Jesse Feiman

During the reorganization of the Habsburg collections Adam von Bartsch (1757-1821), curator of the print cabinet at the Imperial Court Library in Vienna, developed a taxonomy—or, systematic method of classification—by applying the dispassionate logic of natural history to the arrangement of prints. He adapted techniques of empirical observation to the practice of print connoisseurship, establishing methods for recognizing the individual manners of printmakers and for organizing their works by national school and chronological period. Bartsch's system enhanced the accessibility of the imperial collection, and fostered historical analysis by compelling visitors to associate prints with the circumstances of their creation.

In the expansion and renovation of their collections, the imperial court promoted the rational and methodical organization of their contents. In the Imperial Paintings Gallery and in several cabinets housed in the Imperial Court Library, the caretakers used the systematic arrangement of objects to enhance the utility of their collections for research and instruction. Collections of books, shells, and minerals functioned as spaces in which to gain expertise through observation and comparison. As Debora Meijers has argued, visitors benefitted from the clear and rigid structures that governed the installation of the paintings gallery and the arrangement of the Imperial Naturalia Cabinet. In the book and print collections at the Imperial Library, similar principles shaped the reorganization of printed materials. By opening their collections to a broader audience, the court presented its support for imperial institutions as an act of public benefaction.

Throughout the eighteenth century, Habsburg monarchs used the patronage of imperial institutions to enhance their prestige and, by extension, to demonstrate the benefits of their reign. The centralization of the collections concentrated the dynasty's cultural resources and placed them at the immediate disposal of the court, which increasingly devoted them to the education of visitors. In the 1720s, Holy

¹ Daniela Bleichmar, 'Learning to look: Visual experience across art and science in eighteenth-century France', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 46: 1, Fall 2012, 87.

² Debora Meijers, *Kunst als Natur: Die Habsburger Gemäldegalerie um 1780*, Milan: Skira Editore, 1995, 105

³ Thomas Dacosta Kaufmann, 'From treasury to museum: The collections of the Austrian Habsburgs', *The Cultures of Collecting*, John Elsner and Roger Cardinal, eds, London: Reaktion Books, 1994, 150-1.



Figure 1 Salomon Kleiner, *Imperial Court Library, Vienna,* 1724. Engraving on paper, 25 x 44 cm. Plate 18 from *Vera et accurata delineatio omnium templorum et coenobiorum quae tam in caesarea urbe ac sede Vienna, Austriae,* Vienna, 1724. Getty Reseach Institute Library, Los Angeles, California.

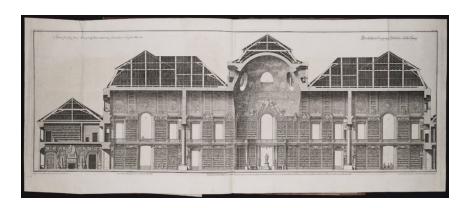


Figure 2 Salomon Kleiner, *Prunktsaal, Imperial Court Library, Vienna,* 1737. Engraving on paper, 45 x 112 cm. Plate 6 from *Dilucida representatio magnificae et sumptuosae Biliothecae Caesareae,* Vienna 1737.

Beinecke Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut

Roman Emperor Charles VI (1685-1740) commissioned the design for a stately library attached to the Habsburg winter palace from the Austrian architect Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach (1656-1723). Completed in 1726 by Fischer von Erlach's son Joseph Emanuel (1693-1742), the Imperial Court Library opened for the first time to visitors without prior appointments.⁴ The centrepiece of the library was the

⁴ Schwartz, "Ein solcher Schatz verdient [...] besondere Pflege", ' 184. Without detailed records, it is difficult to know how the change in policy affected the visitorship of the library. For centuries, some scholars and artists had accessed the various Habsburg collections through invitations granted by reputation or by favor. Absent the need for prior approval,

Prunksaal, a cavernous barrel-vaulted room for storing books and prints, used to host readers after 1769.⁵ As engravings by Salomon Kleiner (1700-61) [figs.1-3] illustrated, the shelves faced the spines of all the books toward a central aisle, which allowed visitors to survey them with a sweep of the eyes.⁶ By circumambulating the space, they could acquire a sense of the library's contents and their arrangement. The abundance of resources and the grandeur of the space demonstrated the Habsburgs' wealth and commitment to research.



Figure 3 Salomon Kleiner, *Central Dome, Prunktsaal, Imperial Court Library, Vienna*. Engraving on paper, 45 x 62 cm. Plate 7 from *Dilucida representatio magnificae et sumptuosae Biliothecae Caesareae*, Vienna 1737. Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Bibliothek, Zürich, Switzerland.

The court made acquisitions and centralized its collections to fill the new institutions in Vienna. The purchase of books and prints from the estate of Prince Eugene V of Savoy (1633-1736) increased the size and prestige of the Habsburg library. Prince Eugene's collection was prominently displayed under the central

the potential readership increased while formal and informal rules still limited its size. For example, the Imperial Library may have had a rule similar to one found at the Imperial Paintings Gallery, which required patrons to have clean shoes. Given the state of Vienna's streets, such a feat required an arrival by carriage and a relatively high level of income; James J. Sheehan, *Museums in the German Art World: From the End of the Old Regime to the Rise of Modernism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000, 21.

⁵ Ernst Trenkler, 'History of the Austrian National Library', *The Library Quarterly* 17:3 July 1947, 227. Also in 1769, the naturalia cabinet was open Monday mornings; Elisabeth Hassman, 'Die k. k. Sammlungen unter Maria Theresia und Joseph II. mit einem Ausblick auf die Zeit um 1800', *Jahrbuch des Kunsthistorisches Museum*, 15/16 2013/2014, 17.

