From the *reliure mobile* to the *Schraubband*. Collecting and storing prints in adjustable albums at the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin

Silvia Massa

When a newly acquired print enters a museum or library collection, or a rehousing project is planned, curators, conservators, and collection managers discuss together which storage system is the best to adopt. The final decision depends on several complex issues. Object preservation plays a pivotal role; other factors usually taken into account include 'access, storage space, economic and time factors, as well as a range of ethical, historical, and aesthetic considerations'.[1] Indeed, there has always been a connection between the value placed upon prints and how collectors and curators have housed them, be it in albums, boxes, or portfolios. Storage systems evolved over time as prints were used and perceived in different ways.

The study of print housing systems lies at the intersection of art history and conservation. 'Re-evaluation' of these systems' 'historical format and evidence' first began in the latter discipline, while the earliest art historical investigations of print collecting in the 1980s and 1990s addressed the topic only in a marginal way.[2] More

[1] Judith Rayner, 'Rehousing of print collections at the British Museum – the William Blake post binder project and other recent approaches', *The Paper Conservator*, 27, 2003, 35.
[2] Marjorie B. Cohn, 'Change, we hope for the better', *The Paper Conservator*, 25, 2001, 103; compare Carlo James, 'The History of Preservation of Works of Art on Paper', in Marjorie B. Cohn, ed., *Old Master Prints and Drawings. A Guide to Preservation and Conservation*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1997, 151–166. For some first mentions on print storage systems see for instance: Peter W. Parshall, 'The print collection of Ferdinand, Archduke of Tyrol', *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien*, 78:42, 1982, 177 and 182–183; Antony Griffths, 'Print collecting in Rome, Paris, and London in the early eighteenth century', *Harvard University Art Museums Bulletin*, 2:3, 1994, 37–58; Antony Griffiths, 'The Archaeology of the Print', in Christopher Baker, Caroline Elan, Genevieve

recently, research on the history of graphic art departments has brought the organisation of print collections under the spotlight.[3] A linear history of print housing and storage methods, however, cannot be pieced together. While the arrangement of prints in public museums and libraries has been marked by increased standardisation since the nineteenth century, 'there is no single history of print collecting' as far as the preceding period is concerned, 'only a series of varied and linked lineages'.[4] Indeed the print, at once image, knowledge, and communication medium,[5] has sparked a multiplicity of interests over the centuries. All sorts of print collecting and different organisation and housing methods have co-existed across time and place.

Housing systems for prints in both private and public collections have been broadly defined around one main structural difference: that of being mounted into bound books, or left unbound.[6] Prints mounted onto pages that are bound together between boards constitute what is generally referred to as a print album,[7] and fall into the former group. In the latter, the prints are kept loosely. Whether unmounted, pasted onto backing paper, or on a sunk mount, loose prints can be piled up in cabinet shelves or drawers, boxes, portfolios, or folders. By analysing print albums that remain intact to this day or documenting dispersed collections, scholars have

---

Warwick, eds, *Collecting Prints and Drawings in Europe, c. 1500–1750,* Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003, 9–28.

[3] See for instance: Stefan Brakensiek, *Vom 'Theatrum mundi' zum 'Cabinet des Estampes'. Das Sammeln von Druckgraphik in Deutschland 1565–1821*, Hildesheim: Georg Holms Verlag, 2003; Christien Melzer, *Von der Kunstkammer zum Kupferstich-Kabinett: Zur Frühgeschichte des Graphiksammelns in Dresden (1560–1738)*, Hildesheim: Georg Holms Verlag, 2010; Laura Aldovini, 'Luigi Malaspina di Sannazzaro and the "Accessories" for a Print Collection', in Andrea M. Gáldy, Sylvia Heudecker, eds, *Collecting Prints and Drawings*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018, 203–218; Silvia Massa '"Il più bello gabinetto delle stampe che esiste": a (failed) project for the Ortalli collection of prints at the Biblioteca Palatina in Parma', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 24, 2021. For an overview of storing systems see Antony Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography. An Introduction to European Printmaking 1550–1820*, London: The British Museum Press, 2016, 411–426; and, for the conservation perspective, the seminal manual by Joanna M. Kosek, ed., *Conservation Mounting for Prints and Drawings. A Manual Based on Current Practice at the British Museum*, London: Archetype Books, 2006.

[4] Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, 445.

[5] Marie Isabelle Vogel, *Die Klebebände der Fürstlich Waldeckschen Hofbibliothek Arolsen. Wissenstransfer und -transformation in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2015, 31.

[6] Conceptually distinct forms of keeping prints such as framing or pasting on walls or other objects will not be addressed here (see Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, 415–420, for an overview).

[7] The phrase 'book of prints' is way too broad and may include other kinds of prints joined by some sort of binding but not meant as a collection. Examples include extra-illustrated books (on extra illustration see Lucy Peltz, *Facing the Text. Extra-illustration, Print Culture, and Society in Britain, 1769–1840*, San Marino, Cal.: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens, 2017, 1–50) and seventeenth-century print series such as landscapes or biblical subjects that were conceived and published to be bound in sequence and sold as a complete set (again Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, 423, for an overview).

outlined a range of historical and aesthetic factors that impacted the inception, utility, and significance of print collections, whether bound or unbound.[8] Both bound and unbound housing systems have existed since at least the second quarter of the sixteenth century. It is generally agreed that the age of print albums—usually bulky, and sewn along the spine between leather-, parchment-, or marbled paper-covered boards so as to resemble the other bound books of their day—waned by the end of the eighteenth century, while storage in loose sheets went on to become prevalent in public collections.[9]

How then does another kind of print album—similarly bulky, but with leaves fastened to the spine by screws that can be removed to allow the arrangement of the leaves to be adjusted—fit into the picture? First introduced in France by the mid-nineteenth century,[10] this storage system could be considered as the forerunner of the commercially produced screw-post binders for prints used in the British Museum and other collections;[11] but very little is known about its inception. To address this gap, the present study introduces evidence of the use of adjustable albums in the second half of the nineteenth century and offers suggestions as to how they have functioned within their private or institutional environments. It does so by focusing on the material and historical aspects of a large group of such print albums held at the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin, where they are known as *Schraubbände*.

Schraubbände at the Kupferstichkabinett: an overview

The great bulk of prints at the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin are accommodated in Solander-type portfolio boxes, in paper or cardboard folders, or in print albums

---

[8] Recently investigated case studies of bound print collections include Marie Isabelle Vogel, 'Sammlungsobjekte zwischen Bild und Buch. Die Klebebände in der Fürstlich Waldeckschen Hofbibliothek in Arolsen', in Andreas Gardt, Mireille Schnyder, Jürgen Wolf, eds, *Buchkultur und Wissensvermittlung in Mittelalter und Früher Neuer Zeit*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011, 23–40; Roberta Cristofori, 'L'insigne ornamento', in Roberta Cristofori, Maria Grazia De Rubeis, eds, *L'Insigne Ornamento, La Raccolta di Stampe di Massimiliano Ortalli nella Biblioteca Palatina di Parma*, Parma: Monte Università Parma Editore, 2014, 9–58; Joyce Zelen, 'The reconstructed print album of Johann Georg I. Zobel von Giebelstadt', in Gáldy, Heudecker, eds, *Collecting Prints and Drawings*, 121–137. Hannah Lehner, '"Cut and Paste" in der Frühen Neuzeit. Aspekte von Geschichte, Materialität und Funktion des Klebebands', in Ute Schneider, ed., *Imprimatur. Ein Jahrbuch für Bücherfreunde*, 26, 2019, 11–38, provides instead a broader overview on bound albums. On the rationale behind loose print collections see Stefan Brakensiek, 'Kennerschaft aus Kassetten. Die Loseblatt-Sammlung als offenes Modell zur nutzbringenden Organisation einer Graphiksammlung in der Frühen Neuzeit', in Stefan Brakensiek, Michel Polfer, eds, *Graphik als Spiegel der Malerei. Meisterwerke der Reproduktionsgraphik 1500–1830*, Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2009, 33–47.

