

## Determining the value of connoisseurship – an art of lasting topicality

Review of:

*Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, edited by Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels, and Anne-Katrin Sors, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 352pp., numerous b. & w. illus., €45/\$38.86, ISBN 978-3-7319-0367-3 hdbk.

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*Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft* published by Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels, and Anne-Katrin Sors promises, in the words of the blurb, to open up fresh perspectives on the art, commerce and connoisseurship in 1800 – and appeared to coincide with the exhibition *Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch (1757-1821)*. This exhibition took place from 11 April–11 September 2016 in the Kunstsammlung of the University of Göttingen. The idea for the exhibition and the preparation of the catalogue was the result of cooperation between working groups comprising students and curators of the graphic collections of the art historical institutions of the universities of Göttingen, Trier and Tübingen. In thirty-two texts, the publishers and the members of the working groups discuss various aspects of the historical origins of connoisseurship, of collecting practices, evaluation and description methods and their contextualisation. However, it is precisely the number of authors, texts and their different emphases that impede a comprehensive discussion and assessment of the catalogue. As the publishers write in their introduction: 'For the students, close inspection of the originals provided important experience for determining print-making techniques and the systematic recording of the works in the context of the art historical literature and opens completely new perspectives on art'.<sup>1</sup> This exemplary approach kindled an intellectual curiosity and developed a broader understanding of art historical processes. 'The fact that connoisseurship and artistic judgement of amateurs and collectors was widespread in the eighteenth century and was discussed and collected using prints, clearly became the prerequisite for the emergence of a bourgeois art public and stimulated interest in parallel processes'.<sup>2</sup> With the publication of the catalogue, the publishers

<sup>1</sup> 'Das Nahe Sehen der Originale schloss für die Studierenden wichtige Erfahrungen zur Bestimmung von druckgraphischen Techniken sowie die systematische Erfassung der Werke im Zusammenhang der kunsthistorischen Fachliteratur ein und eröffnete völlig neue Sichtweisen auf Kunst', Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels and Anne-Karin Sors, 'Zum Geleit', in: Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels and Anne-Karin Sors, eds., *Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 7-8.

<sup>2</sup> 'Die Erfahrung, dass Kennerschaft und Kunsturteil von Amateuren und Sammlern im 18. Jahrhundert weit verbreitet waren und anhand von druckgraphischen Blättern diskutiert und gesammelt wurden, ließ dabei die Voraussetzungen für die Herausbildung eines bürgerlichen Kunstpublikums deutlich werden und weckte das Interesse für parallele Prozesse in der Gegenwart', Brakensiek, Michels and Sors, 'Zum Geleit', 8.

are now asserting a claim to be able to present the results to a wider public as an 'innovative form of collective teaching and learning', based on the accessibility and research of 'interesting and important' collections of the three universities.<sup>3</sup> The focus of the discussion is principally on the findings about connoisseurship and judgement criteria that may be relevant for current research. As the publishers rightly point out in their introduction, issues about originality, copying, reproduction, forgeries and authenticity are the subject of increasing debate, thus demanding a critical examination and academic discussion.<sup>4</sup> The reader is given information about important stages in the discourse on art in the eighteenth century, particularly with the aid of illustrative sketches and from testing their methods of reproduction. In addition, it provides biographical information about Johann Adam Bernhard Ritter von Bartsch, who was curator of the engravings collection of the Viennese Court Library and was conversant with numerous other important European graphic arts collections. He is generally acknowledged to be the founder of the academic study of fine art printmaking. Even today, his twenty-one-volume *magnum opus Peintre-Graveur*, published between 1803 and 1821, is regarded as a guide and reference work for research into the graphic arts and contains numerous catalogues of old master prints from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries.