⁶ Eric Garberson, 'Libraries, memory and the space of knowledge', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 18: 2, 2006, 105.

dome of the Prunksaal.⁷ The Belvedere, his former summer palace, became the home of the Imperial Paintings Gallery in 1776.⁸ In 1748, Emperor Franz Stephan I (1708-65) purchased a collection of minerals and shells from Jean Chevalier de Baillou (1684-1758) and established the Imperial Naturalia Cabinet.⁹ In the 1770s, Empress Maria Theresa (1717-80) ordered the transfer of select objects from the dynasty's regional palaces to Vienna and the redistribution of materials among the city's galleries and cabinets.¹⁰ The reorganization of *Kunstkammers* into specialized collections of naturalia and artificialia freed objects from their associations with superstition and inserted them into novel orders based on observation and experimentation.¹¹ The seizure of materials from Jesuit churches and libraries following the dissolution of the order in 1773 further contributed to the richness of the Habsburg collections.¹² The concentration of natural and cultural artifacts in the Habsburg capital made that city the rival of any in Europe, and demontrated the dynasty's unique ability to cultivate learning and to promote scholarship.

On the advice of State Chancellor Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz-Rietberg (1711-94), Maria Theresa and her son, Joseph II (1741-90), sought to raise the dignity of the Habsburg dynasty by improving the education of the subjects living in their monarchy. They attempted to challenge the cultural supremacy of foreign powers by training local artists to rival the graduates of Europe's famous academies. With

^{7 &#}x27;Nach dem Tode des Herzogs kaufte Kaiser Karl IV der Nichte desselben die kostbare Bibliothek nebst den prächtigen Sammlungen der Kupferstiche, Minaturmahlieren, Handschriften u. ältesten Druckwerke ab, und vereinigte sie mit der kaiserlichen Büchersammlung in den neu erbauten Saale zwischen den Jahren 1736 bis 1740.' Adam von Bartsch, 'Ueber die Verwaltung der Kupferstich-Sammlung der k. k. Hof-Bibliothek', ÖNB-HSS: Cod. 15344, Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.

⁸ Meijers, Kunst als Natur, 29.

⁹ Meijers, Kunst als Natur, 105.

¹⁰ For example, Dürer drawings held by the Imperial Treasury were transferred to the Imperial Court Library in 1777; Schwartz, "Ein solcher Schatz verdient […] besondere Pflege", 186. Ignaz von Born had a meteorite removed from the treasury and placed in the naturalia cabinet; Meijers, *Kunst als Natur*, 111.

¹¹ Lorraine Daston and Katherine Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature*, 1150-1750, New York, Zone Books, 1998, 330-1.

¹² Jeffrey Chipps Smith, 'The Jesuit Artistic Diaspora in Germany after 1773', *Jesuit Survival and Restoration: A Global History*, 1773-1900, Boston: Brill, 2014, 133, 136; Franz A. J. Szabo, *Kaunitz and Enlightened Absolutism* 1753-1780, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, 196. Maria Theresa seized thirty works of art from Jesuit churches, including paintings by Caravaggio and by Rubens, that entered the imperial collection; Franz Pichorner, 'The Imperial Collections and the Kunsthistorisches Museum', *Habsburg Splendor: Masterpieces from Vienna's Imperial Collections at the Kunsthistorisches Museum*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015, 18; Michael Yonan, 'Kunsthistorisches Museum/Belvedere, Vienna: Dynasticism and the function of art', *The First Modern Museums of Art: the Birth of an Institution in 18th- and Early-19th-century Europe*, Carole Paul, ed., Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2012, 171.

¹³ Szabo, *Kaunitz and Enlightened Absolutism*, 191, 197.

Kaunitz's encouragement, she paid for the Viennese artist, Jakob Matthias Schmutzer (1733-1811), to study engraving in the Parisian studio of Johann Georg Wille (1715-1808) from 1762 to 1766. The year Schmutzer returned, Maria Theresa founded the Imperial and Royal Academy for Engravers, and appointed him as its first director. ¹⁴ In 1769, he accepted a young Adam Bartsch as a student.

The education Bartsch received under Schmutzer equipped him with keen observational skills and a broad exposure to the manners of famous European artists. Pedagogy at the Academy focused on drawing from models and mastering the tools and techniques of intaglio printmaking, precisely the skills Schmutzer had learned from Wille. Bartsch primarily etched plates after extant drawings and prints, and created over 500 works over the course of his career. The process of translating images into etching forced him to identify and to interpret the minute details of his source images. This manner of printmaking taught him to recognize a variety of individual, regional, and historical styles, and began the decades he would spend examining works at the Imperial Library. Bartsch's artistic practice thereby contributed to his expertise in the attribution and classification of prints.

Bartsch's studies at the University of Vienna may have developed his scholarly acumen. Although no formal records of his activities at the university remain, he claimed to have matriculated there. To Given his age and the duration of primary education, Rudolf Rieger estimates that Bartsch entered the university around 1773, which coincided with Maria Theresa's assertion of control over schools and universities. The Jesuit order had held a virtual monopoly on education within the monarchy and critics believed the influence of dogmatic Catholicism had hindered the intellectual and economic development of the Habsburgs' subjects. 19

¹⁴ On Kaunitz's recommendation, Maria Theresa had funded Schmutzer's studies in Paris in 1762 and nominated him to lead the academy upon his return to Vienna. ' ... le Prince de Kaunitz, que l'Impératrice-Reine envoya le jeune Schmutzer à Paris, pour qu'il apprit la gravure sous la direction de Wille ... Au bout de quatre ans il fut rappelé à Vienna, et nommé par Marie-Thérese Directeur de sa nouvelle Académie'; Michel Huber and Carl Christian Heinrich Rost, Manuel des curieux et des amateurs de l'art, contenant une notice abrégée des principaux Graveurs, et un Catalogue raisonné de leurs meilleurs ouvrages; depuis le commencement de la Gravure jusques à nos jours: Les Artistes rangés par ordre chronologique et divisés par Ecole, Zurich: Orell, Gessner, Fuessli and Co., 1797, 2:73.

¹⁵ Rudolf Rieger, *Adam von Bartsch* (1757-1821): Leben und Werk des Wiener Kunsthistorikers und Kupferstechers, Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2014, 1:21.

¹⁶ Rieger, *Adam von Bartsch*, 1:22-3; see also Schwartz, "Ein solcher Schatz verdient […] besondere Pflege", 185.

¹⁷ Bartsch listed university studies among his qualifications in a document from 1796: 'Hat seine Studien auf der Universität ordentlich geendiget'; "Conduite-Liste," 1796, ÖNB-AGS:50/49-4, Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.

¹⁸ Rieger, Adam von Bartsch, 22-3.