[9] Lehner, '"Cut and Paste" in der Frühen Neuzeit', 31.

10 See below, section 'Achille Devéria and 'his' *reliure mobile'*.

[11] Rayner, 'Rehousing of print collections at the British Museum'; Kosek, ed., *Conservation Mounting for Prints and Drawings,* 79; see also the entry "Schraubband" in Gustav Moessner, *Buchbinder ABC*, Bergisch Gladbach: Zanders Feinpapiere, 1981.

referred to as *Schraubbände* (literally: 'screw volumes'). There are around 900 albums of this kind, stored horizontally in dedicated cabinets.[12] *Schraubbände* are grouped by format: the majority (575) come in the so-called A-format and measure 54.5 x 40 cm; B-format albums (175) measure 52 x 67 cm and C-format ones 106 x 77 cm (150).[13] Within broad chronological categories (before 1800, nineteenth century, twentieth century), the albums are arranged by national schools (German, French, Italian, English, Dutch, Spanish, Russian[14]) and, within each school, they are usually arranged alphabetically by engraver regardless of technique. Each album comprises either the work of one engraver, a family of engravers, or a relatively small number of prints by several different artists. Generally, prints by one artist are distributed according to Adam von Bartsch' *Le Peintre-Graveur* or to the relevant catalogue raisonné.[15]

[12] During the 1939–45 war, to safely allocate the Kupferstichkabinett collection to different storage facilities, some *Schraubbände* (perhaps all) were unmounted so that space and weight could be saved by storing the prints only. The album covers remained behind in the former Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum on the Museum Insel, where the Kupferstichkabinett was housed. When Berlin was divided between the GDR and FRG, the collections of the former Royal Museums were split too. Some of the prints formerly contained in the adjustable albums landed in the Kupferstichkabinett in West Berlin, in the former Museum Dahlem, without their album covers. The works that had been stored in East Berlin could, however, be reunited with their *Schraubbände*. Once the collections were reunified in 1993 at the Kulturforum, some of the unbound prints from the Museum Dahlem were installed back into *Schraubbände* chosen among those which had not suffered war damage. A side-by-side account of the events at the two museums in Alexander Dückers, ed., *Das Berliner Kupferstichkabinett. Ein Handbuch zur Sammlung*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1994, 25–42. On the 'twin museums' in Berlin see Petra Winter, *'Zwillingsmuseen' im geteilten Berlin. Zur Nachkriegsgeschichte der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin 1945–1958, Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 50, 2008 (Beiheft).
[13] I owe the exact counting to Josefine Werthmann, 'Rückführung von Graphiken in ihre Schraubbände. Am Beispiel der Radierung 'A Dancing Martins Ball' von Thomas Rowlandson', undated internal report, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.
[14] It seems reasonable to think that the three albums labelled 'R' (for Russian) may have been compiled in the Kupferstichkabinett in East Berlin between the 1960s and 1970s. One of them bears the unusual label 'W. Timm', perhaps Werner Timm (1927–1999) who directed the museum between 1961 and 1967. The album contains eighteenth- and nineteenth-century engravings mostly depicting Russian sovereigns, religious and military figures, and landscape views. Judging from the inventory numbers and the information provided in the inventory book, these sheets belong to the so-called early holdings (that is, acquired before 1877); some of them even come from one of the founding collections of the museum, that of Karl Ferdinand Friedrich von Nagler (1770–1846), acquired in 1835. Most of the sheets in the album were first inventoried in 1975; by this time Timm did not work at the Kupferstichkabinett anymore. The album labelled 'G. Hippius' contains lithographic portraits by the Estonian artist Gustav Adolf Hippius (1792–1856), who was active in Saint Petersburg too. The third album is labelled 'A-Z' and comprises lithographs with military scenes, and engraved portraits and landscapes by artists born in Russia or who were active there during the eighteenth century.
[15] There are however some exceptions, especially in albums supposedly compiled after the 1939–45 war and incorporating works from the twentieth century. Also, in *Schraubbände*

Figs. 1–2: *Schraubbände* stored in cabinets, 2022. Berlin: Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin © Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin / Silvia Massa

The covers of these albums are made of robust cardboard covered in fabric and are joined to a wooden spine mostly covered in leather. The spines show slight variations in design: most are beige; some are red, black, or dark brown. Most of them are embellished with paired horizontal fillets, spaced so as to suggest the raised cords of traditional sewn bindings (figs. 1–2). Since after the 1939–45 war the prints were relocated within albums that were not necessarily the same as those that housed them before the conflict, it is now impossible to determine whether there used to be a correspondence between album design and content at the time of compilation. Today, the latter is indicated by a rectangular label pasted on the upper area of the spine; in many cases, traces of earlier labels can be seen underneath.

Prints are mounted along their upper and left edges to the rectos of the support pages, whose manufacturing can be traced back at least to the former paper mills Spechthausen and Zanders.[16] Some of the prints are pasted directly on the

---

devoted to artists from earlier centuries, the order may deviate from that of Bartsch or the catalogue raisonné. To give just one example: the album containing engravings by Stefano della Bella (1610–1664) features a group of ornamental prints distributed on subsequent pages, prints for which, however, the catalogue raisonné numbers are not sequential. This is probably because the album was compiled before the publication of Alessandro de Vesme's catalogue in 1906 (Alessandro de Vesme, *Le Peintre-Graveur italien, ouvrage faisant suite au Peintre-Graveur de Bartsch*, Milan: Ulrico Hoepli, 1906, 66–332), whose entry numbers were only later appended next to the prints.

[16] The holdings have not been viewed systematically; the only watermark encountered so far is contained in one of the 'Russian albums' and points to the Spechthausen paper mill (Brandenburg, active 1765–1957). The empty pages stored in the Kupferstichkabinett for additions to the *Schraubbände* bear instead a handwritten note that relates to the Zanders paper mill (North Rhine-Westphalia, active 1829–2021).

support page; others have V-hinges.[17] Larger-sized prints are individually mounted, while up to eight smaller prints are displayed together on one page. Groups of prints are arranged symmetrically (figs. 3–4). Inventory numbers are written in pencil onto the backing pages, usually just below the lower right of the print; sometimes catalogue raisonné or other numbers as well as attribution remarks are visible, too.[18]

Figs. 3–4: Displays of prints on the pages of two *Schraubbände*, 2022. Berlin: Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin © Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin / Silvia Massa

At a first glance, these albums' outer design and inner display strategies recall the elegant folio albums created before the nineteenth century for well-known collectors such as Michel de Marolles (1600–1681) and lesser-known ones as Massimiliano Ortalli (1742–1833).[19] The crucial difference is that the backing sheets

[17] In four albums (prints by Adam von Bartsch), the few with a red spine (compare fig. 2), a thicker beige cardboard is used instead (fig. 4). The verso of the pages shows traces of glue from former mounts, perhaps a testimony to a trial-and-error process when compiling the first albums of this kind.

[18] This includes the so-called 'Russian number', an inventory number preceded by the abbreviation Инв (Russian for 'Inv') assigned when the *Schraubbände*-prints stored in areas occupied by the Red Army in 1945 were confiscated and transported to the Soviet Union as looted art. The re-joining of the prints with their album covers in the Kupferstichkabinett of Berlin East as described in note 12 must have happened in or after 1958, when the Soviet Union returned 1,5 million works of art to the German Democratic Republic (see Dückers, *Das Berliner Kupferstichkabinett*, 25, 28–29; Dagmar Korbacher, eds, *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin: Dokumentation der Verluste. Kupferstichkabinett, deutsch und niederländische Zeichnungen des 15. bis 18. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 8, Berlin: Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2010).

