, pp.84-85; and Seidel, *op. cit.* (note 5), p.107, no.7.
- 22 Document preserved in the Ducal Archive of Medinaceli, Toledo (hereafter ADM): '*Pintura de un cambiador. Asimismo metemos, unimos y yncorporamos un quadro de un cambiador con su muger cav[e] él!*' ('We [. . .] add [to Las Navas majorat] a painting of a [money] changer and his wife next to him'), ADM, 16.1.8, fol.7v (drawn up on 27th May 1557).
- 23 *Ibid.*, 258.47 (drawn up on 10th April 1554).
- 24 For Pedro Davila's biography, see Parada López de Corselas and Palacios Méndez, *op. cit.* (note 21), pp.1-15.
- 25 'Una tabla del cambiador' ('a panel [painting] of the [money] changer'), ADM, 179.17.54 (without folio indication).
- 26 V. Lleó Cañal: 'The painter and the diplomat: Luca Giordano and the Viceroy, Count of Santisteban', in E. Cropper, ed.: *The Diplomacy of Art: Artistic Creation and Politics in Seicento Italy*, Milan 2000, pp.121-50, at p.139; Parada López de Corselas and Palacios Méndez, *op. cit.* (note 21), p.20.
- 27 See A. Paz y Méliá: *Series de los más importantes documentos del archivo y biblioteca del exmo. señor duque de Medinaceli: 1a serie histórica. Años 860-1814*, Madrid 1915, p.220, doc.174.
- 28 '*Otra [pintura] de mano de Marini en tabla q[ue] están dos figuras pesando monedas, [vinculada] al dicho Mayorazgo [de Las Navas]'*

confirms that the *Money changer* by Marinus belonged to the old *majorat* of the Marquisate of Las Navas, cited after Lleó Cañal, *op. cit.* (note 26), p.140.

- 29 W. Burger: 'Correspondance', *La chronique des arts et de la curiosité* 46 (1864), pp.30-31, at p.31.
- 30 '*El Cambista y su muger [tasado] en un mil setecientas cincuenta pesetas*', see Archivo de Protocolos Notariales, Madrid (hereafter APNM), Tomo 35613, fol.2219r. On the collection of the 15th Duke of Medinaceli, see P.J. Martínez Plaza: *El coleccionismo de pintura en Madrid durante el siglo XIX: La escuela española en las colecciones privadas y el mercado*, Madrid 2018, pp.239-43 and 465-67.
- 31 '*El cambista y su mujer. La composición de este cuadro fue inspirada por la de otro semejante, de Quentin Metsys, existente en el Museo del Louvre. El original del presente perteneció a la colección de Doña Isabel de Farnesio en el palacio de S. Ildefonso, donde se atribuía, malamente, a Lucas de Holanda. Hoy está en el Museo del Prado, señalado con el número 1422. Es de Marinus de Reyerswale [sic] o de Zeeuw, pintor zelandés de mediados del siglo XVI. = Escuela holandesa*', see ADM, Archivo Histórico, leg. 85.2.2, unpublished manuscript catalogue *Catálogo de los cuadros existentes en el palacio de los Excmos. Sres. Duques de Medinaceli en Madrid*, 1877, pp.49-50. The document was kindly provided by Pedro J. Martínez.
- 32 ADM, Desvinculación, 294.51, 'Relaciones de los cuadros adjudicados a la Excm. Sra. Duquesa Vda. De Medinaceli', entire batch Q [unfoliated], again as no.185. The document was kindly provided by Pedro J. Martínez.
- 33 '*Cambista, por Marinus, ochenta por noventa y cinco centímetros, [tasado en] quince mil pesetas*', see APNM, Tomo 43201, 'Operaciones de inventario, avalúo, liquidación y adjudicación de los bienes que ha dejado a su fallecimiento la Excm. Sra. Doña Ángela Pérez de Barradas y Bernuy, Duquesa de Denia', p.178 (fol.2449v). The document was kindly provided by Pedro J. Martínez.
- 34 A. Balis et al.: *La pintura flamenca en el Prado*, Brussels 1989, p.95; S. Gascón and P. Herce: *Ángela, duquesa de Medinaceli y marquesa de Las Navas: Su vida, su obra, su tiempo*, Madrid 1995, pp.194-95, note 3.
- 35 The Prado version dated 1538 (P2102) as a Lucas van Leyden in 1746, see Á. Aterido, J. Martínez Cuesta and J.J. Pérez Preciado: *Inventarios reales: colecciones de pinturas de Felipe V y Isabel Farnesio*, Madrid 2004, II, pp.69 and 454, no.890; the *St Jerome* (P2100) as a work by Albrecht Dürer, see G. Martínez Leiva and Á. Rodríguez Rebollo: *El inventario del Alcázar de Madrid de 1666: Felipe IV y su colección artística*, Madrid 2015, p.350, no.335, as was the *Virgin and Child* (P2101), see J. Zarco Cuevas: 'Cuadros reunidos por Carlos IV, siendo príncipe, en su Casa de Campo de El Escorial', *Religión y cultura* 25 (1934), pp.382-419; and J.J. Luna: *Carlos IV, mecenas de pintores y coleccionista de pinturas*, Madrid 1992.
- 36 *Catalogue des tableaux anciens des écoles Espagnole, Italienne, Flamande & Hollandaise composant la galerie de M. le Mis de Salamanca, vente en son Hôtel*, Paris 1867, p.121, no.159 (85 by 114 cm.). Pedro J. Martínez kindly signalled the mention of this painting in the marchioness's testament of 1866.
- 37 Inv. no.2058 C. See E. Gerspach: *La Collection Carrand au Musée national de France*, Asnières 1904, p.10; L. Sebregondi and T. Paris, eds: exh. cat. *Denaro e Bellezza: I banchieri, Botticelli e il rogo della vanità*, Firenze (Palazzo Strozzi) 2011, p.163, no.4.4.
- 38 According to Burger, *op. cit.* (note 29), p.31.
- 39 Described as '*una abaro, con un peso en la mano izquierda, en la derecha una moneda [. . .] y una muger mirando. [Fechado] Mierrs*' (85 by 111 cm.), see Museo del Prado: *Inventario general de pinturas II. El Museo de la Trinidad*, Madrid 1991, p.253, no.828. It was recorded in the infante's picture gallery in 1835, see M. Agueda: 'La colección de pinturas del infante don Sebastián Gabriel de Borbón', *Boletín del Museo del Prado* 3, no.8 (1982), p.108, no.84.