In the second text, *Kennerschaft an Universitäten: Göttingen, Trier, Tübingen*, authors Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels, Anne-Katrin Sors, and Arwed Arnulf underline the importance of the debate and historical transformation that the term connoisseurship, along with its aspiration and responsibilities, entails for the graphic collections of the universities. The collections not only served a 'didactic purpose', rather than in the eighteenth century connoisseurship was already 'part of the educational concept of those universities shaped by the Enlightenment, and that due to its proximity to the medium of the book, connoisseurship in the graphic arts was even seen to be a particularly erudite form'.<sup>5</sup> The authors examine the respective histories of the collections and their most influential protagonists, discuss their historical reception and draw attention to contemporary practical and object-related applications: 'Practical in relation to the training for an art historical certification in the field of graphic arts collections, object-related in order to impart knowledge of the techniques and artistic means and materials, conservational

<sup>3</sup> 'Forschendes Lernen aus dem Kontext der Universitätssammlungen erlaubte damit, vor dem Hintergrund der interessanten und wichtigen Bestände der Universitäten Göttingen, Trier und Tübingen, eine innovative Form gemeinsamen Lehrens und Lernens, deren Ergebnisse nun einer größeren Öffentlichkeit vorgestellt werden', Brakensiek, Michels and Sors, 'Zum Geleit', 8.

<sup>4</sup> Brakensiek, Michels and Sors, 'Zum Geleit', 7.

<sup>5</sup> 'Kunstkennerschaft gehörte, zum Bildungskonzept der aufklärerisch geprägten Universität, Graphikkennerschaft aufgrund der Nähe zum Medium des Buches sogar in besonders gelehrt erscheinender Spielart', Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels, Anne-Katrin Sors and Arwed Arnulf, 'Kennerschaft an Universitäten', in: Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels and Anne-Karin Sors, eds., *Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 10.

aspects and required procedures in relation to the objects being preserved and studied'.<sup>6</sup>

With this form of application the authors highlight the parallels to Bartsch's study of engraving. Thus, in addition to teaching from the object, there is also the attempt at a continuous 'historical contextualisation, its functional and intentional contingency, its changing reception and of its being tied to a specific historical concept of connoisseurship and grounds for curiosity as to when and in what form such a qualified connoisseurship even becomes the object of critical enquiry and historical perspective'.<sup>7</sup>

In the digital age, we in Tübingen are attempting to impart – in practical seminars using original artworks – a different, expanded form of art historical connoisseurship. This involves a familiarisation with the specific attributes of the individual object, its front and back, its context in the history of the collection, its materiality and technique, conservational condition, provenance as well as its art historical and cultural subject matter. Art on paper thus becomes an object of learning around which seeing and the history of seeing is taught in a comprehensive way.<sup>8</sup>

According to the authors, there is a categorical difference between this and the handling of digital images. The authors take up the theme of the *Foreword* by citing the art historical expertise taught by the three universities, i.e. research-based learning centred on the original object, that attaches as much importance to the appropriate handling of the originals as it does to an analysis of the content and an art historical discussion of the artefacts.<sup>9</sup> Taking inspiration from Adam von Bartsch's sentence 'an eye for detail', the authors envisage an updated form of art

<sup>6</sup> 'Praxisnah in Hinblick auf die Ausbildung für eine kunsthistorische Bestätigung im Bereich graphischer Sammlungen, objektnah, um die Kenntnis der Techniken und künstlerischen Mittel sowie Materialien, konservatorische Aspekte und notwendigen Arbeitsschritte in Betrachtung der zu bewahrenden und erforschenden Objekte zu vermitteln', Brakensiek, Michels, Sors and Arnulf, 'Kennischaft an Universitäten', 11.

<sup>7</sup> 'Kommt zur Lehre am Objekt auch das Bemühen um deren stete historische Kontextualisierung, ihre funktionale und intentionale Bedingtheit, ihre sich wandelnde Rezeption und zeitbedingte Interpretation, vor allem auch das Bewusstsein um die Zeitgebundenheit eines Kennerschaftsbegriffs hinzu, besteht Anlass zur Neugier, wann und in welcher Form eine so relativierte Kennerschaft selbst Gegenstand kritischer Nachfrage und historischer Betrachtung wird', Brakensiek, Michels, Sors and Arnulf, 'Kennischaft an Universitäten', 11.