19 Stefan Brakensiek, 'Sammeln, Ordnen und Erkennen. Frühneuzeitliche Druckgraphiksammlungen und ihre Funktion als Studien- und Erkenntnisorte; das Beispiel der Sammlung Michel de Marolles' (1600–1681)', in Robert Felfe and Angelika Lozar, eds, *Frühneuzeitliche Sammlungspraxis und Literatur*, Berlin: Lukas, 2006, 130–162. On Ortalli: Cristofori, 'L'insigne ornamento'.

on which the prints are mounted are not sewn together at the spine but instead are held together by screws. The basic principle is simple, and readers will be familiar with a variety of items bound in this way and usually known as screw post binders: menus, newspapers, photo albums, scrapbooks, or sample books of upholstery fabric or leather.[20] As in traditional, sewn book structures, the outer covers of a *Schraubband* are linked to the spine with a hinge or crease. The backing sheets that form the pages of the book block, however, are not sewn or glued to the inlay of the spine. Along the left side of the spine there is a relatively wide strip, with a square metal rod coated in fabric attached to it. Three screws are inserted through corresponding holes in the rod and secured on the opposite side on a second metal rod, identical to the first one but not fixed: when the screws are removed, this second rod can be removed too. The backing sheets are squeezed in between the two rods and the screws make the connection very stable (fig. 5). The screws and rods are not visible when the album is open, and the pages can lay flat thanks to thinner, but very tough paper strips hinged to the left margin held in the spine.

Figure 5: The two metal rods in a *Schraubband* hold the backing pages together, 2022. Berlin: Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin © Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Debating bound and unbound print collections

The first obvious advantage of these adjustable albums is that by loosening the screws and disengaging the binding, mounted prints can be easily added and removed. This facilitates exhibition, digital reproduction, or restoration of the prints, and permits integration of new acquisitions. Technically the prints could be also rearranged in a different order, but in practice this rarely happens.[21] All of these

20 On screw post binders see Elaine Reidy Schlefer, 'One-piece post binding with interior hinges', *The Book and Paper Group Annual*, 13, 1994 (https://cool.culturalheritage.org/coolaic/sg/bpg/annual/v13/bp13-09.html, last accessed 15 August 2022).
21 If a newly acquired print is not considered of sufficient significance to merit passe-partout mounting, then it is stored in a *Schraubband*. The albums do not have blank pages for such

processes belong to the everyday life of a public collection of graphic art, but opportunities and limits offered by an 'open' unbound versus a 'fixed' bound collection have been of concern since the beginning of print collecting history. There is plenty of material and theoretical evidence in this regard. Bound albums (like the one shown in Daniel Chodowiecki's etching, fig. 6) offered better protection, for example from dust, and allowed prints to be kept in a given, meaningful order. But these advantages came at a cost. Sometimes whole albums had to be broken up in order to rearrange and update their organisation, or to sell individual sheets.[22] What is more, prints in bound volumes often had their margins removed to accommodate more prints on a page, or their corners and edges lost when they were remounted.

Fig. 6: Daniel Chodowiecki (1726–1801), *Der Kupferstich Liebhaber,* 1780. Etching, 11.7 x 6.6 cm. Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum © Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (CC0)

Bound albums thus presented huge problems for collectors, especially those who assembled enormous amounts of prints like de Marolles or Lord Richard Fitzwilliam (1745–1816), who each owned more than 500 print volumes.[23] But

additions, but a batch of fresh pages are stored in the museum for this purpose. When selected for exhibitions, prints are not individually removed from the album but instead the whole backing page is extracted. The sheet receives a temporary mount to allow framing; after the exhibition, it is put back into the album. Whenever a new art work is inserted in a *Schraubband*, or replaced after exhibition or digitization, care is taken to maintain the existing order and internal arrangement of the albums. (Just like other museums do with bound albums, such as the Albertina: there the individual print is removed and then it resumes its position. I thank Eva Michel for pointing this out to me.)

[22] James, 'The History of Preservation of Works of Art on Paper', 158–160 and 165–166.

[23] James, 'The History of Preservation of Works of Art on Paper', 151–152. On Fitzwilliam's

writings that addressed questions of space and flexibility in print collections did not advise in favour of bound or unbound storage simply for practical reasons, as serious collectors' preferences could have far more profound motivations. A systematic review of the theoretical discussion around reception and arrangement of print collections falls outside the scope of this paper, but the following outline hints at its complex evolution.

The first complete statement on the matter was given in 1565 by Samuel Quiccheberg in his *Inscriptiones vel titvli theatri amplissimi.* While celebrating prints together with drawings for their variety, Quiccheberg included them among the contents of an ideal encyclopaedic museum and spoke in favour of their unbound organisation on shelves.[24] As Brakensiek illustrated, the loose arrangement of some Early Modern print collections, rather than reflecting the absence of a collecting or storage rationale, was informed by the principle of the 'open arrangement and growth' of knowledge itself, which a print collection could serve as an image archive ('promptuarium imaginarium').[25] Prints bound in books could also be part of an encyclopaedic collection as were, for instance, the bound prints kept in the Kunstkammer at Ambras Castle.[26] But rather than the open growth of knowledge, display strategies in bound books typically reflected specific narratives appropriate to the collections of which they formed a part, including, in the Ambras Kunstkammer, the encyclopaedic power and prestige of the owner. In such cases, carefully composed display strategies could dictate the arrangement of prints on the page and contribute another layer of meaning to the collection, that of a 'medial staging' of knowledge embodying dynamics of power and prestige.[27]

When a connoisseurial approach to print collecting became predominant at the end of the seventeenth century, a loose flexible arrangement came to be preferred. Loose prints had more potential to refine the eye because, as Roger De Piles remarked:

---

collection see Eleonor Ling, *Prized Possessions. Lord Fitzwilliam's Album of Prints After Adam Elsheimer*, exhib. cat. (Cambridge 2010), Cambridge, UK: The Fitzwilliam Museum, 2010.

[24] Harriet Roth, *Der Anfang der Museumslehre in Deutschland. Das Traktat 'Inscriptiones vel tituli theatri amplissimi' von Samuel Quiccheberg*, Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2000, 139–141.

[25] Samuel Quiccheberg, *Inscriptiones vel titvli theatri amplissimi, complectentis rerum vniuersitatis singulas materias et imagines eximias etc.*, Munich: Adamus Berg, 1565, fol. d iiii. Compare Brakensiek, 'Kennerschaft aus Kassetten', 34–35; Roth, *Der Anfang der Museumslehre in Deutschland*, 139.

[26] Lehner, '"Cut and Paste" in der Frühen Neuzeit', 24.

[27] 'Sie sind als spezielle Form der Materialisierung und der konzeptuellen Vermittlung zu sehen—und damit als ein eigener Kultur- und Wissensraum, den der Sammler anhand seiner Auswahlkriterien medial inszeniert.' Vogel, 'Sammlungsobjekte zwischen Bild und Buch', 27. See also Christien Melzer, 'Zur Theorie der Druckgraphik in Gabriel Kaltermarckts *Bedencken wie eine Kunst Cammer aufzurichten sein möchte* (1587)', in Markus Castor, Jasper Kettner, Christien Melzer, Claudia Schnitzer, eds, *Druckgraphik. Zwischen Reproduktion und Invention*, Berlin and Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2010, 232.

'you can easily see the works of the different Masters on a table, form an idea of them, judge them by comparison'.[28]

Fig. 7: Frontispiece from Siegmund Jacob Apin, *Anleitung wie man die Bildnisse berühmter und gelehrter Männer mit Nutzen sammlen und denen dagegen gemachten Einwendungen gründlich begegnen soll*, 1728. Nürnberg: Adam Jonathan Felßecker.

