

## Pierre-Jean Mariette, enlightened art connoisseur and scholar of art history

Review of:

*Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Europe* by Kristel Smentek, Farnham: Ashgate, 2014, 303 pp., 20 col. plates, 39 b.& w. illus., £75.00, ISBN 978 1 4724 3802 7

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One of the outstanding public acknowledgements Pierre-Jean Mariette (1694-1774) received as an art dealer, collector, scholar and antiquarian of European renown was by means of a monumental pastel portrait of the Marquise de Pompadour by Maurice-Quentin de la Tour (Musée du Louvre, Paris). Fashioned as a philosophe with an interest for the arts and sciences Pompadour had the portrait put up on public display on the Paris Salon of 1755. Mariette's book on gem engraving, the *Traité des pierres gravées* (1750), is depicted by her side on the table; one of its illustrations showing the art of gem engraving hangs prominently over the edge of the table.<sup>1</sup> As one of a range of attributes highlighting Pompadour's intellectual and artistic interests it features among volume IV of the *Encyclopédie*, Montesquieu's *De l'esprit du lois*, Voltaire's *Henriade*, Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido* and further objects illustrating the arts of music, painting, printmaking and gem engraving. Although some critics attacked the inappropriate distraction that Pompadour seems to express in the portrait, others believed that the attributes were a fully justified indication of her interests.<sup>2</sup>

In *Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (2014) Kristel Smentek creates a contrast between the famous portrait of Pompadour and the now hardly known *Traité* of Mariette to highlight what was in effect his 'most substantial scholarly achievement'. In this way Smentek effectively draws attention to aspects of Mariette's career that have largely been dominated by his achievements as a drawing collector and connoisseur.<sup>3</sup> She not only thoroughly analyses the scholarly interests he developed in connection to engraved gems, but also the various business activities he employed in the print and book trade, and brings them together with his refined practices as a drawing collector and connoisseur. By doing this she also makes a convincing case of Mariette's ambitions to improve his social position. He gave up a successful print business that had been

<sup>1</sup> Pierre-Jean Mariette, *Traité des pierres gravées*, 2 vols, Paris: Pierre-Jean Mariette, 1750.

<sup>2</sup> Xavier Salmon and Johann Georg Prinz von Hohenzollern, eds, *Madame de Pompadour und die Künste*, München: Hirmer Verlag, 2002, 22-23.

<sup>3</sup> Rosenberg indicated that an all-encompassing monograph on Pierre-Jean Mariette is still missing. Rosenberg and Laure Barthélemy-Labeeuw, *Les dessins de la collection Mariette. École française*, 2 vols, Milano: Mondadori Electa, 2011, xviii; Roseline Bacou, ed, *Le Cabinet d'un Grand Amateur P.-J. Mariette 1694-1774 Dessins du XVe siècle au XVIIIe siècle*, Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1967.

built up by several generations of the Mariettes and interchanged his life of a little appreciated merchant for that of a highly respected gentleman-scholar at leisure. The great value of Smentek's book lies in this rich correction of a persistent one-sided picture of the capital figure of Mariette in the eighteenth-century art world.

Moreover, more than merely presenting a biographical array of Mariette's different activities, Smentek discusses them in the methodological perspective of what she calls the science of the connoisseur. In the book she 'investigate[s] the specific eighteenth-century institutional and economic conditions in which the connoisseur emerged as a social type and art history's distinctive forms of analysis'.<sup>4</sup> For that matter she underscores the often collaborative business, collecting and scholarly practices of Mariette with discussions of still extant parts of his print and drawing collections, (illustrated) publications in which he participated, contemporary theories of connoisseurship (by De Piles, Richardson, Caylus) and philosophies of the senses that were passed on to the field of art scholarship through the natural sciences (Locke). Thus, by analyzing the multi-faceted career of Mariette, Smentek admirably unravels the different ways in which connoisseurship – grounded in the empirical observation of art works – contributed to the emergence of a new kind of art history as a distinct field of scientific knowledge in the eighteenth century. Yet, where she extrapolates from Mariette and his circle to art connoisseurs in Europe, more research is needed to determine the extent to which his practices impacted art history.