<sup>8</sup> 'Im digitalen Zeitalter versuchen wir in Tübingen – in Praxisseminaren vor Originalen – eine andere, erweiterte Form von kunsthistorischer Kennerschaft zu vermitteln: Diese bezieht sich auf das Heranführen an das Spezifische des einzelnen Objekts, mit seiner Vorder- und Rückseite, seinem sammlungsgeschichtlichen Kontext, seiner Materialität und Technik, seines konservatorischen Zustands, seiner Provenienz und seiner kunst- und kulturhistorischen Thematik. Die Kunst auf Papier wird hier zu einem Objekt des Wissens, an dem Sehen und eine Geschichte des Sehens übergreifend gelernt wird – etwas, was sich vom Umgang mit digitalen Bildern kategorial unterscheidet', Brakensiek, Michels, Sors and Arnulf, 'Kennischaft an Universitäten', 13.

<sup>9</sup> Brakensiek, Michels, Sors and Arnulf, 'Kennischaft an Universitäten', 13.

historical connoisseurship for the media age, which includes practices in dealing with the original as a cultural asset. With the reference to Sybille Krämer, here there is an 'operational space between head and hand' that at the present time cannot be overestimated.<sup>10</sup> A brief explanation of the concept with the aid of bibliographical information could have provided more support for this idea.

The large number of authors and the numerous contributions with similar emphases probably explains why a repetition of identical information, arguments, references and contextualisations is almost unavoidable. This is already presaged by the preceding arguments. For example, the text *DürerÜbung. Der hl. Antonius von der Stadt. Ein genauer Blick auf Dürers Kupferstich*, by the artist Anton Würth, occupies a special – artistic – position. The graphic artist Würth copies Albrecht Dürer's 1519 engraving of *St Anthony* which he had in the form of a postcard. It allows him to 'reconstruct the method of manual execution, the intentions as regards content and their relationship within the work'.<sup>11</sup> Würth's intention was to copy Dürer's print 'line by line', in order to follow the syntax of the artist, to understand his technique and to get an idea of his skill. As Würth sees it, a linear engraving is a binary system consisting of 'lines and spaces'. The spaces between the lines are just as important as the lines. The artist clearly describes the process of exact copying and the impressions gained from it:

From a close-up view of the details it is noticeable how Dürer's linear structure is very clearly, austere and particularly precisely conceived, but nevertheless remains vivid in the overall context. As a contemporary artist one can learn a great deal from this quality, particularly if the line occurs in a prominent position, such as in a minimalistic context. There the line is no longer subordinated to the narrative as a mere means of expression (for example, to represent the fabric of a cloak) but is an object of the artistic statement, in which what is presented itself becomes the content.<sup>12</sup>

In his essay, Anton Würth stresses the value of technique as an aid to the expression of sensory experience that an artist experiences during the creative process, and compares it with the process of exact copying, by which similar experience can be gained and an added aesthetic value is attained.

<sup>10</sup> Brakensiek, Michels, Sors and Arnulf, 'Kennerschaft an Universitäten', 13.

<sup>11</sup> Anton Würth, 'DürerÜbung', in: Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels and Anne-Karin Sors, eds., *Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 15.

<sup>12</sup> 'In der Nabsicht der Details fällt auf, wie Dürer die Linienstruktur außerordentlich nüchtern, klar und besonders genau konzipiert und wie sie im Kontext des Ganzen dennoch lebendig ist. Von dieser Qualität kann man als zeitgenössischer Künstler sehr viel lernen. Ganz besonders wenn die Linie in einer so herausgehobenen Stellung wie in einem minimalistischen Kontext vorkommt. Hier die Linie nicht länger Erzählung als bloßes Ausdrucksmittel untergeordnet (um zum Beispiel einen Mantelstoff darzustellen), sondern ist Gegenstand der künstlerischen Aussage, in der das Dargestellte sich selbst zum Inhalt wird', Anton Würth, 'DürerÜbung', 15.