¹⁹ R.J.W. Evans, *Austria, Hungary, and the Habsburgs: Essays on Central Europe, c.1683-1867*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, 37, 58, 60, 70.

When a papal decree dissolved the order, the empress replaced the Jesuits' curriculum with history, science, geography, and natural law.²⁰ Adam František Kollár (1718-83), the linguist and former Jesuit who helped design Maria Theresa's new educational policy, taught history at the university while also serving as director of the Imperial Library in the 1770s.²¹ The studies he published out of the library's archive demonstrated dispassionate methods for examining documents, which he presumably imparted to students.²² The jurist and journalist, Joseph von Sonnenfels (1732-1817), lectured on the rights of men and the just exercise of state power as a professor of philosophy. Bartsch may have also encountered ideas about empiricism that reinforced the priority of close observation he had learned as printmaker. While these scholars operated under the strict censorship of foreign literature, later eased by Joseph II, they cultivated ideas and practices aligned with the Enlightenment.

With continued renovation, the Habsburg collections became laboratories for developing innovative methods for the display and classification of the dynasty's most significant objects. In 1773, Maria Theresa ordered an inventory of the family's palaces with the intent of transferring the most precious books, prints, paintings, and rarities to its libraries, galleries, and cabinets in Vienna.²³ The reinstallation of the Imperial Paintings Gallery in the Belvedere Palace devised by Swiss publisher and printmaker Christian von Mechel (1737-1817), which arranged the works by attribution and national school, was the first art historically oriented museum display.²⁴ Gottfried van Swieten (1733-1803), prefect of the library, encouraged the adoption of classification systems to enhance the accessibility of the imperial collections, and invented a new tool for libraries, the card catalogue.²⁵ Metallurgist and mineralogist Ignaz von Born (1742-91) rearranged portions of the naturalia cabinet in emulation of Linnaean principles. In this context, Bartsch's taxonomy was one of several new strategies for the administration of a research collection.

The Habsburgs' most public effort to expand historical knowledge of the visual arts was the installation of the Imperial Paintings Gallery at the Belvedere palace, which opened in 1781. The court, which had previsouly admitted art students and invited guests to the gallery, lifted its invitation requirement and opened the palace to visitors three days a week, free of charge. ²⁶ Mechel's

²⁰ Yonan, 'Kunsthistorisches Museum/Belvedere, Vienna', 171.

²¹ Paul Shore, 'Ex-Jesuit librarian-scholars Adam František Kollár and Gyorgy Pray: Baroque tradition, national identity, and the enlightenment among Jesuits in the eastern Habsburg lands', *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 6, 2019, 471.

²² Paul Shore, *Narratives of Adversity: Jesuits on the Eastern Peripheries of the Habsburg Realms* (1640-1773), Budapest: Central European University Press, 2012, 216, 239.

²³ Yonan, 'Kunsthistorisches Museum/Belvedere, Vienna', 171.

²⁴ Andrew McClellan, *The Art Museum from Boulée to Bilbao*, Berkeley: University of California, Berkeley Press, 2008, 122.

²⁵ Schwartz, "Ein solcher Schatz verdient [...] besondere Pflege", 187.

²⁶ Yonan, 'Kunsthistoriches Museum/Belvedere, Vienna', 171-2.

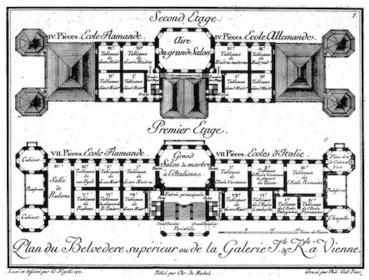


Figure 4 Christian von Mechel, Plan du Belvedere supérieur ou de la Galerie Ile. & Rle. à Vienne. Engraving on paper, 22×30 cm.

Plate 1 from *Catalogue des Tableaux de la Galerie Impériale et Royale de Vienne*, Basel, 1784. The Digital Cicognara Library, https://cicognara.org/catalog/3410.

organizational scheme illustrated the progress of art in the Dutch, German, and Italian schools with the highlights of the Habsburg paintings collection. He divided the works into four schools—Italian, German, Flemish, and Old Flemish—and placed each one in an apartment on the first and second floors of the Upper Belvedere Palace (fig. 4). Within each wing of the building, Mechel grouped together paintings by the same artist and placed the artists' oeuvres in a roughly chronological order. He encouraged visitors to learn painters' individual manners by comparing their works and contrasting them with other painters in their school.²⁷ The labels he provided each work helped viewers to confirm their judgements and to recognize the work of unfamiliar artists.²⁸ Mechel believed that the sequence of paintings in each of wing of the palace displayed the characters of different eras within each national school and allowed viewers to witness the development from one period to the next.²⁹ His arrangement reinforced the concepts of artistic progress and national traditions that had informed histories of art dating back to the writings of Giorgio Vasari (1511-74).

Mechel's characterizations of his installation emphasized its didactic function and indicated the importance of collections as venues for the historical analysis of art. He described the gallery as a 'repository of the visible history of

²⁷ Christian von Mechel, *Catalogue des Tableaux de la Galerie Impériale et Royale de Vienne*, Basel: Chez Christian von Mechel, 1784, xiv.

²⁸ Sheehan, Museums in the German Art World, 40.

²⁹ '... de salle en salle la gradation ou les caractères des siècles sont devenus si sensibles ...;' Mechel, *Catalogue des Tableaux*, xiv.

art.'³⁰ It is not a coincidence that Mechel compared it to 'a well-stocked library, in which the curious visitor might find works of all sorts and from every age,' since his arrangement of paintings emulated the orders of print cabinets in many libraries.³¹ By the mid-eighteenth century, large collections, such as the one Michel de Marolles (1600-81) assembled and sold to the Cabinet du Roi in Paris, divided works into oeuvres (volumes devoted to the works of a single artist) and albums arranged by subject or by technique.³² Mechel's guides included descriptions of an unrealized installation of Habsburg portraits in the Lower Belvedere Palace, which resembled paper collections by reserving galleries for the display of a single genre of paintings. A few examples, including the collection of Prince Eugene, used the chronological organization of oeuvres to present a survey of the history of printmaking.³³ As Stephan Brakensiek observes, the labels on the paintings provided the same guidance as the title pages of print albums and the inscriptions that appeared in the prints themselves.³⁴