### **Print trade and art scholarship**

Arguing that prints are as yet little acknowledged contributors to art scholarship in the eighteenth century, the main aim in the chapter 'Knowledge economies of the print trade' is to reveal how the economic interests of Mariette in the print trade shaped his art scholarship. First of all she follows Mariette's life in the print trade, and the remarkable social advancement he achieved. When Mariette inherited the print business in 1749 it had already been in the family for four generations since the first half of the seventeenth century. His father Jean – who acquired a fortune – gave him the chance to follow a prestigious education, to cooperate in lucrative business, to converse with polite society and to make a grand tour to Italy. In this way Mariette was prepared for a prominent role in the family business and in gentleman society. Because his father had married the daughter of a royal printer, it now became possible also to publish and print books alongside the trade in prints. Smentek states Mariette would publish books in the field of religion, medicine, travel, literature, military pursuits and historical events, but increasingly also in the field of the visual arts with new editions of Dubos and De Piles's books and the *Recueil Crozat*.<sup>5</sup> It was only after the death of both his parents in 1742 and 1749 that Mariette decided to sell his book publishing and printing business, and sold many copperplates. He became an associate member of the *Académie Royale de peinture et de sculpture* and bought himself a country house as well as the position of

<sup>4</sup> Smentek, *Mariette*, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Smentek, *Mariette*, 26-27.

Comptroller General of the Chancellery of France with which he secured nobility for his children.

Smentek gives a rich overview of the impressive scope of the Mariette print trade. She points out that Mariette's notoriety as a collector was not only his own doing, but was also deeply indebted to the commercial activities of his forefathers. In the course of several generations the Mariettes built up a print business in which they sold, published and pirated a wide range of prints including devotional prints, maps, architecture prints, fashion prints, ornament prints – for example for snuff boxes – and old master prints. Occasionally they sold drawings too. With this business they operated in a wide international trade network extending from New France (Canada), Spain, England, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Germany. The Mariettes also acted as agents at auctions, and guided members of elite society. They thereby became brokers between French artists or architects, such as the sculptor Edme Bouchardon or the architect Jacques-François Blondel, and visiting foreigners, such as the Hannoverian diplomat Friedrich Karl von Hardenberg. Furthermore, they would complete the printed oeuvres of artists, also on the basis of catalogues of buyers' print collections, such as for example the oeuvre of Raphael and many others for the ambassador Carl Gustaf Tessin. They did however raise irritation among some of their clients because of the high prices they asked for their old master prints, but apparently this did not compromise their trade. Alongside the business they increased their reputation by assembling a print collection as well as a drawing collection, from which they would not part and only sold duplicates. Both collections have been dispersed, yet, one of the albums devoted to Parmigianino prints is preserved and illustrates vividly by the characteristic signatures on the back how the album was assembled by several generations of the Mariettes.<sup>6</sup>

According to Smentek two highly prolific business activities in particular connected the print trade to art scholarship. They were the commissions for entire 'ready-made' print collections and publication projects in the form of so-called *Recueils* which involved the production of prints as well as accompanying texts. In c. 1716-1717 Prince Eugene of Savoy commissioned a historical survey collection of prints, which would entail 25,000 portraits, 110 albums of views and 255 albums of complete printed oeuvres of artists.<sup>7</sup> For this enormous project Mariette studied the art literature from all over Europe, learned about the art of the European schools and developed his art-critical skills. During his stay in Vienna in 1717 and 1718 he assembled albums and provided indexes with descriptions addressing issues of attribution, rarity and quality.<sup>8</sup> In the prestigious illustrated publication projects of *recueils d'estampes*, of which the *Recueil Crozat* (1729-42) is the most famous, Mariette 'continued the scholarly trajectory'.<sup>9</sup> He not only operated as a commercial

<sup>6</sup> The album with the oeuvre of Parmigianino is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

<sup>7</sup> The print collection of Prince Eugene is preserved in the Albertina in Vienna.

<sup>8</sup> The correspondence with his father at this time gives vivid detail about the discussions involved.

<sup>9</sup> Mariette did not publish the second edition of the *Recueil d'estampes d'après les plus beaux tableaux et d'après les plus beaux dessins qui sont en France dans le Cabinet du Roi, dans celui de Monseigneur le Duc d'Orléans & dans d'autres Cabinets* (Paris 1729-42), but the second volume

publisher, but also as an innovative scholar who contributed to essays and entries and to an updated classification of prints which was geared towards the 'stylistic coherence and chronological development of the various European schools of painting'. By means of these publications Smentek interestingly and importantly suggests that an 'empirical approach to art of the past' was disseminated, as well as a canon of art in which the classicism of Raphael was favoured. In this section references to studies such as those of Bähr and Schwaighofer are lacking, which would have supported the analysis of the collecting-historical context of the recueils as well as that of the history of the drawing reproduction.<sup>10</sup>