There was still, however, no defined canon of how individuals ought to collect and store their prints. Many—Antoine-Joseph Dézallier d'Argenville (1680–1765), André Felibien (1619–1695), and Edmé-François Gersaint (1694–1750) among them—simply acknowledged the wide variety of collectors and noted that they were free to do as they pleased.[29] In 1728, Siegmund Jacob Apin's (1693–1732) description of his collection provides another testimony of the intertwined practical, scholarly, and aesthetic issues at stake: Apin stored his loose prints in boxes made to resemble folio books, so that they could fill library shelves and thus represent power and knowledge in the same manner as bound prints (fig. 7).[30]

[28] 'Au lieu, que par le moyen des Estampes, vous pouvez sur une table voir sans peine les Ouvrages des différens Maîtres, en former une Idée, en juger par comparaison', Roger De Piles, *L'Abrégé de la vie des peintres ... avec un traité du peintre parfait*, Paris: François Muguet, 1699, 83. Compare Brakensiek, 'Kennerschaft aus Kassetten', 44. Eighteenth-century French writings that discuss prints are reviewed by Norberto Gramaccini, *Theorie der französischen Druckgraphik im 18. Jahrhundert: eine Quellenanthologie* (Neue Berner Schriften zur Kunst 2), Bern: Peter Lang, 1997.
[29] Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, 444; Vogel, *Die Klebebände der Fürstlich Waldeckschen Hofbibliothek Arolsen*, 29.
30 'Wollte man aber auch seine Portraits zwischen Pappier legen, dass einerley Grösse hat, und solche in verschiedenen darzu verfertigten hölzernen Capsuln, oder starcke Deckeln von Pappier zwischen seine übrige Bücher stellen, so sind sie als *Volumina* bequem zu

The different views concerning print storage outlined so far stemmed from private collecting environments, and as such they rarely reckoned with the use of prints by a public wider than a restricted élite.[31] This changed with the increase of accessible and publicly maintained collections. Before the sunk mount for individually mounted collection items became standard in most museums,[32] writings commented upon bound and loose prints in relation to handling and perception by study room users. Carl Heinrich von Heineken (1707–1791) was concerned that loose prints would be shuffled when they landed in the public's hands.[33] Joseph Heller (1798–1849), on the contrary, regretted having so often encountered prints in public collections that were fixed in settings that did not allow comparison by laying them next to one another.[34] Abbot Pietro Zani (1748–1821) even brought preservation into the discussion. In his *Discorso dei metodi diversi, che comunemente si tengono, e si posson tenere nell'ordinare un gabinetto, o uno studio, o una raccolta di stampe*, he observed how study room users examined large volumes of prints by holding them flat open on a table. This led many to recklessly rest their

---

gebrauchen und zu erhalten, auch in einer Bibliotheque mit Vergnügen anzusehen', Jacob Siegmund Jacob Apin, *Anleitung wie man die Bildnüsse berühmter und gelehrter Männer mit Nutzen sammlen und denen dagegen gemachten Einwendungen gründlich begegnen soll*, Nürnberg: Adam Jonathan Felßecker, 1728, 47–48. See also Brakensiek, 'Kennerschaft aus Kassetten', 40–41.

[31] Sociable viewing of private graphic art collections is a largely uncharted field. For an early remark see Giulio Mancini, *Considerazioni sulla pittura* [1617–1621], in Luigi Salerno, Adriana Marucchi, eds, 2 vols, Rome: Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, 1956–1957, vol. I, 43, and Michael Bury, 'Giulio Mancini and the Organisation of a Print Collection in Early Seventeenth-Century Italy', in Baker, Elan, Warwick, eds, *Collecting Prints and Drawings in Europe*, 79–84. Hints are also provided by Carlo James, 'Old Master Prints and Drawings: an Art-Historical Survey of Collecting and of Preservation Methods' (1992), in Margaret Holben Ellis, ed., *Historical Perspectives in the Conservation of Art on Paper*, Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 2014, 390.

[32] See Kosek, ed., *Conservation Mounting for Prints and Drawings,* 8.

[33] 'Allein, ihre Arbeit in großen Umschlägen von starken Papier, oder in Pappendeckeln aufzubehalten, ist den großen Cabinetten, die öffentlich besucht werden, gar nicht anzurathen. Ich sage dieß aus Erfahrung, und weis, was für Verwirrung in Verlegung der Blätter entsteht, wenn man die Werke, ungebunden, so vielen Liebhabern und neubegierigen Fremden vorlegen muß', Carl Heinrich von Heineken, 'Anmerkungen über die Recension der Idée générale im 13. Bande der neuen Biblioteck der S. W.', *Neue Bibliothek der schönen Wissenschaften und freyen Künste*, 16, 1774, 31–32.

[34] 'Diese au einzelne Bogen gezogene Blätter haben noch den Vortheil, dass … die Blätter zum Studium nebeneinander hinlegen, und vergleichen kann…. Diese Vortheile hat man alle nicht, wenn die Blätter in Bücher geklebt sind, welches bei öffentlichen Sammlungen häufig der Fall ist', Joseph Heller, *Praktische Handbuch für Kupferstichsammler*, vol. 1, Bamberg: C.F. Kunz, 1823, 22–23. Compare Nadja Lang, '*"Welches Äussere man einer Kupferstich-Sammlung geben soll". -* Aufbewahrung und Präsentation von Graphik', in Stefan Brakensiek, Anette Michels, Anne-Kathrin Sors, eds, *Copy.Right. Adam von Bartsch. Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 251–252.

arms on the pages and thus on the prints, something that could be avoided by placing loose prints on angled bookstands.[35]

Achille Devéria and 'his' *reliure mobile*

Fig. 8: Achille Devéria (1800–1857), *Self-Portrait*, 1830–1840. Lithograph, 44.7 x 31 cm. Chicago: The Art Institute of Chicago © The Art Institute of Chicago (CC0)

Adjustable print albums, which retain the advantages of bound albums while mitigating their disadvantages, do not appear until the mid-nineteenth century. They are first documented in the collection of the artist Achille Devéria (1800–1857), *conservateur adjoint* from 1848 and then director of the Cabinet des Estampes at the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris (fig. 8). Primarily active as a lithographer until his appointment at the Bibliothèque, Devéria began collecting prints in the early 1820s. Over the years he assembled 'a general history governed by chronological order according to each geographical area of the world'.[36] Encompassing prints depicting

[35] 'di provvedere nella Biblioteca diversi leggj di misura adattata al foglio, fatto in maniera che … serviranno ad essere lontani d'ogni timore che … qualunque altra persona possa offendere la stampa coll'appoggiarvi sopra le braccia, come accade di vedere in quelle che son legate nei libri', Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, ms. Parmense 3641, Pietro Zani, *Discorso dei metodi diversi, che comunemente si tengono, e si posson tenere nell'ordinare un gabinetto, o uno studio, o una raccolta di stampe*, 7. This *Discorso* is the third out of four that Zani prepared as attachment to the second part of his *Enciclopedia metodica e ragionata delle belle arti* (1817–1824) entitled *Catalogo ragionato universale delle stampe classiche antiche e moderne.* Compare Roberta Cristofori, *Agostino Annibale e Ludovico Carracci. Le Stampe della Biblioteca Palatina di Parma*, Bologna: Editrice Compositori, 2005, XLIX–LXIV.

[36] 'la collection d'estampes et de dessins que j'ai réunis depuis trente ans en une histoire générale à laquelle préside l'ordre chronologique dans chaque circonscription géographique du globe', Paris, Archives nationales, F/17/20693, Pièce 24, in Gérard Jubert, 'Achille Devéria,

historical and mythological subjects, portraits, regional costumes, monuments, maps, and even autograph documents, Devéria's collection emphasized breadth of subject matter and not the standing of the printmaker or the quality of the impressions. While this visual repertoire might have begun as a model book for Devéria's artistic practice, a desire to document the world, past and present, became an end in itself.[37] He therefore housed it so that any number of additional prints could be inserted wherever they might belong, and thus provide new content or fill in existing gaps.

Upon presenting his collection to the French State in 1848, right after his long-awaited appointment to the Cabinet des Estampes, Devéria remarked that approximately half of his 500 print albums were already installed in *reliures mobiles* (adjustable bindings). [38] He did not share other details concerning this binding method, but he must have realised that he could not pursue his collecting scope using traditionally bound print albums. At the same time, a system of loose sheets in folders or cassettes would have compromised the sequential order required for easy retrieval and correct understanding of the visual information provided in the albums. The disadvantages of loose sheets were particularly relevant once Devéria set his sights on a public resting place for his collection. Many of his contemporaries assembled prints to illustrate the history of painting or printmaking and arranged for their albums to live on as a reference tool for art students. Devéria instead aimed at a more general audience, such as 'a painter or a historian', as he wrote in a memorandum, whom his world image atlas would help 'to handle any historical topic' by 'immediately surround[ing]' him with 'all documents of an earlier age'.[39] That potential users could literally surround themselves with relevant prints reflected the combination of organisational structure and flexibility inherent in the *reliure mobile*.