The encyclopaedic print collection that Prince Eugene commissioned from the Mariette firm of Paris provided Bartsch with an ideal venue to learn the connoisseurship of prints. Assembled by Pierre-Jean Mariette (1694-1774) between 1717 and 1718, it comprised tens of thousands of impressions variously organized by subject, medium, and author. It included over 900 folios of portraits, 110 albums of views, some codices devoted to chiaroscuro woodcuts and to mezzotints, and 255 volumes of artists' oeuvres, each of which contained analytical descriptions and indices written by Pierre-Jean on the prince's request.³⁵ Where collectors up to the seventeenth century had attended to the quality and iconography of prints, Mariette and his generation measured the expertise of a connoisseur by the accuracy of his or her attributions. Where the criteria of genre and of medium focused viewers' attention, respectively, on iconography and technology, the classification of prints by attribution turned their minds toward the assessment of authorship. By studying the Eugenian albums, Bartsch refined his understanding of the expression of artistic manner.

³⁰ 'un Dépôt de l'histoire visible de l'Art', Mechel, Catalogue des Tableaux, xv.

³¹ '... Sammlung scheint einer reichen Bibliothek zu gleichen, in welcher der Wißbegierige froh ist, Werke aller Arten und aller Zeiten anzutreffen ...'. Christian von Mechel, *Verzeichniss der Gemälde der kaiserlich königlichen Bilder Gallerie in Wien*, Vienna: 1783, xi. Curiously, Mechel omitted this phrase from the French-language guide he published one year later.

³² Antony Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography: An Introduction to European Printmaking*, London: The British Museum, 2018, 445. Stephan Brakensiek, *Vom "Theatrum Mundi" zum "Cabinet des Estampes": Das Sammeln von Druckgraphik in Deutschland 1565-1821*, Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2003, 32.

³³ Kristel Smentek, *Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, Burlington: Ashgate, 2014, 42.

³⁴ Brakensiek, Vom "Theatrum Mundi", 544.

³⁵ Smentek, Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur, 42, 46.

The contents of the oeuvres prepared by Mariette taught Bartsch to rely on empirical observation and comparison in the attribution and analysis of prints. These volumes, which were variously dedicated to designers and to printmakers, included prints executed by their respective artists as well as prints after the artist's works in other media. Mariette internally arranged the albums by genre and included copies, counterproofs, retouched states, and other variant impressions with the attributed prints. In his commentaries, Pierre-Jean compared the impressions in order to address the merits of the artists and the unique hands of the printmakers who carried out their designs. To follow Mariette's notes, Bartsch had to inspect the prints himself and to compare them with one another. Through the end of his life, he maintained that first-hand comparison was the easiest way to distinguish between prints, especially between originals and copies. The systematic organization of the collection made a strong impression on Bartsch, both as a didactic tool and as an effective strategy for the arrangement of an institutional print collection.

As curator of the Imperial Court Library's print cabinet, Bartsch developed a taxonomy to organize more than a hundred thousand printed images.³⁹ The variety of materials housed in the collection, which ranged from fine art prints and reproductive engravings to maps and musical scores, required a capacious classification system. Although Bartsch did not invent the principles that guided his taxonomy of prints, his systematic application of those rules introduced the structure of Linnaean taxonomy into the organization of the print cabinet. In emulation of the naturalist, he arranged the Habsburgs' prints according to a nested hierarchy in which every category was comprised of smaller, more specialized classes. Bartsch developed a professional environment that encouraged visitors to engage in inductive reasoning by forming judgments and recognizing generalities based on specific details. The empirical foundations of his classifications gave his categories the epistemological weight of a posteriori, that is, evidence-based judgments. By relying on a print's observable features, Bartsch laid bare the data and logic he followed to ascribe a work to a national school, historical period, or individual hand with certainty.

³⁶ Smentek, Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur, 46, 53.

³⁷ Smentek, Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur, 48.

³⁸ 'Es ist nicht schwer, oft sehr leicht, den Unterschied zwischen einem Originale und dessen Copie zu erkennen, wenn man beide nebeneinander sehen kann, aber ser sichere Ausspruch hierüber wird oft sehr schwierig, wenn man keine Gelegenheit hat, eine solche Vergleichung anstellen zu können'; Adam von Bartsch, *Anleitung zur Kupferstichkunde*, Vienna: J.B. Wallishausser, 1821, 1:101. In *Le Peintre Graveur*, he invoked direct comparison as the method he used to determine which of two fifteenth-century sets of tarot cards was the original and which a copy after it; Adam von Bartsch, *Le Peintre Graveur*, Vienna: J.V. Degen, 1811, 13:121. ³⁹ The total from an inventory of the print cabinet taken in 1814 was over 175,000 prints. Bartsch, 'Ueber die Verwaltung'.

The influx of materials to the Imperial Library necessitated the expansion of the library's staff and the creation of new methods for storing and locating objects. In the 1770s, Gottfried van Swieten created more positions to administer the collections and to attend to visitors, so that the library employed a prefect (himself), a director (Kollár), three *Kustos*, four *Skriptors*, three *Bibliotheksdieners*, and several laborers. Around 1778, van Swieten directed Bartsch, a recently hired *Skriptor*, to copy bibliographical data onto the cards for his card catalogue and to propose new ideas for the organization of the collections.

An arrangement Bartsch proposed for the incunabula, or early printed books, accommodated the need for logic and anticipated the future growth of the Imperial Library. After the incunabula were separated from the prints and manuscripts in 1778, he devised a plan to place them on the shelves according to their dates of publication. 42 He suggested that instituting a chronological system would be 'simpler, easier, and more orderly' than preserving the existing organization by subject, especially in light of changes to the collection:⁴³ '... an even more significant obstacle would arise if the whole collection were to be transferred to different shelves in another location; in the event that one would not be willing to make the width of the shelves in the new cabinet identical to the old ones.'44 Bartsch envisioned a capacious and flexible method for arranging the incunabula that relied upon portable labels. In his plan, Bartsch sketched a design for rigid partitions measuring two Schüh tall and half a Schüh deep to be fixed with a date and placed between books (fig.5).45 He also illustrated a library shelf bearing books separated by a series of dividers marked with dates (fig. 6). The volumes in the lower left, drawn in pen, demonstrated that the labels clearly marked the order of the books; the volumes on the right, some drawn in graphite and others in pen, suggested that new works could be integrated with ease between the partitions. Although it is not

⁴⁰ Trenkler, 'History of the Austrian National Library', 227.