Smentek gives a solid and rich picture of the print business of Mariette. Yet, by evoking the many fields of knowledge of the books he published and the broad range of subjects from visual culture represented in the prints he sold, she passes over the question how art came to predominate the trade and scholarship of Mariette? Answers to such a question do not only lie in the hypotheses of Mariette's economic and social concerns and ambitions, but also in his (scholarly) understanding of art that is expressed in the organization or classification of collections, and possibly of his stock. According to Smentek Mariette was 'following established practice' in the arrangement of schools, and he was 'using conventional criteria' of De Marolles and Le Comte to organize print albums according to subject, artist and technique.<sup>11</sup> However, a comparative analysis of the (full) scope of the classification systems used, proposed and even merely suggested by De Marolles, Le Comte, Mariette and for example d'Argenville will bring to light the different choices they made in a period that the encyclopaedic collection made way for more specialist collections such as those devoted to art.<sup>12</sup> These choices could thus be indicative of changing views on the definition of the field of art and beyond, and the contribution that Mariette made in this context.

### The science of drawing connoisseurship

The following two chapters – 'The Making of a Drawings Connoisseur' and 'The Collector's Cut' - are devoted to Mariette as a drawing collector and drawing connoisseur. They form the heart of the book, not only literally, but also in terms of the artistic medium in which Mariette as an art connoisseur excelled. Smentek

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of the first edition (1742). The second edition was published by Basan in 1763. Smentek, *Mariette*, 56 and bibliography.

<sup>10</sup> Astrid Bähr, *Repräsentieren, Bewahren, Belehren: Galeriewerke (1660-1800). Von der Darstellung herrschaftlicher Gemäldesammlungen zum populären Bildband*, Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2009; Claudia-Alexandra Schwaighofer, *Von der Kennerschaft zur Wissenschaft. Reproduktionsgraphische Mappenwerke nach Zeichnungen in Europa 1726-1857*, Berlin: Deutsche Kunstverlag, 2009.

<sup>11</sup> Smentek, *Mariette*, 45, 47.

<sup>12</sup> Michel de Marolles, *Catalogue de Livres d'Estampes et de Figures en taille douce*, Paris: Frederic Leonard 1666; Florent le Comte, *Cabinet des Singularitez d'Architecture, Peinture, Sculpture et Graveure*, 3 vols, Paris: Nicolas le Clerc and Jacques Colombat, 1699-1700; Antoine-Joseph Dezallier d'Argenville, 'Lettre sur le choix & l'arrangement d'un cabinet curieux', *Mercure de France* XII (1727) Janvier-Juin, Geneva 1968 (Paris 1727), 1294-1330.

argues that Mariette 'articulated a view of drawings as offering more immediate encounters with an artist's thought than finished works, and thus as the graphic medium that best allowed one to assess and historically situate the art of the past.'<sup>13</sup> She bases such a view on insights that were developed by Mariette in the fascinating context of collective discussions at meetings organized by various prominent connoisseurs and artists such as Crozat, Coypel, Watelet or Geoffrin, of shared copying by means of drawing and etching and of the exchanges of gifts and favors. Furthermore, she bases Mariette's views on drawings on the widely acclaimed auction catalogue of Crozat's drawing collection (1741) – carefully commented by Mariette – which not only became a transmitter of art connoisseurship but also secured Mariette's international reputation as an art connoisseur. Moreover, Smentek makes a strong case for looking upon Mariette's drawing connoisseurship – and in particular the practice of attribution – as a science in the eighteenth century. His belief in the empirical theory of (comparative) observation at the basis of object research, classification, historicization and evaluation can be backed up by art-theoretical and art-critical discourse of internationally renowned art scholars such as Richardson, De Piles and d'Argenville as well as the methods of the natural sciences.

In the fascinating chapter 'The Collector's Cut' Smentek discusses Mariette's display practices of drawings. She extensively discusses the way he framed the drawings with ornamented and gold frames with captions on blue mounts, whereby he improved the 'prestige' of a drawing as much as created – with the use of a modern concept - a 'museum effect'.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, she draws attention to the different ways in which Mariette's (unfixed) mounts facilitated comparative viewing, which was directed at the creation of a single glance (*coup d'oeil*). In the first impression true connoisseurs not only immediately recognized the subject, but also the author of the drawing(s). Most intriguing of all, Mariette intervened in the drawings themselves by restoring, cutting, completing or even splitting individual sheets, so as to create the best viewing conditions for a 'more complete sensory experience and intellectual understanding of the object'.<sup>15</sup> Smentek thus understands his display practices not primarily from a decorative or aesthetic point of view – although she acknowledges that in the eighteenth century scientific considerations went hand in hand with aesthetic ones –, but from its roots in the sensation theories of Locke and Aristotle which learned that unobstructed, free viewing and clarity of sense impressions lead to knowledge formation.