Writing to the French Minister of Education Hippolyte Fortoul (1811–1856) in 1855, Devéria claimed to be himself the inventor of the *reliure mobile*.[40] Previous

---

conservateur du département des Estampes de la Bibliothèque impériale', *Nouvelles de l'Estampe*, 175, 2001, 9.

[37] Laure Beaumont-Maillet, 'Les collectionneurs au Cabinet des Estampes', *Nouvelles de l'Estampe*, 132, 1993, 14.

[38] Paris, Archives nationales, F/17/20693, Pièce 32, in Jubert, 'Achille Devéria', 7.

[39] 'Lorsqu'un peintre ou un historien se propose de traiter une matière historique, combien de volumes ne doit-il pas ouvrir pour rencontrer quelques pièces analogues à l'objet qui l'occupe? … La classification de M. Devéria permet de s'entourer immédiatement de tous les documents d'une époque antérieure, de même qu'aujourd'hui chacun de nous est entouré de tous les documents du temps présent', *Note sur la collection d´estampes et de dessins réunis en une histoire générale par M. Achille Devéria*, in Jubert, 'Achille Devéria', 23 (Appendice I).

[40] 'L´introduction de la reliure mobile dont l´invention m'appartient', Paris, Archives nationales, F/17/20693, Pièce 16, in Jubert, 'Achille Devéria', 12. Compare Marie de Laubier, 'Maxime Préaud et la Réserve des Estampes', *Revue de la BNF*, 2:32, 2009, 55–65 (https://doi.org/10.3917/rbnf.032.0055, last accessed 15 August 2022); Laure Beaumont-Maillet, 'Le Département des estampes et de la photographie de la Bibliothèque Nationale de France et sa Collection de Dessins: Aperçu Historique et Descriptif', in Laure Beaumont-

literature has reiterated this primacy, but more likely Devéria adapted an existing binding system and skilfully designed a *reliure mobile* suitable for print albums. Indeed, a binding system called *reliure mobile donnant lieu à un nouveau système de publicité et à divers autres usages* had already been patented by Jacques-François Adam in 1827; before Devéria claimed to use *reliures mobiles* for his own collection seven more models had been patented in France.[41] Presented at the Exposition des produits de l'industrie française in 1827, Adam's expandable binding allowed users to 'insert leaves in a printed or handwritten volume at will'[42] and, because of this, it promised to have 'very important consequences for science, legislation, and commerce in general'.[43] The first users, however (among them Johann Wolfgang von Goethe), had to contend with the labour-intensive requirements of Adam's binding. The adjustable spine consisted of gut strings and brass wire in place of the sewing structure of a traditional codex, and a strap with buckle and spike to allow for changes in the thickness of the book block.[44] Compared to Adam's design, Devéria's binding—which functioned using rods and screws placed inside the book spine, just like the *Schraubbände* in Berlin—was much easier to use.

Reliures mobiles at the Bibliothèque nationale and beyond

It is hardly surprising, then, that Devéria's *reliure mobile* could be successfully applied on a large scale at the Cabinet des Estampes of the Bibliothèque nationale. He was unable to transfer his own collection to the Bibliothèque (this happened only after his death),[45] but in his capacity as *conservateur adjoint* and then as director

---

Maillet, Gisèle Lambert, Jocelyn Bouquillard, eds, *Dessins de la Renaissance, collections de la Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département des estampes et de la photographie*, exhib. cat. (Barcelona-Paris 2003–2004), Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2003, 16.

[41] Institut national de la propriété industrielle, Cote 1BA572, Déposant Adam, Jacques-François, Date de dépôt 30/06/1827.

[42] 'Au moyen de ces reliures, on peut intercaler à volonté des feuilles dans un volume imprimé ou manuscrit', Héricart de Thury, M. Migneron, *Rapport sur les produits de l'industrie française*, Paris: Imprimerie Royale, 1828, 479.

[43] 'Parmi les nombreux produits de l'industrie française qui font l'objet de l'exposition de 1827, on remarque une invention qui doit avoir des conséquences très-importantes pour les sciences, la législation et le commerce en général' (from a printed piece of ephemera entitled *Notice sur une nouvelle reliure*, which describes Adam's *reliure mobile*. This leaflet, bound together in a small volume with five others, was on sale as of 2021 at the antiquarian Charles B. Wood, *Catalogue* no. 179, item no. 13).

[44] Frank Sellinat, 'Goethe und die "reliure mobile"', Blog Klassik Stiftung Weimar, 4 November 2021 (https://blog.klassik-stiftung.de/goethe-und-die-reliure-mobile/, last accessed 15 August 2022); Frank Sellinat, 'Goethe und der "bewegliche Einband". Auf der Suche nach einem frühen Ordnungsmittel in Weimar', *Einband Forschung*, 41, 2017, 27–36. A simplified *reliure mobile* suitable for prints among other things was patented in 1834 by the paper seller Marie-Emile Frichet (Institut National de la Propriété Industrielle, Cote 1BA4774, Déposant Frichet, Marie-Emile, Date de dépôt 3/06/1834).

[45] By Devéria's death in 1857 his print collection counted 560 volumes and it was bought for a very reduced price by the Bibliothèque nationale in June 1858, Jubert, 'Achille Devéria', 18–21.

Devéria introduced 'his' adjustable binding to different sections of the Cabinet des Estampes, where they are still in use.[46] Just like he did for his own collection, Devéria organised the Cabinet's prints, including portraits as well as historical and topographical subjects, in *reliures mobiles*, of which six different formats were made for the library. This section was the largest of the Cabinet des Estampes and increased daily at a fast pace, since the *dépôt légal* had underpinned print acquisitions since the mid-seventeenth century. The ease of removing individual prints from the *reliures mobiles* might have hindered supervision and inventory operations,[47] but the advantages outweighed the possible objections. Devéria's adjustable albums avoided the impossible task of having to decide in advance how much space prints would need in the future; they took up less storage space (two rooms where prints had been laying loose were liberated); and they provided easy access for reading room users, as Devéria explained in detail.[48]

Adjustable bindings, in varied designs and formats to suit different purposes, continued to be produced in the second half of the nineteenth century both in France and abroad.[49] Devéria's model, however, quickly established itself as the most suitable for prints. Demand for it rose rapidly after the French bookbinder Jean Weber, who manufactured albums for the library based on Devéria's design,[50] patented the *reliure mobile* and presented it at the London Great Exhibition of 1851.

[46] Henri Delaborde, *Le Département des estampes à la Bibliothèque nationale: notice historique; suivie d'un Catalogue des estampes exposées dans les salles de ce département*, Paris: E. Plon, 1875, 158–160; Joseph Guibert, *Le Cabinet des estampes de la Bibliothèque nationale: Histoire des collections*, Paris: Maurice Le Garrec, 1926, 38, 139–166; René Hardy, 'Principes de montage des documents en feuille du Département des estampes et de la photographie de Bibliothèque nationale de France', papers of the VIII. IADA Congress, Tübingen 1995, 200 (https://iada-home.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Tubingen_1995_Hardy_199.pdf, last accessed 15 August 2022).
[47] Guibert, *Le Cabinet des estampes de la Bibliothèque nationale*, 165.
[48] 'L'introduction de la reliure mobile … m'a permis de mettre immédiatement en service un choix des pièces des dépôts de cinq ans, toutes les pièces des dons, acquisitions et transmissions de ce même nombre d'années: 600 suppléments d'œuvres de maîtres, tous les résidus non portés qui encombraient depuis 30 ans deux salles entières. Ces diverses séries forment un ensemble de 900 volumes de divers formats, depuis le grand monde jusqu'au petit folio. Toutes les pièces de la Réserve qui étaient livrées flottantes ont été montées en reliure mobile et estampillées', Paris, Archives nationales, F/17/20693, Pièce 16, in Jubert, 'Achille Devéria', 12.
[49] See *L'Univers illustré: journal hebdomadaire*, 1364, 14 May 1881, 306; *Revue de la reliure française, de la papeterie et de l'imprimerie*, 1, 5 May 1890, 5. Having heard of adjustable bindings 'advantageously used in great foreign libraries', on 23 February 1836 the British Museum Assistant Librarian Anthony Panizzi (1797–1879) suggested that the Museum Trustees make use of the *reliure mobile* for the Catalogue of Printed Books. Indeed, the system was adopted in the library for catalogue pages ('Report from Mr. Panizzi', *Papers Relating to the Alphabetical Catalogue of Printed Books*, London: George Woodfall and Son, 1847, 55).
[50] Jean Adhémar, 'Fonctionnaires et lecteurs du Cabinet des estampes de la Bibliothèque nationale pendant le XIXe siècle', *Bulletin d'information de l'A.B.F.*, 22, 1957, 17. On Weber's patent see Institut national de la propriété industrielle, Déposant Weber, Jean, Date de dépôt 26/09/1850, Numéro de dépôt 10557.

