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An exchange of paintings between the courts of Vienna and Florence in 1792–1793

A logical step taken at the right moment

Debora J. Meijers

Translated from the Dutch by Donald Gardner

It may come as a surprise that in the turbulent political period of spring 1792 a decision was taken at the courts of Vienna and Florence to carry out an exchange of paintings, the aim of which was 'to complete' the collections of the Emperor and the Grand Duke, each 'with the profusion of the other'. There are, however, signs that this step originated in the recent past of both galleries and further that it related to the developments of that particular historical moment. The exchange can be interpreted as a logical consequence of the recently introduced taxonomic division into schools, the advancement of which would lead to an unprecedented level of 'completeness'. Besides being a perfect seed-bed for emerging artists, the presentation of 'all' the schools could also be seen as a metaphor for political power. But in this time of war with France the exchange served mainly as a bond between two brothers who were pursuing very different political courses.

ONE day shortly before 21 May 1792 Franz and Ferdinand, the two eldest sons of the Emperor Leopold II, were walking round the Kaiserlich Königl. Bildergalerie in the Obere Belvedere in Vienna.¹ The visit probably served partly for recreation in the midst of all the upheavals caused by the sudden death of their father some months earlier.² It was a time of radical change in international political relations. The effects of the revolution, which had broken out in France in 1789, were making themselves felt everywhere in Europe. Franz, who had just succeeded his father but had not yet been chosen and crowned as emperor, was already at war with the French *Assemblée* – something that Leopold had tried so hard to avoid.³ This had implications for the relations between the brothers, respectively twenty-four and twenty-three years old. Ferdinand, who had become Grand Duke of Tuscany, after their father had had to give up this title in return for the imperial crown early in 1790, suddenly owed fealty to his brother. The first seeds of conflict had been sown: while Franz, encouraged by a number of his advisers, was keen to adopt an aggressive policy towards France, Ferdinand adhered to his father's legacy of neutrality for Tuscany.

There was, therefore, sufficient reason for the brothers to take a stroll together round the imperial painting collection in the company of Franz Xaver,

Fürst Orsini-Rosenberg, *Oberstkämmerer* to the court at Vienna and a trusty acquaintance from their childhood, and with the Marchese Federigo Manfredini, *maggiordomo maggiore*, formerly their home tutor in Florence.⁴ But pleasant relaxation was not the sole aim of their gallery visit. The composition of the group suggests something else too, namely that they were involved in working out a plan. In fact the same source from which we learn who was present also makes mention of such a scheme: two years later Joseph Rosa, director of the imperial gallery, recalled that the group then strolling through the galleries had indeed been discussing the conditions for an exchange of paintings with the Galleria Reale in the Uffizi in Florence.⁵ It was an exchange for which the court in Vienna appears to have taken the initiative, with the goal of completing both galleries with the aid of each other's profusion.⁶

In retrospect it might appear strange to us that under the bewildering circumstances of this particular historical moment an exchange plan should not only have been drafted but actually implemented in an even more thoroughgoing form than was indicated in the initial scheme. While the first draft referred to an exchange of works by the

Florentine painters, Fra Bartolomeo and Andrea del Sarto, for others by the Venetians, Titian and Paolo Veronese, of which there were plenty in Vienna,⁷ it soon became clear that a much more ambitious undertaking was under way. While the original departure point remained adhered to – Florence for instance was given Veronese's *Esther before Ahasuerus* and Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne (Nymph and Shepherd)* and Vienna got Fra Bartolomeo's *Presentation of Christ in the Temple* and Andrea del Sarto's *The Archangel Raphael with Tobias and Saint Lawrence* (Figs 1–4) – this was only the beginning of a much wider exchange than a mere pair of Venetian paintings for a couple of Florentine ones. At various stages in the years 1792 and 1793, fifty-five paintings changed owner with – besides the masters just mentioned – works by artists such as Alessandro Allori, Agnolo Bronzino, Ludovico Cardi da Cigoli and Giorgio Vasari, but also for instance Salvator Rosa (from Florence to Vienna) in exchange for Giovanni Bellini and Tintoretto, and Giulio Romano, Rubens, Dürer and Holbein (from Vienna to Florence) (Figs 5–6). The selection agreed on by both parties on the basis of their wish-lists of masters led now and then to bickering, for instance when wishes were deviated from or when the physical condition of the paintings dispatched proved disappointing. It was agreed in advance that in such cases the works could be sent back, as happened on a number of occasions.⁸