In the article, "*à la mode française*" – *Geschmack und ästhetische Urteile als Grundlage für Kennerschaft*<sup>13</sup> Raymond Keller meticulously addresses the subject of the history and development of connoisseurship. Keller has divided his essay into eight sections, beginning with an historical outline of the role of the collections of the nobility and the influence of patronage. The bibliographical references underscore the scholarship involved in the work. Direct quotations allow protagonists of the time to have their say and are appropriate for the thematic development and reconstruction of aesthetic value judgements or forms of taste, in order, on the one hand to rank them historically and on the other hand, not to address an exclusively specialist audience. Keller develops the concept of the connoisseur from its original purpose, that of an advisory function in the buying of artworks.<sup>14</sup> Keller comments on the situation of princely collections, the cabinets of curiosities in Italy, France and Austria from the middle of the sixteenth century and the role of prominent artists, prefacing his essay with a quotation from the French art historian, Charlotte Guichard, that highlights the significance of connoisseurship in the eighteenth century: 'The eighteenth century is the golden age of the amateur, between the heyday of the patron and that of the collector in the nineteenth century'.<sup>15</sup> Keller substantiates the basis for aesthetic judgements with the development of aristocratic tastes, as they were influenced by Italian painting and particularly the taste of Louis XIV: 'The culture of taste, the concept of taste itself, evolved in courtly-aristocratic society, also in relation to looking at art'.<sup>16</sup> In the last section, *Die Kunstakademien*, Raymond Keller presents a brief account of the origins and function of the art academies. He describes the role of the *conférences*, which were regularly occurring discussions about art. These conferences were held under the *Académie de peinture et de sculpture*, which had been founded under the authority of Jean Baptiste Colbert in 1648. This academic viewing of art particularly promoted the development of French art theory and criticism.<sup>17</sup> In a similar manner, Keller takes this argument further to include various illustrations, predominantly of engravings. He identifies the importance of a vocabulary of artistic terms, the development of methods of judging artworks, and devotes a separate section to the question as to who is entitled to judge art. Raymond Keller proceeds in a trenchant

<sup>13</sup> Raymond Keller, "'à la mode française" – Geschmack und ästhetische Urteile als Grundlage für Kennerschaft', in: Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels and Anne-Karin Sors, eds., *Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 21-29.

<sup>14</sup> Keller, "'à la mode française" – Geschmack und ästhetische Urteile als Grundlage für Kennerschaft', 21.

<sup>15</sup> 'Das XVIII. Jahrhundert ist das goldene Zeitalter des amateurs, zwischen der Blütezeit des Mäzens und dem des Sammlers im XIX. Jahrhundert', Keller, "'à la mode française" – Geschmack und ästhetische Urteile als Grundlage für Kennerschaft', 21. See also: Charlotte Guichard, *Les amateurs d'art à Paris au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2008, 333.

<sup>16</sup> 'Die Kultur des Geschmacks, überhaupt der Begriff des Geschmacks, hat sich in der höfisch-adeligen Gesellschaft, auch im Hinblick auf das Betrachten von Kunst, herausgebildet', Keller, "'à la mode française" – Geschmack und ästhetische Urteile als Grundlage für Kennerschaft', 21-22.

<sup>17</sup> Keller, "'à la mode française" – Geschmack und ästhetische Urteile als Grundlage für Kennerschaft', 22.

and stringent manner, whereby the historical discourses remain vividly comprehensible. He keeps an eye on the subjects of the catalogue, supporting his argument with the aid of numerous quotations from importance representatives of the period and influential theoreticians. He does this, for example, by focussing on the original and the copy, or rather imitation: 'You may therefore be worried about being swindled, and as often happens, take copies to be originals due to a lack of experience'.<sup>18</sup> From *Studien durch Nachahmen* he directs his attention to the founding of art history as an independent academic discipline. 'It was not until the institutionalisation of art history as university scholarship that a change occurred which attached less importance to the connoisseurial expertise'.<sup>19</sup> Keller concludes his essay with a discussion *Zur philosophischen Kritik des Geschmacks* and refers to the discourse on Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790) 'according to which the judgement of taste is not objective, but intersubjective, taste becomes *sensus communis*, taste without society is impossible'.<sup>20</sup>

In the essay *Vom handwerklichen Wissen zur Wissenschaft der Kupferstichkunde – von Abraham Bosse bis Adam von Bartsch*<sup>21</sup>, Maik-Sören Hanicz addresses the relationship between the original and the copy. He quotes Adam von Bartsch who stresses the importance of the copy, or rather imitation as an interpretation of the engraver with its own creative accomplishment: 'An original engraving is one that the engraver has either made straight from nature, or from the imagination and transferred directly to his plate, or one that has been engraved from a drawing. Where several engravers have, at different times, made engravings from the same original image, then every sheet should be regarded as an original'.<sup>22</sup> After briefly

<sup>18</sup> 'Das kann auch daher kommen, dass man Angst hat betrogen zu werden, und dass man, wie es des öfteren vorkommt, Kopien für Originale hält, aus Mangel an Erfahrung', Keller, "'à la mode française" – Geschmack und ästhetische Urteile als Grundlage für Kennerschaft', 28. See also: Roger de Piles, *Abrégé de la vie des Peintres*, Paris: Sercy, 1699, 67.