Praised for 'all the conditions of solidity, conservation and grace essential to a library',[51] Devéria's adjustable binding was soon introduced in at least two other libraries in Paris—the Bibliothèque Mazarine and the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève—and included in a popular French handbook for binders.[52] By 1885, the director of the Pinacoteca Nazionale in Turin, Francesco Gamba (1818–1887), who appreciated the combination of preservation, organisation, and accessibility, transferred most of the Pinacoteca's relatively small print collection to *reliures mobiles* made after the ones he had seen in Paris.[53] By 1890, the leading library handbook in Italy, *Della Collocazione dei Libri nelle Pubbliche Biblioteche,* prescribed Devéria's *reliure mobile* for print collections (fig. 9). Given such endorsement, print albums with adjustable bindings are likely to have been far more popular in late nineteenth-century Europe than this first cursory survey suggests.[54]
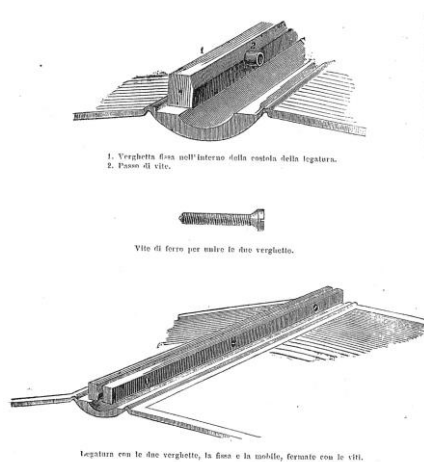

Fig. 9: Illustration of a *reliure mobile,* from Giuseppe Fumagalli, *Della collocazione dei libri nelle pubbliche biblioteche,* 1890, Firenze: G.C. Sansoni, 62.

[51] *Almanach national annuaire de la République française pour 1851*, Paris: A. Guyot et Scribe, 1851, no page.

[52] Louis-Sébastien Le Normand, *Nouveau manuel complet du relieur en tous genres*, Paris: Librairie encyclopédique de Roret, 1867, 300–301.

[53] Gamba learned about the *reliure mobile* in 1878 during a study trip he took to Paris to gather expertise on the organisation of public collection of works on paper: 'questo sistema di legatura adottato dalla biblioteca mazzarina di Parigi, e dalle principali d'Europa, è la migliore per la conservazione ed ordinamento delle stampe che vogliosi lascia studiare dagli amatori senza il pericolo di vederle sciupare'. Torino, SABAP, Miscellanea Vico, f. L inf I 25, mazzo 6, Vico, corrispondenza relativa alla Galleria dal 1870 al 1885. Gamba to Vico, 3 November 1885. The letter is published in Federica Panero, 'Stampe a Torino 1863–1893. Giovanni Vico conoscitore e collezionista', in Chiara Gauna, ed., *La Sfida delle Stampe. Parigi Torino 1650–1906*, Turin: Editris Duemila, 2017, 147. Some of the engravings are still mounted in the mobile bindings.

[54] Giuseppe Fumagalli, *Della Collocazione dei Libri nelle Pubbliche Biblioteche,* Florence: G.C. Sansoni, 1890, 62. On Fumagalli compare Guido Fagioli Vercellone, 'Fumagalli, Giuseppe', in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, vol. 50, Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1998 (https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giuseppe-fumagalli_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/, last accessed 15 August 2022).

'in festen, zweckmäßig konstruierten Bänden': the role of Friedrich Lippmann in Berlin

With this historical and conceptual background in mind, the Berlin *Schraubbände* shall now be revisited to clarify how they relate to Devéria's *reliure mobile* and how they functioned within the Kupferstichkabinett collection. Their outward aspect and current arrangement are not sufficient for a complete picture of their inception at the museum. First, their present state cannot be understood as an unaltered snapshot of the collection's organisation over time. This is especially true for this institution where the 1939–45 war and the division of Germany have impacted the holdings in multiple ways, including loss, splitting, acquisitions, and rehousing.[55] Second, the albums give no explicit indication of who compiled them and when. Traces of earlier labels glued on the spine undermine any attempt to single out compilation phases by tracing the specific hands or machines that wrote them. Furthermore, the different materials used for their outer parts indicate that the *Schraubbände* were not manufactured in a single campaign. Still, the consistent arrangement into national schools and the alphabetic order reveal precise classification systems underpinning this section of the collection.

       Archival records come to the rescue. An expense account related to the ongoing installation of prints from the *alter Bestand* (early holdings) dated 7 July 1899 reports that 2,700 engravings had been catalogued but not yet included in the '*Schraubbände* intended for them'.[56] The year 1899 as *terminus ante quem* prompted the investigation of records related to Friedrich Lippmann's (1838–1903) directorship (1876–1903), which was outstanding in many ways.[57] He is best known

[55] See note 12 and 18.

[56] '2770 Stück noch nicht endgültig in die für sie bestimmten Schraubbände aufgenommen werden konnten', Richard Schöne to the Minister of Geistlichen, Unterrichts- und Medicinal-Angelegenheiten, 7 July 1899. Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, I HA Rep 76 Ve Sekt. 15 Abt. X 2, vol. 8.

[57] For a biographical overview on Lippmann see 'Lippmann, Friedrich', in Archiv Bibliographia Judaica, ed., *Lexikon deutsch-jüdischer Autoren*, vol. 16, Munich: Saur, 2008, 80–83. On Lippmann's most important acquisitions for the Kupferstichkabinett see Sigrid Achenbach, 'Das Berliner Kupferstichkabinett und die französische Kunst unter Friedrich Lippmann und Max Lehrs', in Johann Georg von Hohenzollern, Peter-Klaus Schuster, eds, *Manet bis Van Gogh. Hugo von Tschudi und der Kampf um die Moderne*, Munich and New York: Prestel, 1996, 318–331; Dagmar Korbacher, '"Ich bin sehr sehr glücklich daß wir ihn haben". Botticellis Dante und die Sammlung Hamilton im Kupferstichkabinett', in Dagmar Korbacher, ed., *Der Botticelli-Coup. Schätze der Sammlung Hamilton im Kupferstichkabinett*, Cologne: Wienand, 2015, 21–29; Beatrice Alai, 'Il Ventennio d'Oro: la Miniatura al Tempo di Friedrich Lippmann', in Beatrice Alai, *Le Miniature Italiane del Kupferstichkabinett di Berlino*, Florence: Edizioni Polistampa, 2019, 61–70; Silvia Massa, Michael Roth, 'Dürer in Berlin. Spurensuche im Kupferstichkabinett', in Sebastian Schütze, ed., *Zeichnungssammlungen in Wien und Mitteleuropa*, Berlin: De Gruyter, *forthcoming*. An upcoming exhibition and accompanying catalogue will throw light on Lippmann's exceptional acquisition of the

for transforming and enhancing the collection by acquiring capital works of art and for building a skilled staff with unprecedented learning and scholarship. The Prague-born art historian also reshaped the organisational setting of the museum. Among other things, Lippmann established a card index and a new inventory-number system (both of which remain in use to this day) and brought in sunk mounts (passepartouts) like those used at the British Museum.[58]