⁴¹ Anette Michels, 'Zwischen Nähe und Distanz – Adam von Bartsch als Künstler', *Copy.Right: Adam von Bartsch: Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft,* Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels, and Anne-Katrin Sors eds., Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 256.

⁴² Although the manuscript is undated, Rieger dated it 1778-c.1780; Rieger, *Adam von Bartsch*, 2:667.

⁴³ 'Weit einfacher, leichter, und ordentlicher hingegen muß folgende Methode, die Bücher zu stellen, sein. Man setzt vorläufig alle Bücher nach den Jahren ihrer Ausgabe in einer Chronologischen Reihe ...'; ÖNB-AGS 50/49-1 Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.
⁴⁴ 'Ohne diesem Umstand, der immer viele Unordnungen nach sich ziehen müßte, würde auch ein noch wichtigeres Hinderniß aufstossen, wenn man die ganze Kollection an einen andern Ort, und in andern Kästen übertragen sollte; im Fall, daß man nicht willens wäre, die Breite der Fächer in den neuen Kästen, dene Fächern ihrer vorigen Kästen gleich zu machen'; Bartsch ÖNB-AGS 50/49-1 Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.

⁴⁵ The dimensions Bartsch gave were '2 Schüh lang.' and '1/2 Schüh breit;' Bartsch ÖNB-AGS 50/49-1 Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.

clear that Van Swieten followed Bartsch's proposal, it demonstrated the young scholar's engagement with the practical and theoretical concerns of classification.



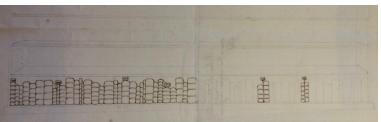


Figure 5 Adam von Bartsch, *Book Spine with Partition and Date 1470*, 1778-80. Ink on paper, 14 x 5 cm. ÖNB-AGS 50/49-1, Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.

Figure 6 Adam von Bartsch, *Sketch of Bookcases with Partitions and Date Labels* (detail), 1778-80.

Graphite and ink on paper, 4 x 31 cm., ÖNB-AGS 50/49-1, Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.

The taxonomic classifications concurrently applied by Ignaz von Born to the collection of the naturalia cabinet reflected his engagement with the scholarship of Linnaeus. When Born was selected to lead the collection around 1778, it occupied two rooms in the library. The first room contained molluscs, corals, and fossils, likely stored in the same display cases arranged by Chevalier de Baillou for Franz Stephan. Although he did not alter the order of the molluscs, Born consulted Linnaeus's texts for the identification of new specimens. He reorganized the mineral collection, housed in the second room, according to his own hierarchical system of categories that resembled Linnaean taxonomy. Born organized specimens into more general taxa, or categories, based on their physical characteristics, such as their texture, flammability, and taste. Brhe higher ranks of the system, which Born labelled 'order', 'class', and 'kingdom', borrowed their structure and their names from Linnaeus. Born even incorporated the Swedish naturalist's ideas into an anticlerical tract, Specimen Monachologiae, Methodo Linnaeana, Tabulis Triubus Aeneis Illustratum (Vienna, 1783), that he published under the pseudonym Joannis

⁴⁶ Hassman, "Die k. k. Sammlungen unter Maria Theresia und Joseph II.', 19.

⁴⁷ G. C. Kronenberg, 'Born's strombs (Mollusca: Gastropoda) with some notes on *Strombus succinctus* Linnaeus, 1767', *Annalen des Naturhistorischen Museums in Wien*, 109, 2007, 61.

⁴⁸ Meijers, *Kunst als Natur*, 115-6.

Physiophili. In this work of satire, he described various orders of monks in the language of a natural history catalogue, complete with illustrations of the attributes by which each 'species' of clergyman could be identified. His taxonomies demonstrated the presence of Linnaeus's ideas at the Imperial Library.

The presence of innovative and rational systems of classification demonstrates the Habsburgs' interest in the orderly presentation of nature and culture. Born's arrangement placed the dynasty's minerals and gems into a taxonomy purged of the superstitious and alchemical properties traditionally associated with those materials. Mechel's installation displayed the progress of art as a steady and logical process. Mariette's division of Prince Eugene's prints did the same. The order and rationality of these taxonomies mirrored the stable social order established under the Habsburgs. 49

When the imperial collections were opened to the public, visitors interacted with their classification systems and engaged with the affinities and dissimilarities they described. Through the inspection of displays, the browsing of shelves, or the survey of its catalogues, readers learned the principles that guided the arrangements of the cabinets. In letters Bartsch sent to van Swieten from a journey to Paris in 1784, he critiqued the organization of the Cabinet du Roi based on his experience studying there. After eight days in the collection, he wrote: 'The organization of the cabinet, which I came to know well, differed in many places from the order of the imperial collection, but not for the better. Certain oeuvres are quite a mess, and could not be set right by expertise or diligence.'50 As Brakensiek points out, Hughes-Adrien Joly (1718-1800), curator of the cabinet, had arranged the prints according to the principles promoted by Carl-Heinrich von Heinecken (1707-91).⁵¹ Heinecken published a plan for an ideal collection, *Idée générale d'une collection* complette d'estampes (Leipzig, 1771), based on the taxonomy he developed as curator of the print cabinet in Dresden.⁵² He classified prints into ten categories based on their subject matter or national origins. Five of his classes described genres, such as portraits, architecture, or ceremonies, and five corresponded to the oeuvres of Italian, French, Netherlandish, English, and German artists. His catalogue listed the artists in each school alphabetically by surname. Despite the many categories used

⁴⁹ Daston and Park, Wonders and the Order of Nature, 331.

⁵⁰ 'Die Einrichtung des Cabinets, die ich vorzüglich zu kennen mich bewarb, ist in vielen Stücken zwar von der Ordnung der kaiserlichen Sammlung unterschieden, aber darum eben nicht besser. Gewisse Oeuvres sind in eigentlicher Unordnung, und weder mit Kenntniss noch mit Fleiß zusammengebracht.' Letter from Adam von Bartsch to Gottfried van Swieten from Paris 29 January 1784; ÖNB- 8/2-14 Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.