<sup>19</sup> 'Erst mit der Institutionalisierung der Kunstgeschichte als universitäre Wissenschaft vollzog sich ein Wandel, der dem kennerschaftlichen Urteil eine geringere Bedeutung beimaß', Keller, "'à la mode française" – Geschmack und ästhetische Urteile als Grundlage für Kennerschaft', 29. See also: Claudia-Alexandra Schwaighofer, *Von der Kennerschaft zur Wissenschaft: Reproduktionsgraphische Mappenwerke nach Zeichnungen in Europa 1726-1857*, Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2009, 110.

<sup>20</sup> 'Das Geschmacksurteil sei demnach nicht objektiv, aber intersubjektiv, der Geschmack wird zum *sensus communis*: ohne die Gesellschaft sei Geschmack nicht möglich', Keller, "'à la mode française" – Geschmack und ästhetische Urteile als Grundlage für Kennerschaft', 29. See also: Dominik Brückner, 'Geschmack. Untersuchungen zu Wortsemantik und Begriff im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert', in: Stefan Sonderegger and Oskar Reichmann, eds., *Studia Linguistica Germanica*, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2003, 53.

<sup>21</sup> Maik-Sören Hanicz, 'Vom handwerklichen Wissen zur Wissenschaft der Kupferstichkunde – von Abraham Bosse bis Adam von Bartsch', in: Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels and Anne-Karin Sors, eds., *Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 31-35.

<sup>22</sup> 'Ein Original-Kupferstich wird derjenige genannt, den der Kupferstecher entweder unmittelbar nach der Natur, oder aus dem Kopfe sogleich auf seine Platte übertragen hat, oder auch derjenige, welcher nach einer Zeichnung gestochen worden ist. Wenn mehrere Kupferstecher zu verschiedenen Zeiten nach ein und demselben Originalbilde Kupferstiche gefertigt haben, so ist jedes Blatt als Original anzusehen', Hanicz, 'Vom handwerklichen

outlining the craft of the engraver in the seventeenth-century literature for artists and art lovers and evaluation criteria for engravings and etchings, Hanicz pursues the question as to what quality may be assigned to reproduction, whether it should be named a translation or an interpretation and concludes by stressing its value for connoisseurship. A greater importance is attached to the copy for the study of engraving. Hanicz takes up Bartsch's view of the study of engravings as a knowledge base for collectors, art lovers and thus the connoisseur. Bartsch's systemisation of the characteristics, features and peculiarities of individual styles, makes the acquisition of connoisseurship something that can be both taught and learnt.<sup>23</sup> Maik-Sören Hanicz continues Rudolf Rieger's argument and concludes his contribution with a quotation from Adam von Bartsch: 'When the assiduous art researcher has learnt through continuous practice to distinguish the engravings of noteworthy artists, to identify the different periods of one artist from their works and to determine the characteristic features of the styles of two or more similar artists, whoever, in a word, has progressed so far as to be able to recognise the peculiar style of every artist, and thus to identify the artist from his works, he will never, or only very seldom, be misled by copies'.<sup>24</sup>

In other relevant articles the role of connoisseurship is examined and discussed by reference to case studies. For example, in Stephan Brakensiek's paper *Technische Meisterschaft mit Originalitätsproblem: Johann Gottlieb und Maria Katharina Prestel*,<sup>25</sup> the history of reproduction prints is described in greater detail. Secondly, there is a closer focus on the history of collections and their characteristics. Anne-Katrin Sors and Arwed Arnulf should be mentioned in this context for their text *Fiorillo und die Göttinger Bibliothek Universitäres Graphiksammeln und der Kunsthandel*<sup>26</sup> and Bartsch, *Rembrandt und der Catalogue raisonné: Rembrandtrezeption*,

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Wissen zur Wissenschaft der Kupferstichkunde', 31. See also: Adam von Bartsch, *Anleitung zur Kupferstichkunde*, Wien: Wallishausser, 1821, 100.