Starting in the mid-1860s, Lippmann assiduously visited public and private art collections as well as auctions throughout Central Europe. Through his keen eye, primarily focused on Renaissance art (his specialty), he observed a wide range of systems for classifying, cataloguing, mounting, storing, and displaying works of art on paper. He gathered sufficient expertise that just months after taking up his post in 1876, he wrote a 50-page report that assessed every single aspect of the organisational setting of the Berlin Museum. From cataloguing to display, from staff shortage to the use of photographs, in this unpublished document Lippmann outlined the state of affairs at the Kupferstichkabinett and his strategy for the future. Unsuitable storage systems claimed much of Lippmann's interest, and this avows his active engagement with management principles such as conservation, accessibility, supervision, and retrieval of artworks: principles that remain central in collection management today. In discussing prints, he noted that they were attached by the two upper corners to thin backing sheets and laying loose in folders. He remarked:

> Not only is this method of storage extremely detrimental to the sheets during heavy use — due to the friction of the cardboard on the engravings — and has undoubtedly already damaged many series exposed to heavy use, but a fixed, catalogue-like order of the sheets within the folder, subject to constant disturbances and, yes, transferred to the hands of the public, can hardly be maintained. In addition to this, as is to be expected, very few of the visitors know how to handle the cardboard appropriately; they bend and crease it, to the detriment of the sheets.

Further on in the same document, he brought up print albums as a means of effectively reorganising the print collection:

Posonyi-Hulot collection of drawings and prints by Albrecht Dürer: *Dürer für die Nation. Spurensuche im Kupferstichkabinett*, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, 2023.
58 *Zur Geschichte der Königlichen Museen in Berlin Festschrift*, Berlin, 1880, 104; report by Friedrich Lippmann, 20 December 1876, Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, I HA Rep 76 Ve Sekt. 15 Abt. X 2, vol. 4. Lippmann was a regular figure in London and a great Anglophile. Compare Frances Carey, 'Campbell Dodgson (1867–1948)', in Antony Griffiths, ed., *Landmarks in Print Collecting. Connoisseurs and Donors at the British Museum since 1753*, London: The British Museum Press, 1996, 213.

In my opinion, there will have to be an arrangement of the engravings in solid, purposefully constructed volumes, similar to those in use in the collections of Vienna and Paris. Although 'volumes' also have some drawbacks, for the order, preservation, and conservation of the prints, as well as for protection against theft, they are unquestionably preferable to loose cardboard boxes. The fact that volumes are somewhat more inconvenient to handle takes a back seat to the above-mentioned advantages.[59]

Should this passage be understood as the first reference to *Schraubbände*? Perhaps, but since Lippmann does not describe or name them, there is room for doubt. Furthermore, there is no evidence yet of *Schraubbände* being used in the major Viennese art institutions. Lippmann would have known this, having lived and worked in Vienna before moving to Berlin.[60] There are some hints, however, that support the likeness of the *Bände* (volumes) described in the report. First, Lippmann was familiar with the graphic collection of the Bibliothèque nationale, as becomes apparent when he mentions the 'Réserve' fund of the Bibliothèque further on in this same report.[61] Second, Lippmann asserted that in this first overview of the collection, he would not go into detail about the measures to be taken.[62] Third, there is a note dated 1889 that describes prints at the Kupferstichkabinett kept in folio

[59] 'Nicht nur, dass diese Art der Aufbewahrung bei starkem Gebrauch den Blättern, — durch die Reibung der Kartons auf den Stichen, — äußerst nachtheilig ist, und unzweifelhaft schon viele, einer starken Benutzung ausgesetzten Serien, geschädigt hat, so ist auch eine fixe, Katalog mäßige Ordnung der Blätter innerhalb der Mappe, fortwährenden Störungen unterworfen, ja einmal den Händen des Publikums übergeben, kaum aufrecht zu erhalten. Hierzu kommt noch, daß wie nicht anders zu erwarten die wenigsten der Besucher den Karton zweckmäßig anzufassen verstehen dieselben einbiegen und knittern ebenfalls sehr zum Schaden der Blätter. Hier wird meiner Ansicht nach, eine Anordnung der Stiche, in festen, zweckmäßig konstruierten Bänden, Platz greifen müssen, ähnlich denen, welche in den Sammlungen von Wien und Paris in Verwendung sind. Allerdings haben auch "Bände" manchen Übelstand, aber für die Ordnung, Evidenzhaltung und Konservierung der Blätter, so wie zum Schutze gegen Entwendung sind sie den losen Kartons ohne Frage vorzuziehen. Die Rücksicht, daß Bände etwas unbequemer zu handhaben sind, tritt gegen den erwähnten Vorzug völlig in den Hintergrund', report by Friedrich Lippmann, 20 December 1876, Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, I HA Rep 76 Ve Sekt. 15 Abt. X 2, vol. 4.
[60] The presence of *Schraubbände* at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna could not be assessed as of November 2021.
[61] In his report, Lippmann suggested that just as the Bibliothèque did with prints not kept in the Réserve, the Kupferstichkabinett should initiate a section of less valuable collection items (less valuable prints existing in more impressions, for instance) to hand out to study room users who had no real research intent. Report by Friedrich Lippmann, 20 December 1876, Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, I HA Rep 76 Ve Sekt. 15 Abt. X 2, vol. 4.
[62] Report by Friedrich Lippmann, 20 December 1876, Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, I HA Rep 76 Ve Sekt. 15 Abt. X 2, vol. 4.

bindings with a leather-lined spine, just like those found on the adjustable albums today.[63] However one interprets his report, since no earlier mention of the *Schraubbände* has been found, it is safe to conclude that Lippmann, at some point during his tenure, introduced adjustable albums to the Kupferstichkabinett after Devéria's model.

The postulated derivation of the *Schraubbände* from Devéria's *reliure mobile* calls for a reconsideration of the presumed dependency of the Kupferstichkabinett on the British Museum in terms of curatorial practices for art on paper. There were many parallels between the development of the two graphic art collections.[64] But perhaps Lippmann in Berlin had greater latitude to reorganise a museum that was younger and (at that time) smaller than those of London, Vienna, and Paris. Just like he was free to patronise art markets across Europe to secure outstanding drawings, prints, and miniatures, he was at liberty to embark on a radical reshaping of the museum to adopt the best solutions to store, catalogue, and display graphic art. Funds were available, since, in the decades following the unification of Germany in 1871, the German government financed the growth of the Berlin museums in order to rival those of the greatest European cities.[65]

Re-organising the print collection

To figure out what exactly landed in the *Schraubbände* is more problematic. Further on in the 1876 report, Lippmann observed that the staggering number of prints at the museum made it unthinkable to mount them all on passepartouts or sturdy cardboard like he planned to do with drawings, 'as this would increase its spatial expansion to an incalculable extent'.[66] But this distinction between mounting and storing techniques for drawings (on passepartouts) and prints (in albums) did not occur. The note of 1889 reports that state-of-the-art sunk mounts were in use for both drawings and prints. But the note does specify that passepartouts were used exclusively 'for the most precious sections' of the collection, and most likely this was due to mounting, storage, and time costs. 'Most precious' essentially meant 'the old masters, the peintres-graveurs, and the drawings' but likely this was not a strict discrimination and surely not one that reflects the current distribution of the prints

[63] Report on the Kupferstichkabinett, October 1889, Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, I HA Rep 76 Ve Sekt. 15 Abt. X 2, vol. 8; *Festschrift*, 104.
[64] Carey, 'Campbell Dodgson', 213.
[65] The competition against other nation states was a pervasive argument in Lippmann's letters to the General Administration of the Royal Museums, and it was often brought up when the director asked for extra funds, be it to snatch artworks from English or French buyers at auction or to redesign the collection set up in a scholarly way. Compare the report by Friedrich Lippmann, 20 June 1888; letter from Lippmann to the General Administration of the Royal Museums of Berlin, 28 May 1889, both in Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, I HA Rep 76 Ve Sekt. 15 Abt. X 2, vol. 7.
[66] 'Zu dem Auskunftsmittel, welches ich weiterhin für die Zeichnungen vorschlage, dicke Kartons und "Passe-partout", kann von der Stichsammlung nicht greifen, da dadurch ihr räumlicher Umfang ins Unabsehbare vergrößern würde', report by Friedrich Lippmann, 20 December 1876, Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, I HA Rep 76 Ve Sekt. 15 Abt. X 2, vol. 4.

between one or the other storage system.[67] For instance, today, prints by Marcantonio Raimondi are kept both on passepartouts and in *Schraubbände*, as are those by Félix Vallotton. Prints by nineteenth-century printmakers might have been initially installed in adjustable albums and later, perhaps for an exhibition, selected for a passepartout mount. (Though such upgrades are not part of today's curatorial practice at the museum.)