Smentek is right to claim that Mariette played a key role in promoting autograph drawings among art connoisseurs in Europe, in spite of the fact that she sets out at the same time to correct the picture of him as a drawing collector and

<sup>13</sup> Smentek, *Mariette*, 94.

<sup>14</sup> With reference to Svetlana Alpers, 'The Museum as a Way of Seeing', in Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine, eds, *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1991, 27; Smentek, *Mariette*, 149.

<sup>15</sup> Smentek, *Mariette*, 163.

connoisseur.<sup>16</sup> Yet, she passes over the question to what extent drawings in fact also became dominant within the spectrum of artistic media used not only by Mariette and his circle, but also by art connoisseurs elsewhere in Europe. This question is important because it touches on the intriguing problem of the relative value accorded to the various artistic media used by connoisseurs who were creating fundamentally new views on art history in the eighteenth century. Mariette was unequivocally positive about drawings as tools for studying the artistic past and he had doubts about reproductive prints in which print makers obscured the individual style of artists.<sup>17</sup> Yet, it is not self-evident that his views eclipsed those of the many connoisseurs who continued to believe paintings were the supreme artistic medium from the past, or those of many others who praised and promoted the use of prints that were widely available in often large number to illustrate artistic developments, or those of still others who believed gems were key for the light they shed on art from the classical as well as the early modern past.

### **Antiquarianism and art history of gems**

It is astonishing and fascinating that Mariette's most important scholarly work was not about prints or drawings, but about gems. In the last chapter of her book Smentek restores Mariette's *Traité des pierres gravées* (1750) to the transforming role it played in the historiography of art, where it has been almost completely overlooked. In the eighteenth century gems were appreciated by many collectors – even as central to their interests according to Smentek – and like prints, drawings and coins the kind of easily portable, collectable and reproducible object that could be assembled in such numbers that they could make visible different facets of the artistic past. Crozat assembled a gem collection which Mariette catalogued in 1741 and which he aimed to publish, and also Mariette himself collected them. At the time many publications on gems saw the light of day, such as those by Von Stosch, Lévesque de Gravelle and Winckelmann.<sup>18</sup> That Mariette wrote the *Traité* had to do

<sup>16</sup> This can also be deduced from a range of drawing publications – not mentioned by Smentek – that build on the example of the *Recueil Crozat* and appeared in the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. See Schwaighofer, *Kennerschaft*.

<sup>17</sup> In this context Smentek pays less attention to Mariette as a painting connoisseur, of which the illustrated *Recueils* and some further sources such as (annotated) auction catalogues also testify. Edouard Kopp and Jennifer Tonkovich, 'Pierre-Jean Mariette's Annotations to the 1767 Sale Catalogue', in Christoph Martin Vogtherr and Jennifer Tonkovich, *Jean de Jullienne Collector & Connoisseur*, London: The Wallace Collection, 2011, 134-145; Edouard Kopp and Jennifer Tonkovich, 'The Judgment of a Connoisseur: P.-J. Mariette's Annotations to the 1767 Jullienne Sale Catalogue: Part I (Paintings)', *The Burlington Magazine* 151, 2009, 821-84. Mariette also assembled a small collection of paintings. Pierre Rosenberg, Colin B. Bailey and Sue Welsh Reed, *La Vente Mariette. Le catalogue illustré par Gabriel de Saint-Aubin*, Milano: Mondadori, 1-7.