<sup>23</sup> Hanicz, 'Vom handwerklichen Wissen zur Wissenschaft der Kupferstichkunde', 35. See also: Rudolf Rieger, ed., *Adam von Bartsch (1757-1821). Leben und Werk*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2014, vol.1, 61.

<sup>24</sup> 'Wenn nun der beflissene Kunstforscher durch anhaltende Übung erlernt hat, die Kupferstiche merkwürdiger Künstler zu zerlösen, die Perioden eines und des selben Künstlerlers in seinen Werken anzugeben, und das Charakteristische der Manieren zweier oder mehrerer sich ähnlichen Künstler zu bestimmen; wer, mit einem Worte, es so weit gebracht hat, die jedem Künstler eigentümliche Manier, folglich den Künstler aus seinen Werken zu erkennen, dieser wird niemals, oder nur äußerst selten, durch Copieen irre geführt werden können', Bartsch, *Anleitung*, 140.

<sup>25</sup> Stephan Brakensiek, 'Technische Meisterschaft mit Originalitätsproblem: Johann Gottlieb und Maria Katharina Prestel', in: Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels and Anne-Karin Sors, eds., *Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 103-111.

<sup>26</sup> Anne-Katrin Sors and Arwed Arnulf, 'Fiorillo und die Göttinger Bibliothek Universitäres Graphiksammeln und der Kunsthandel', in: Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels and Anne-Karin Sors, eds., *Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 147-161.

*Katalogkonzeption und Beschreibungsmodus.*<sup>27</sup> These essays follow a similar argumentation and structure as those previously mentioned.

In her essay, *Bartschs Bücher*,<sup>28</sup> Gaia Englert addresses the subject of Bartsch's use of illustrative materials in the study of engravings and, with reference to Wilhelm Lübke, includes photography as an important aid to art appreciation. 'Art history is more indebted to photography than it is to any other present technical aid. Actually, for the first time it has enabled us to make comparative studies with a degree of reliability, that is no longer subject to the influence of the change of subjective mood, lighting, time of day and place of storage'.<sup>29</sup> According to Englert, this demonstrates that the most important research material of the scientist is as accurate as possible depiction of the original object, by means of which both the object itself and its role can be assessed in comparison with other objects.<sup>30</sup> Particularly now in the digital age, the 'art researcher' is able to draw on a new research medium in the Internet. Collections are being digitalised and systematised following models similar to those used by Bartsch.<sup>31</sup>

In her article, *Das Sehende Auge – Die Kunstkennerschaft seit dem 18. Jahrhundert*,<sup>32</sup> Nina Christine Dusartz de Vigneulle raises an issue of contemporary relevance by asking whether the connoisseur is still needed today.<sup>33</sup> Dusartz de Vigneulle cites Nelson Goodman, who claims pictures must be viewed with knowledge, so that the differences between the original and a forgery can be detected.<sup>34</sup> Dusartz de Vigneulle contrasts that view with the technological research methods of conservation science, the results of which, she maintains, nevertheless still require explanation by experts. She bases her argument on Ulrich Pfisterer, who believes that results only become interpretable when they are explained by

<sup>27</sup> Arwed Arnulf, 'Bartsch, Rembrandt und der *Catalogue raisonné*: Rembrandtrezeption, Katalogkonzeption und Beschreibungsmodus', in: Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels and Anne-Karin Sors, eds., *Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 297-303.

<sup>28</sup> Gaia Englert, 'Bartschs Bücher', in: Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels and Anne-Karin Sors, eds., *Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 277-295.