⁵¹ Brakensiek, Vom "Theatrum Mundi", 522.

⁵² The table of contents lists twelve 'classes'. The first ten described types of printed images and the last two respectively pertained to texts and to drawings. Karl-Heinrich von Heinecken, *Idée générale d'une collection complette d'estampes*, Leipzig, Vienna: Jean Paul Kraus, 1771, n.p.

in both Heinecken's and Mariette's systems, Bartsch found that the former lacked the coherence and the precision he came to expect from the latter.⁵³

As keeper of the imperial print cabinet, Bartsch sought to improve the experiences of visiting researchers by developing a logical and comprehensive method for organizing the images. Although he had referred to himself as 'Garde d'Estampes' as early as 1784, Bartsch did not officially assume the position until 1791.⁵⁴ In addition to Prince Eugene's collection, the cabinet contained impressions purchased by the library as well as prints, drawings, and woodblocks transferred from various Habsburg collections. To bring order to the material, he selected prints to be arranged into oeuvres and classified the rest according to their subject matter. This arrangement helped the staff locate and retrieve objects requested by the public.⁵⁵ Bartsch's commitment to attending to visitors' needs led him to exempt an album of prints representing ceremonial celebrations from reclassification due to the frequency with which it was requested.⁵⁶

Following his appointment, Bartsch began to devote concerted effort to the attribution of prints. In an undated manuscript likely written early in his tenure as curator, he outlined a plan to reorganize portions of the library's collection according to the principles demonstrated in Mariette's oeuvres. His stated goal was 'not reform, but rather the perpetuation and preservation of the imperial print collection.' Fe proposed to preserve the integrity of Prince Eugene's albums and to classify more prints according to Mariette's system. In practice, Bartsch removed

⁵³ Throughout the catalogues raisonnés Bartsch published in *Le Peintre Graveur*, the author pointed out mistaken attributions and inaccurate classifications made by Heinecken in *Idée general* and other publications.

⁵⁴ Letter from Adam von Bartsch to Gottfried van Swieten from Paris 9 February 1784; ÖNB-8/2-14 Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.

⁵⁵ Bartsch envisioned the print cabinet as a space in which to welcome practicing artists, scholarly researchers, and connoisseurs with collections. He explicitly barred entertainment seekers and novices. 'Die Kupferstichbände nur denjenigen Besuchenden abzugeben, welche entweder a.) wirklich ausübende Künstler, oder b.) ausgezeichnete Kunstverständige sind, welche die Kupferstichsammlung zu ihren gelehrten Nachforschungen und Arbeiten nöthig haben; endlich c.) solchen Kennern und Kunstliebhabern, welche selbst Sammlungen besitzen, und öfters in den Fall kommen, dieselbe zu eigener Belehrung und Lösung ihrer Zweifel brauchen zu können – Solche, die sich nur mit Bilderbeschauen unterhalten, und Anfänger, die sich im Nachzeichnen üben wollen, muß er immer abweisen.' Bartsch, 'Ueber die Verwaltung'.

⁵⁶ 'Nur der einzige Recueil de Cérémonies, weil bey einer Bibliothek öfters nach solchen Gegenständen gefragt wird, verdient fortgesetzt zu werden.' Bartsch, 'Ueber die Verwaltung'.

 ⁵⁷ 'Er betrift nicht die Reform, sondern die Fortsetzung und Erhaltung der k. k.
 Kupferstichsammlung'; ÖNB-HSS: AHB 1790/469 Austrian National Library, Vienna,
 Austria. Rudolf Rieger dated this manuscript c.1790; Rieger, *Adam von Bartsch*, 2:742.
 ⁵⁸ '1stens die Sammlung des Prinz Eugen so viel als möglich, unverletzt zu erhalten. 2stens für die Fortsetzung derselben solche Regeln aufzustellen, dies in der fernsten Zukunft noch

prints from some of the library's thematic albums, particularly those devoted to landscapes and to animals, and placed them into portfolios according to their attributions. ⁵⁹ Such reclassifications demonstrated his belief that an authored work was most useful to researchers in the context of its oeuvre, and suggested that he placed greater significance on authored prints than on genre works. Through the renovation of the collection, he defined explicit rules extrapolated from his model.

A manuscript Bartsch wrote in 1820 for his son and successor, Friedrich (1798-1873), explained his system and some of the pragmatic concerns that contributed to its formation. This set of instructions, entitled 'Concerning the Administration of the Collection of Prints of the Imperial Court Library in Vienna', divided the collection into four independent categories—musical scores, maps, portraits, and engravings—each of which followed its own set of rules. ⁶⁰ Bartsch developed practical systems for organizing the musical scores and maps, and left the creation of analytical or descriptive taxonomies to his successors. The library continuously acquired new sheet music and new maps as obligatory deposits from publishers in the Habsburg monarchy. He arranged the scores by the date of their acquisition, and recorded their titles and authors on cards for the catalogue. Bartsch divided the maps between bound volumes and loose sheets, and subdivided those categories according to size. He recommended that specialists design systematic arrangements for the scores and the maps when their respective collections grew large enough to warrant reorganization. ⁶¹

The instructions left for the library's printed portraits expressed Bartsch's primary concern for the preservation of Prince Eugene's albums. He wrote:

The curator of the collection of engravings must consider it his unalterable duty never to cut apart or to rearrange (no matter what the arrangement) any of the Eugenian albums. The arrangement of the collection established by Mariette must remain for him untouchable and sacrosanct. He owes this

sollen befolget werden können. 3stens die Manipulation des dabey angestellen Beamten zuverlässiger leichter und also befördernder herzustellen'; ÖNB-HSS: AHB 1790/469 Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.

⁵⁹ Schwartz, "Ein solcher Schatz verdient [...] besondere Pflege", 189.

⁶⁰ 'Das Kunstfach zerfälllt in folgende vier Abtheilungen, nähmlich in die Sammlung der <u>Kupferstiche.</u> der <u>Porträte.</u> der <u>Landkarten.</u> der <u>Musikalien.</u>' Bartsch, 'Ueber die Verwaltung'.