To make the collection easily searchable, Lippmann established a double index-card system, where all prints were arranged alphabetically by engraver in one section and by *inventor* (the designer of the motif) in the other. By doing so, he supplanted the classification system previously in use at the Kupferstichkabinett, which had been based on strict adherence to Adam Bartsch's catalogue:

> the "works" of the painters described in Adam Bartsch's *Peintre Graveur* are simply arranged according to this book, in such a way that, for example, everything described in the first volume lies together, and so on. As is well known, however, Bartsch' work is not a system, but merely a large collection of individual catalogues, which have no or very little connection with each other…. Bartsch' work does not aim to give any historical representation of the art of copper engraving…. The engravers known to Bartsch are arranged according to him, — and the engravers not known to Bartsch are arranged alphabetically, — quite apart from the dimensions of those engravings and woodcuts which chance has assigned to some kind of storage method, and which therefore cannot be considered to be really arranged in any sense.[68]

Looking at prints in *Schraubbände*: final thoughts

The adjustable binding Lippmann introduced at the Kupferstichkabinett was originally conceived and designed to serve the needs of Devéria's private encyclopaedic print collection. The likeness of Devéria's albums to books was

---

[67] 'für die kostbarsten Theile … die ältesten Meister, die Peintre-graveurs, sowie die Handzeichnungen', report on the Kupferstichkabinett, October 1889, Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, I HA Rep 76 Ve Sekt. 15 Abt. X 2, vol. 8; compare *Festschrift*, 104.

[68] 'die "Werke" der Stecher welche im Peintre Graveur von Adam Bartsch beschrieben sind, einfach nach diesem Buche anzuordnen, in der Art, daß z. B. Alles was da in ersten Bande beschrieben ist, um beisammen liegt und so fort. Das Werk von Bartsch ist aber bekanntlich kein System, sondern lediglich eine große Collection von einzeln „Katalogen, welche unter sich keinen, oder nur höchst geringen Zusammenhang haben … das Bartsche Werk bezweckt auf nicht irgend eine historische Darstellung der Kupferstichkunst zu geben … Stecher die Bartsch kennt: nach ihm gereiht, — und Stecher die Bartsch nicht kennt alphabetisch gelegt, — ganz abgesehen von der Anmasse jener Stiche und Holzschnitte denen der Zufall irgend einen Platz als Aufbewahrungsort angewiesen hat, die man also noch in keinen Sinne als wirklich aufgestellt betrachten kann'. Report by Friedrich Lippmann, 20 December 1876, Berlin, Geheimes Staatsarchiv, Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, I HA Rep 76 Ve Sekt. 15 Abt. X 2, vol. 4.

justified by their intent to provide visual information completing or even supplanting written knowledge encapsulated in books. (He called his own collection a 'library'.)[69] Even when the *reliure mobile* went public, its resemblance to a normal binding was praised as one of its greatest merits.[70] At the Bibliothèque nationale the *reliures mobiles* functioned as well as they had in a private setting, meeting the needs of reading room users and curators alike.

In Berlin today, the adjustable albums still stand out for their imposing and elegant appearance (especially when compared to modern Solander-type portfolio boxes). Rather than a visual encyclopaedia, here they fit a collection designed to embody the evolution of printmaking in all its forms. The *Schraubbände* feature display strategies in that smaller-sized prints have been attractively arranged on the backing pages. How might these appealing presentations, encapsulated in elegant bindings, have affected the perception of the prints? Judith Rayner, commenting on rehousing projects at the Department of Prints and Drawings of the British Museum, observes that 'old albums' with 'rich leather bindings, gold tooling, and generous proportions … relate to the way in which objects are perceived on a deeper level. The albums tend to imbue their contents with a certain value and importance'. Their 'aura … has implications for the way in which the prints are handled, as an object presented in a manner which implies value … is more likely to be treated with care'.[71]

However intriguing, Rayner's argument cannot be taken too far. In some bound albums—as Vogel suggested—aesthetic and cognitive access to the prints took place through different channels (display, mounting, juxtaposition, cutting and addition of images).[72] Each *Schraubband* comprising the work of more than one artist has, instead, a hand-written artist name-index provided at the beginning of each album, supplemented by small labels with consecutive numbers on the right margin. By facilitating the retrieval of one artist's prints within each album, both these devices suggest the way in which these volumes were supposed to be used and 'read'. That is, as a container of art objects, rather than a book to leaf through from cover to cover. Nor was the arrangement of the prints necessarily meant to provide an aesthetically rewarding experience to the viewer. What mattered most was having ready access to each individual print, classified, and arranged according to scholarly principles.

Furthermore, there is enough evidence to advocate that—aside from building up the collection, which was the number one priority—Lippmann was mostly concerned with establishing scholarly, rational, and practical long-term solutions for the management of the holdings. If he chose and designed the adjustable albums in a certain way, it was first and foremost so that they would fit

[69] 'Cette bibliothèque se compose de 400 volumes', in Jubert, 'Achille Devéria', 23 (Appendice I).

[70] *Almanach national Annuaire de la République Française pour 1851*, Paris: A. Guyot et Scribe, 1851, no page.

[71] Rayner, 'Rehousing of print collections at the British Museum', 37.

[72] Vogel, *Die Klebebände der Fürstlich Waldeckschen Hofbibliothek Arolsen*, 37–39.

into the setting he created: a museum collection meant to expand continuously at a fast pace.[73]

This first exploration of print albums with adjustable bindings has suggested a new trail in the scholarship on print storing systems, no longer confined to bound or loose sheets. Adjustable albums corroborate the multifaceted scope of private but especially public print collecting, by combining features that can be recapitulated in Heller's wording: 'special care should be taken to combine the beautiful with the comfortable, thus making the retrieval easier'.[74]

Silvia Massa is the 2022–2023 Getty Paper Project Postdoc Fellow, Kupferstich-Kabinett, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. Her research encompasses Early Modern prints and drawings, history of collecting and musealisation, and history of exhibitions. She co-edited *'Mostre permanenti'. Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti in un secolo di esposizioni* (2018). Drawing from her PhD thesis (2019, IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca), she organised the exhibition *Mich tröstet die Liebe zur Kunst. Paul J. Kristeller zwischen Berlin und Italien* (Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, 2020).

silvia.massa89@gmail.com

---

[73] It is quite surprising not to find any reference to the *Schraubbände* in Hans W. Singer, *Handbuch für Kupferstichsammlungen, Vorschläge zu deren Anlage und Führung*, Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1916, the standard reference work for the arrangement and storage of prints. Perhaps Max Lehrs, who directed the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett from 1904 to 1908 and then took up the same role in the Dresden Kupferstich-Kabinett, was not a supporter of the *Schraubbände* and therefore suggested his assistant Hand Wolfgang Singer (1867–1957) not to include them in the *Handbuch.* (I am grateful to Georg Josef Dietz for pointing out the *Handbuch* to me.)

[74] 'Auch das Äussere erhöht eine Kupferstich-Sammlung viel; und es ist vorzüglich darauf Rücksicht zu nehmen, dass man das Schöne mit dem Bequemen verbindet, und dadurch das Aufsuchen erleichtert', Heller, *Praktische Handbuch für Kupferstichsammler*, 21–22.