<sup>29</sup> 'Keinem technischen Hilfsmittel der Gegenwart ist die Kunstwissenschaft zu solchem Dank verpflichtet, wie der Photographie. Sie eigentlich hat uns erst in die Lage gesetzt, vergleichende Studien mit jener Sicherheit zu betreiben, auf welche der Wechsel der subjektiven Stimmung, der Beleuchtung, der Tageszeit, des Aufbewahrungsortes keinen Einfluß übt', Englert, 'Bartschs Bücher', 287; Wilhelm Lübke, 'Die Dresdener Galerie in Photographien', *Kunstchronik*, 9, 1873, 81.

<sup>30</sup> Englert, 'Bartschs Bücher', 287.

<sup>31</sup> Englert, 'Bartschs Bücher', 290.

<sup>32</sup> Nina Christine Dusartz de Vigneulle, 'Das Sehende Auge – Die Kunstkennerschaft seit dem 18. Jahrhundert', in: Stephan Brakensiek, Anette Michels and Anne-Karin Sors, eds., *Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft*, Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016, 305-319.

<sup>33</sup> Dusartz de Vigneulle, 'Das Sehende Auge', 318.

<sup>34</sup> Dusartz de Vigneulle, 'Das Sehende Auge', 319. See also: Nelson Goodman, *Sprachen der Kunst. Entwürfe einer Symboltheorie*, Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1997, 104-118.



connoisseurs and have undergone a plausibility check.<sup>35</sup> Christine Dusartz de Vigneulle concludes that these methods remain only an instrument that can be used as an aid, but are still reliant on intellectual decoding.<sup>36</sup> Scientific progress does not push the work of the connoisseur into the background: 'Connoisseurship cannot be learned like a trade, in which after a certain period of training and apprenticeship one qualifies as a master'.<sup>37</sup>

The presumably random sequence of articles selected for the catalogue, that are extremely informative and academically substantiated, make it difficult to identify the promised new perspectives on 'Art, Commerce and Connoisseurship'. This may be due to the lack of a consistent thematic rigour because, ultimately, it is not an academic treatise that is attempting to develop a new method or an in-depth study of a particular research subject. However, the publication also functions as an exhibition catalogue and represents the results of a cooperative project of three study groups. The quality of this large-format and richly illustrated bound work underscores its catalogue-like character, and provides the reader with a multifaceted and impressive insight into the *œuvre* of Adam von Bartsch. It is complemented by the bibliography, which gives an overview of the relevant research literature and offers points of reference for future research work or cooperative projects.

*Copy.Right – Adam von Bartsch – Kunst, Kommerz, Kennerschaft* is aimed not only at the interested reader who is engaging with this subject for the first time, but also at experts and students from the fields of art history, the art market and artistic techniques. The catalogue provides a comprehensive insight into the history and methodology of connoisseurship, contains information about its potential impact on the art market and demonstrates developments in connoisseurial practice.

**Peter-David Friedrich** is a doctoral researcher at the Graduate School of History and Sociology at the University of Bielefeld and of the Graduate School of the University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. In his dissertation project, he is studying exhibition texts and audio commentaries in the setting of museum exhibitions from the eighteenth century to the present day. Friedrich completed a master's degree in cultural heritage from the Chair of Tangible and Intangible Cultural Heritage UNESCO at the University of Paderborn, and following the project phase at the Louvre, his master's thesis was concerned with digital presentation forms in a museum context. The aim of the thesis was to substantiate the use of the web as a virtual platform for the access and sharing of cultural assets and the collection and archiving of text, images and audiovisual media in digital databases for the creation of a global knowledge and research environment. Peter-David Friedrich had previously completed a master's degree in literature studies and a combined bachelor's degree in German studies and educational sciences at the University of Bielefeld.

<sup>35</sup> Dusartz de Vigneulle, 'Das Sehende Auge', 319; Ulrich Pfisterer, ed., *Metzler Lexikon Kunstwissenschaft: Ideen, Methoden, Begriffe*, Stuttgart: Metzler, 2003, 171.

<sup>36</sup> Dusartz de Vigneulle, 'Das Sehende Auge', 319.

<sup>37</sup> 'Kunstkennerschaft lässt sich jedoch nicht wie ein Handwerk erlernen, bei dem man nach einer gewissen Lehr- und Gesellenzeit die Meisterschaft erhält', Dusartz de Vigneulle, 'Das Sehende Auge', 319.

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Determining the value of connoisseurship  
– an art of lasting topicality

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