⁶¹ 'Sollte die Landkarten-Sammlung in Jahren sehr zahlreich seyn, so müßte eine systematische Einrichtung nach den Welttheilen, Reichen und den dahin gehörigen Provinzen, Kreisen, Städten u.s.w. verantsaltet werden, und zu diesem Endzwecke wären dann die nöthigen Vorbereitungsarbeiten zu unternehmen'; Bartsch, 'Ueber die Verwaltung'.

maintenance not only to the scholar who established this order, but even more to the name of the gracious and world-famous donor of the collection.⁶²

The folios of portraits, in which Mariette arranged the works according to the national origins of their subjects, constituted the core of the Imperial Library's portrait collection. Bartsch maintained the existing arrangement and placed any additional portraits into boxes. He suggested mounting the new prints into albums and integrating them into the existing order, but not until the size of the supplemental collection approached the limits of the space devoted to its storage. ⁶³ In this way, Bartsch honored Mariette's system and Prince Eugene, for whom the Mariette firm had assembled the albums.

The organization of Prince Eugene's collection profoundly shaped Bartsch's understanding of the classification of prints. He divided the library's collection of engravings into five categories. The first included the oeuvres prepared by Mariette, which divided artists by national school and ordered them roughly by date of birth. The second and third categories comprised prints that were respectively too large or too small to share the same shelves as Eugene's albums. Illustrated encyclopaedias and other compendiums formed the fourth. The final group consisted of loose prints intended to be bound into oeuvres. Before arriving in more permanent accommodations, Bartsch stored these works in portfolios with the following designations: German historical, English historical, Spanish, Dutch, Italian, French historical, French painters of animals, French architectural, German landscapist, Dutch landscapist, and French landscapist. When a group of works in these folios warranted forming an album, he mounted and bound them, and inserted the new volume into the existing order.

The division of artworks into geographical schools expressed affinities between the objects that connoisseurs associated with the essential characters of the regions' artists. The tradition of organizing collections of prints and drawings according to schools began in the sixteenth century, and became a central principle for ordering the artistic past by the end of the seventeenth century.⁶⁴ The French academician, Roger de Piles (1635-1709), defined national style as 'an idea that the

⁶² Adam von Bartsch, Concerning the Administration of the Collection of Prints of the Imperial Court Library in Vienna, Walter L. Strauss, trans. New York: Abaris Books, 1982), 9. Translation of Bartsch, 'Ueber die Verwaltung'.

⁶³ 'Sollte die Supplement-Porträtsammlung nach Verkauf vieler Jahre zu einem so bedeutenden Körper anwachsen gleich der großen und geschlossenen, welche 217 Cartons zählt: dann wären alle in den Supplement-Cartons befindlichen Porträte nach Materien oder richtiger nach Welttheilen, einzelnen Staaten und Provinzen zu ordnen'; Bartsch, 'Ueber die Verwaltung'.

⁶⁴ Ingrid R. Vermeulen, *Picturing Art History: The Rise of the Illustrated History of Art in the Eighteenth Century*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010, 108.

works made and seen in a region form in the Spirit of those who live there.'65 His descriptions of the Roman, Venetian, Lombard, German, Flemish, and French styles listed their typical traits, which he had gleaned from years of study and comparison.66 Christian von Mechel's installation at the Belvedere encouraged visitors to discern these qualities for themselves by displaying the German, Dutch, and Italian paintings in separate wings of the palace. Regarding the earliest printmakers north and south of the Alps, Bartsch wrote:

... this division is grounded less on the location of a printmaker's homeland and more on the difference of style which markedly distinguishes the works by Italian printmakers from those by Germans. It is not the same with the prints of the old masters of the Low Countries and France, whose drawing and engraving so resemble those of the Germans, that one can hardly distinguish them.⁶⁷

As the principle taxa for the classification of oeuvres, national schools divided artists based on their mutual resemblance and collective difference from artists active elsewhere.

The alphabetical and chronological arrangements of oeuvres provided different perspectives on the national schools to which their artists belonged. Both methods displayed schools' identifying characteristics and demonstrated the range of pictorial expressions generated by their artists. Each system required its users to engage with the principles that determined the placement of the oeuvres, and encouraged them learn those ideas through habitual use. The alphabet was a commonly used tool for collating information in reference works and sale catalogues. This mode of organization focused readers' attention on the spelling of artists' surnames, a trait that did not pertain to the appearance of the works or to the circumstances of their creation. In the list of Italian printmakers in Heinecken's *Idée générale*, the author placed Marcantonio Raimondi (1480-1534) immediately before his student, Marco da Ravenna (1492-1527, now called Marco Dente), but separated them both from Raimondi's other student, Agostino Veneziano (1490-1540). The relative positions of these artists' oeuvres illustrated a convention of language, and

^{65 &#}x27;Et le Goût de Nation, est une idée que les Ouvrages qui se sont ou qui se voyent en un païs, forment dans l'Esprit de ceux qui les habitent'; Roger de Piles, L'Idée du peintre parfait, London: Chez David Mortier, 1707, 82.

⁶⁶ de Piles, L'Idée du peintre parfait, 82-5.

⁶⁷ '... cette division est moins fondée sur la diversité de la patrie des graveurs que plutôt sur la différence du goût qui distingue d'une manière prononcée les pièces des graveurs italiens de celles des allemands. Il n'en est pas de même des estampes des vieux maîtres des Pay-bas et des François dont le dessein et le burin approchent tellement de ceux des allemands leurs maîtres qu'on ne sauroit guère les en distinguer'; Adam von Bartsch, *Le Peintre Graveur*, Vienna: J.V. Degen, 1808, 6:xiv-xv.