<sup>18</sup> Philipp von Stosch, *Gemmae Antiquae Caelatae, Sculptorum Nominibus Insignitae/ Pierres antiques gravées, sur lesquelles les graveurs ont mis leurs noms*, Amsterdam: B. Picart le Romain, 1724; Michel-Philippe Lévesque de Gravelle, *Recueil des pierres gravées antiques*, 2 vols, Paris: Pierre-Jean Mariette 1732-1737; Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Description des pierres gravées du feu Baron de Stosch*, Florence 1760.

with his expertise in works on paper, and the similarity that was perceived between prints, drawings and gems as arts of engraving and of disegno. Interestingly, Mariette shared authorship for the book, among which Smentek identifies Mariette's protector the Comte de Caylus, the sculptor Edme Bouchardon, the Uffizi curator of antiquities Antonio Cocchi<sup>19</sup> and anonymous members of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres. Although collective transnational authorship was believed to contribute to the progress of the arts and sciences, it took Mariette almost 25 years to publish the book, and he had to do concessions to its composition.<sup>20</sup> In two separate volumes two fundamentally different views on gems were united, namely Mariette's primarily historical discussion of gems, which favoured the study of style, and the primarily antiquarian interests of the Académiciens, which were directed at the study of subject matter or iconography.

In a valuable in-depth analysis of the *Traité* Smentek shows both how Mariette moved the study of gems away from antiquarianism into the direction of 'Winckelmannian' art history ('From Antiquarianism to Art'), and what range of models and ideas were underlying his 'historical conception of the work of art' ('The Progress of Art'). Also here the empirical analysis of the artistic form of objects was adopted by Mariette to renew the dominant antiquarian study of antique gems. Rather than drawing attention to iconographic interests grounded in philology, he focused on the formal particularities of subtle contour, line and execution indicating personal style, national taste or taste of an age by means of which he aimed to establish different levels of perfection attained among the ancient nations. His belief that only the Greeks could claim artistic perfection was backed up with art literature on the Greek ideal from Pliny to Dolce and from Sandrart to Bellori, but more importantly it was now also based on object observation and research. Smentek indicates that the tentative connections Mariette thus created between the artistic styles and historical periods of Greece paved the way for Winckelmann's seminal analysis in the *Geschichte der Kunst des Altherthums* (1764).

Mariette's *Traité*, and several of his related other writings were determined by models of universal history and its subgenre *histoire littéraire* which entailed 'the history of learning and the arts'.<sup>21</sup> Smentek argues convincingly that also Mariette's never completed history of printmaking could have entailed such a form.<sup>22</sup> In these works he variously combined the familiar genre of artists' lives and new discussions of artistic progress in social-political contexts. Moreover, in the *Traité* he opted for a secular rather than a religious kind of universal history in which attention for

<sup>19</sup> At the time the Uffizi were referred to as the Reale Galleria. Miriam Fileti Mazza and Bruna Tomasello, *Antonio Cocchi primo antiquario della Galleria Fiorentina*, Modena: Franco Cosimo Panini Editore, 1996.

<sup>20</sup> Reference to Élie Fréron, editor of the *Journal étranger* in Smentek, *Mariette*, 192-3.

<sup>21</sup> Pierre-Jean Mariette, 'Discourse on the Progress of Engraving during the Reign of Louis XVI', in Claude-François Lambert, *Histoire littéraire du règne de Louis XIV*, vol 3, book 12, Paris: Prault fils, 1751; Pierre-Jean Mariette, 'Lettre sur Léonard de Vinci, Peintre Florentin. A Monsieur le C. de C.', in *Recueil de testes de caractère & de charges dessinées par Léonard de Vinci Florentin & gravées par M. le C de C*, Paris: Jean Mariette, 1730; *Recueil d'estampes d'après les plus célèbres tableaux de la Galerie Royale de Dresde*, Dresden: n.p., 1753-7.

<sup>22</sup> Smentek, *Mariette*, 218.

peoples, institutions and techniques came to the fore. Art history was thus perceived as part of the history of the human mind (*l'esprit humain*) or of human society as well as of the history of arts and trades (*arts et métiers*). Mariette did not believe that engraving had biblical origins, such as his predecessor Abraham Bosse, but Egyptian origins in the form of hieroglyphic writing which expressed the 'universal human need for commemoration'.<sup>23</sup> Understanding of the ways in which art and taste flowered and declined since then required an understanding of their historical conditions and thus of the state of civilization of a given people. For example, Mariette singled out politeness and commerce (sociable exchange of ideas and *moeurs*) of certain nations as civilizing forces in the development of art. By contrast, war effectively destroyed the arts, taste, *moeurs* and society, not only in the past but also in the eighteenth-century present disturbed by military conflict. Further, a neglect for the status of artists – in classical Roman times and contemporary French alike – lead to artistic decline, i.e. an increase of artistic complexity at the cost of noble simplicity. Smentek points out that Mariette may have promoted the corrective of Greek and Renaissance art, but that he ultimately did not believe that contemporary sculpture and gem engraving could live up to its classical example.