Although the details of the transaction were largely implemented during the above-mentioned years, there was to be a long and tiresome aftermath, brought about because Tommaso Puccini, who succeeded Giuseppe Pelli Bencivenni as director of the Florentine gallery in 1793, proposed a second exchange due to his dissatisfaction with some of the paintings that his predecessor had accepted. Interestingly, Puccini would have preferred the *Portrait of Gattamelata (Portrait of a Warrior with his Equerry)* by Giorgione (Fig. 7) and the *Purification of the Virgin* by Guido Reni, instead of the *Danae* by Benedetto Cagliari and the *Bacchus and Ariadne (Nymph and Shepherd)* by Titian, despite the fame that the latter work already enjoyed.⁹ These other paintings fitted better with his efforts to exhibit only typical works of all the important masters. Admittedly the exchange plan had been based from the beginning on this principle of choosing representative works,

but Puccini went much further than his predecessor. In this context he also requested three paintings by Caspar de Crayer, Frans Snyders and Jan Fyt respectively, in order to expand the gallery's collection of the Flemish school. These were artists, he argued, who enjoyed renown in Italy, due to the prints of their work in circulation and who would therefore by no means be out of place in the Galleria Reale. From this point onwards the tone of the correspondence became increasingly irritable, especially on the Viennese side, where evidently it was felt that too much was being asked of them; prevarication became the norm. In addition, the political situation had worsened: after October 1793 Tuscany was also at war with France and safe transport of the paintings, carried out up to that point in wagons belonging to the neutral Grand Duke, was for the foreseeable future no longer possible. The conclusion of what for Vienna at least had become a sordid transaction dragged on for a couple of decades, right through the French occupation of Florence and Vienna and the concomitant transport of part of the respective galleries to Paris¹⁰ until 1821, after the Restoration, when the Austrian Emperor finally sent the promised canvases to Florence.

Meanwhile the whole undertaking had ended up in bad odour, at least for Vienna. The view prevailed that the imperial gallery had been seriously short-changed, a feeling that would take on a life of its own right up to the end of the twentieth century. A number of researchers then deemed the time ripe to take a closer look at this episode in the history of the Habsburg and Tuscan collections of paintings. A group of art and cultural historians was set up to explore the by now notorious exchange from a number of angles.¹¹ Amongst other things, the aim was to look at the value placed on these masters at the time of the exchange (could the view still be upheld that Vienna would have wanted to exchange its famous masterpieces, often originating in the collection of Archduke Leopold Wilhelm, for work by third-rate artists?), as well as the backgrounds and theories of the various protagonists (the two brothers, but also the gallery directors Joseph Rosa, Pelli Bencivenni and Puccini, as well as Luigi Lanzi, one of the experts responsible for establishing the canon at that time of the Italian schools of painting). The exchanges carried out by the brothers were also to be studied in the context

of late-eighteenth-century economic and political theory.

My own contribution to the project focused on the question of how far the painting exchanges related to the prevailing enlightened policy in both galleries in the 1770s and 1780s, as expressed in a number of relocations of works, rebuilding activities and internal rearrangements. At the same time, however, I wanted to interpret the transactions of the two brothers in the framework of the dramatic political developments of the years 1792–3. My aim was, and is, to give an account here of both processes – the ‘museumological’ and the political – and in particular their relative importance in the decision to embark on an exchange.

Systems, gaps and duplications

Inherent in each of the different arrangement systems in the history of collecting, there seems to have been a specific idea of what constituted a ‘gap’, and a similarly specific answer to the question of how many examples of a certain category of objects could be acceptable before one could speak of undesirable ‘duplications’. If we want to understand something of the reasons why Franz and Ferdinand decided in 1792 to fill the gaps in each other’s painting galleries out of their respective surpluses, we should first of all revert to the system instituted twelve years earlier in Vienna, namely the taxonomic arrangement according to schools and periods. As is well-known, the State Chancellor Wenzel, Fürst Kaunitz, gave the graphic artist and print dealer Christian von Mechel of Basel a free hand to carry out a revolution in the presentation of the collection in the imperial gallery.¹² Without being in any way answerable to the director Joseph Rosa, or even to the *Oberstkämmerer* Orsini-Rosenberg, under whom responsibility for the gallery officially fell,¹³ Mechel was given the opportunity of radicalizing the division, only recently introduced by Rosa, between the Italian and Dutch schools, by further subdividing the Italians into Venetian, Roman, Florentine, Bolognese and Lombard schools. On the top floor he had carried out an unprecedented rearrangement,¹⁴ by creating two chronological sections for the German and Netherlandish schools of painting respectively – from Theodoric of Prague to Johan Zoffany, and from Jan and Hubert van Eyck to

living masters such as Henri de Cort and Martin Geeraerts, both of whom were professors at the Antwerp Academy.

Through this arrangement by which paintings were hung in a number of separate schools, it became all too plain that the (not yet particularly admired) Germans were allocated almost as much space as the Italians on the first floor,¹⁵ with the Venetians filling two large rooms, while the Florentines occupied no more than a single small corner room. The question then is whether anyone at the time felt uncomfortable with this situation. With regard to the new German section one can detect distinct signs of disapproval shortly after 1780; it proves less easy to discover whether the fact that there were only a few Florentine masters was immediately perceived as a weakness.