⁶⁸ Brakensiek, Vom "Theatrum Mundi", 523.

neither accounted for the similarity of their manners nor advanced the understanding of those artists' contributions to Italian printmaking. When Bartsch encountered this order at the Cabinet du Roi, he associated it with 'slovenliness and ignorance.' ⁶⁹

The chronological organization of oeuvres demonstrated the progress of printmaking within a national school. When applied to the order of oeuvres, chronology placed printmakers' works into a linear sequence from the media's emergence in a given nation to its most recent examples. Through his work in the Eugenian collection, Bartsch had learned to discern formal similarities shared by groups of artists within a school and to associate those qualities with temporal proximity. The resemblance he recognized between works by Raimondi, by Dente, and by Veneziano was the product of the judicious analysis based on empirical observation. By storing their oeuvres together, Mariette described a meaningful connection between the artists and encouraged viewers to appreciate the affinities between them.⁷⁰

The instructions Bartsch left regarding the binding of small oeuvres indicated his willingness to depart from the strict application of chronology in the organization of the Imperial Library's shelves:

There are, however, painters after whose works there have never been enough sheets to fill an entire volume. In these instances, Mariette combined several masters in a volume ... In order to fill a proper volume, one can in the future combine two, three, or more artists ... It is understood that in combining the works of such artists, the works should be done in the same manner, the oldest one should be put first, followed chronologically by the others, and the artists should be natives of the same country.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Regarding the Cabinet du Roi in Paris, Bartsch commented, 'Überhaupt sieht allerwärts Lüderlichkeit und mitunder Ignoranz hervor'; Letter from Adam von Bartsch to Gottfried van Swieten from Paris 29 January 1784; ÖNB- 8/2-14 Austrian National Library, Vienna, Austria.

⁷⁰ In his encyclopedic catalogue raisonné, *Le Peintre Graveur*, Bartsch indicated that the arrangement of the fourteenth volume, dedicated to Raimondi, Dente, and Veneziano, followed the organization of the oeuvre at the Imperial Library: 'D'ailleurs, en cédent à la force des raisons que nous venons d'alléguer en faveur de l'arrangement de norte catalogue, nous n'avons fait que suivre l'exemple de plusieurs autres grandes collections, dont nous ne citerons ici que celle de la Bibliothêque imp. et roy. de Vienne. Cette collection a été arrangée dans le principe par le célèbre *Mariette* qui par la vaste étendue de ses connoissances et de sa pratique en matière d'estampes mérite à tous égards d'être pris pour arbitre et législateur'; Adam von Bartsch, *Le Peintre Graveur*, Vienna: J.V. Degen, 1813, 14:xxviii-xxix.
⁷¹ 'Nun gibt es aber Mahler, nach denen niemahls so viele Blätter gestochen wurden, daß sie allein Einen Band ausfüllen können. In diesem Falle hatte Mariette mehrere Meister zusammen vereinigt … Um einen gehörig großen Band auszufüllen, kann man auch, in der Folgezeit zwey, drey und mehrere Künstlerwerke zusammen nehmen … Es versteht sich

When selecting oeuvres to join into the same album, he prioritized the similarity of the artist's manners over their dates of birth. Rather than independently inserting the artists' works into the established chronology of their national school, he recommended first grouping them based on resemblance. Such albums interrupted the chronological sequence to express subtle affinities between groups of artists within a national school. Through the aggregation of these volumes and monographic oeuvres, the order of the shelves schematically described the development of printmaking in each national school. Bartsch's system reified the cultural groups and developmental narratives described by Vasari, de Piles, Mechel, and others.



Figure 7 Hans Burgkmair, *Equestrian Portrait of Emperor Maximilian I.* Woodcut on paper, 32.3 x 22.7 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, New York.

The rules that determined the placement of a work in the imperial cabinet resembled the hierarchical, nested structure of Linnaean taxonomy. The taxa Bartsch defined for his son and successor in 'Concerning the Administration' situated a print in a series of increasingly general categories based on its salient features, similar to the division of species into genera, families, and kingdoms. In both systems, the categories within which an object was situated described its function and significance. The *Equestrian Portrait of Emperor Maximilian I* (fig. 7; Metropolitan

ohnehin, daß bey Vereinigung solcher Künstlerwerke immer darauf zu sehen ist, daß sie, wo möglich, von einem Lande seyn, daß sie in gleicher Gattung gearbeitet haben, und daß die älteren zuerst, dann die späteren chronologisch folgend, gestellt werden'; Bartsch, *Concerning the Administration*, 4. Translation by Walter Strauss.

Museum of Art, 20.64.24), a woodcut designed by Augsburg printmaker Hans Burgkmair (1473-1531) in the early sixteenth century, appeared in the album devoted to the artist's relief prints. Burgkmair's oeuvre appeared on the shelf following that of Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), a slightly older and vastly more famous artist whom Bartsch credited with leading the German school out of its infancy.⁷² The classification of the *Equestrian Portrait* as a woodcut by Burgkmair, from the post-Dürer period of the German school, located the work in what Smentek called the 'temporal and geographic ... grid of European art.'⁷³ Were Burgkmair not a recognized artist, Bartsch would have bound this print in the portrait collection where it would have served as a visual reference along with the images of other Habsburg Holy Roman Emperors.

Although the print cabinet at the Imperial Library did not function as a 'visible history of art', it encouraged public engagement with the historical analysis of prints. The Habsburgs' commitments to accessibility, to empircism, and to order introduced an audience, large for the time but limited by today's standards, to methods of observation, comparison, and organization still found in print rooms. While the narrative represented through Bartsch's classification system made few specific claims, it established the national schools as independent traditions and recognized the contributions of their best printmakers to the development of the medium. By compelling visitors to identify a print with its author, chronological period, and school, use of the print room accustomed them to the practice of associating the meaning of an impression with the circumstances of its creation. Private and institutional collectors in the nineteenth century applied Bartsch's taxonomy to the arrangement of their prints, and his ideas about authorship, progress, and national identity were adopted as part and parcel of his system. As prints were the primary medium of art historical inquiry prior to the refinement of photography in the last half of the century, the discipline's first generations conducted their research in part through the principles Bartsch developed.

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⁷² 'Lucas de Leyde tient dans l'histoire de la gravure le même rang parmi les Hollandois, qu'occupe Marc-Antoine Raimondi parmi les Italiens, Albert Durer parmi les Allemands. Ces trois artistes vécurent dans le même temps, c'est-à-dire, lorsque la gravure connençoit à sortir de son enfance'; Bartsch, 'Avant-propos', Catalogue raisonné de toutes les estampes qui forment l'oeuvre de Lucas de Leyde, Vienna: J. V. Degen, 1798, iii.

⁷³ Smentek, Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur, 116.

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