In the introduction Smentek indicates that she does not want to proclaim Mariette as the founding father of art history.<sup>24</sup> However, she is not indifferent to the prominent role he – and his milieu – played in the European world of art connoisseurship. In many places she evokes scholars, connoisseurs and artists from his international network with whom he sometimes corresponded for long intervals of time, such as Anton Maria Zanetti, Niccolò Maria Gaburri, Giovanni Bottari, Christian Wilhelm Ernst Dietrich, Gerard Meerman and Charles Rogers. She also relates the wide international acclaim he received for the publications in which he participated, such as the auction catalogue of Crozat's drawing collection and the *Recueils* of Crozat and Heineken. What's more, in the chapter devoted to the *Traité* she compares aspects of Mariette's work with that of his contemporary of a generation later, Winckelmann, who is regarded as a founding father of art history. Most references suggest that Mariette was a supplier of ideas or methods which Winckelmann later on applied in publications which subsequently have been accorded such profound value for the art-historical discipline.<sup>25</sup> Yet, an evaluation of Mariette as a precursor of Winckelmann is evaded. For a figure with such a pre-eminent position it seems vital to further analyse the emergence, transmission and transformation of ideas and methods of art connoisseurship among Mariette's

<sup>23</sup> Smentek, *Mariette*, 218, 221.

<sup>24</sup> Rather she aims 'to build back into the rich intellectual and philosophical history of art history a sense of the material practices and social relations through which art as an object of empirical and historical knowledge was produced.' Smentek, *Mariette*, 2. In this respect she is indebted to recent research in which the value of the contribution of individual authors to the emergence of (modern) art history is diminished to the advantage of practices or views of various connoisseurs that developed over a longer period of time. For example Gabriele Bickendorf, *Die Historisierung der italienischen Kunstbetrachtung im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1998; Pascal Griener, *La République de l'oeil. L'Expérience de l'art au siècle des Lumières*, Paris: Odile Jacob, 2010.

<sup>25</sup> Smentek, *Mariette*, 212, 226.



predecessors, contemporaries and followers, so as to shed light more specifically on the renewal of art history in the eighteenth century.

Smentek finishes the book dramatically with the auction sales of Mariette's collections of books, prints, drawings, paintings and antiquities which took place after his death in 1775 and 1776. Circumstances reveal that Mariette designated his collections for the French nation, but his family declined the offer of the French king Louis XVI. Negative reception of this decision resulted in the ridicule of the commercial background of the family, who were supposedly motivated by self-interest instead of the public good. Smentek is using the reactions on the sales to gauge the impact of Mariette's connoisseurship of drawings and prints. Apparently, his connoisseurship of gems did not elicit any substantial reactions, and she relegates it to the now less familiar context of today's well-known art-historical notions of artist, authenticity and oeuvre which sprang up at the time. Interestingly, Smentek compares prices fetched for drawings at the Crozat sale of 1741 and at Mariette's of 1775-76. Autograph drawings by artists such as Poussin fetched very high prices, but at the same time there were also disappointed reactions on the moderate quality of Mariette's drawings. Similarly, his print albums were highly appreciated, but his inclusion in oeuvres of prints by and after artists were not anymore up to date according to Heineken and Huber. Nevertheless, by equating prints of the most valued of printmakers, the painter-etchers, to drawings in his seminal *Peintre graveur* (1803-21) Bartsch passed on the eighteenth-century appreciation which connoisseurs such as Mariette had developed for autograph drawings.

In her book Smentek brings back to life the rich scope of economic and art-scholarly activities and social ambitions that Mariette employed. By concentrating on the various artistic media in which he was primarily involved, she each time singles out an aspect of Mariette's expertise. Economic and social shrewdness in the case of printmaking, the very core of his art connoisseurship in the case of drawing, and his art-historical scholarship in the case of gem engraving. In spite of the diverse connections she here creates between artistic medium and expertise, Smentek makes abundantly clear that the scientific method of art connoisseurship was underlying the employment of all these artistic media, which favoured empirical analysis in the historical understanding of art. She thereby makes a highly convincing case of the ways in which Mariette's practices changed the terms in which the artistic past was scrutinized. On this basis it seems only logical to further research the impact of Mariette's practices on art-scholarly projects initiated elsewhere in Europe and the ways it contributed to the emergence of art history as a modern discipline.

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research on the national motives for art collecting and research in eighteenth-century Europe under the title the Artistic Taste of Nations.

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