A retrospective remark by Rosa in 1796, however, does create this impression. In the new catalogue that he compiled after the exchange, he writes that the Emperor Franz II had achieved something that his predecessors had for a long time longed for – the completion of the gallery collection with ‘den ersten florentinischen Künstlern, den Wiederherstellern der Malerey’, the school which ‘lange Zeit der Römischen, Venezianischen und Lombardischen [Malerschulen] zum Muster gedient hat’.¹⁶ It could indeed be the case that this wish originated as early as 1780 or 1781, when the possibility was discussed in the correspondence between Rosenberg and Emperor Josef II of an ‘advantageous exchange of paintings’.¹⁷ It also seems probable that Leopold, who succeeded Josef in 1790, continued to entertain this plan, still under the influence of Rosenberg. Immediately prior to the above-mentioned remark, Rosa praised Leopold for the ‘grossen Entwürfe’ that the latter had unfortunately not been able to implement due to his premature death on 1 March 1792,¹⁸ thus suggesting that the plan to acquire some Florentine paintings should be reckoned among the projects that had to be postponed. The supposition that Leopold would have regarded an exchange with his former gallery in Florence as the right way to achieve this seems extremely likely – all the more so in that he had constantly exchanged all sorts of objects with his brother Josef in Vienna throughout his time in Florence, such as books, minerals, plants, horses and dogs, scientific instruments and preparations, and also works of art.¹⁹ Furthermore, in the same period of the 1770s and 1780s Leopold was the

Fig. 1. Paolo Veronese, *Esther before Ahasuerus*. Oil on canvas, 208 x 284 cm. c. 1555. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence (inv. 1890 nr. 912). Published with permission of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali).

Fig. 2. Titian, *Ariadne and Bacchus (Nymph and Shepherd)*. Oil on canvas, 149,6 x 187 cm. c. 1570/75. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (inv. nr. 1825).

driving force behind the reorganization of the Galleria Reale and it was highly likely that it was he who had spurred on his brother to follow his example.²⁰ It is therefore probable that the exchange plan of May 1792 did not come out of the blue, but that it belonged to the legacy of the Emperor just deceased, who may have taken it over in his turn from his brother Josef; in this case *Oberstkämmerer* Orsini-Rosenberg would

have provided the intellectual drive and would have formed a vital link.

But the second part of Rosa's statement of 1796 also contains an interesting suggestion, this time with regard to the specific choice of Florentine paintings. The reason why Franz's predecessors wanted the gallery in Vienna to be expanded with 'the earliest' Florentine painters lay in the fact that these

Fig. 3. Fra Bartolomeo, *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*. Oil on panel, 155 x 159 cm. Dated 1516. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (inv. nr. 195).

Fig. 4. Andrea del Sarto, *The Archangel Raphael with Tobias and St. Lawrence*. Oil on panel, 178 x 153 cm. 1512. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (inv. nr. 182).

masters were the ‘Wiederhersteller der Malerey’, who had long served as a model for the Roman, Venetian and Lombard schools.²¹ Taken literally, the gap that needed to be filled in Italian painting was a gap in the series of stages in this art: what was missing was the earliest stage – in other words the Florentine painters. Rosa seems to be hinting that the aim of the exchange was to start exhibiting the ‘origins’ of Italian painting, in addition to the earliest stages of the Netherlandish

and German schools, which had already been introduced with the reorganization of around 1780. Or are Rosa’s words merely a commonplace expression? Taking him at his word, one would expect to see at the very least such fourteenth- and fifteenth-century masters as Taddeo Gaddi and Paolo Uccello on the Vienna wish-list, while in fact the earliest names one encounters are those of Fra Bartolomeo and Andrea del Sarto (Figs 3–4).²² Even so Rosa and the people

Fig. 5. Salvator Rosa, *Justice, driven out of the city, seeks refuge in the countryside (The Return of Astraea)*. Oil on canvas, 138 x 209 cm. Signed, c. 1640/45. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (inv.nr. 1613).

who drafted the list were not inconsistent, at least if we measure them by the standards of their age. The most important reason why Vienna did not ask for the ‘earliest’ Florentine masters was that in 1792 ‘primitive’ art was deemed fit for gallery exhibition only in its country or city of origin: its presentation could serve a purpose there, whereas elsewhere it would be regarded only as crude. In Florence Cimabue, Taddeo Gaddi and Paolo Uccello fitted in with the patriotic message that the gallery of the Grand Duchy had wanted to convey since the 1780s and which is also expressed in an important two-volume book of prints published in Florence between 1791 and 1795, *L'Etruria Pittrice ovvero storia della pittura Toscana dedotta dai suoi monumenti che si esibiscono in stampa dal secolo X fino al presente*.²³ That this publication covered works of an even earlier period than the works in the gallery was because it could also take account of immovable property, such as murals in churches. But both the volumes of prints and the Florentine gallery wanted to show that the revival of painting began in Tuscany, even if other Italian schools had

later risen to greater heights. It appears that it was this idea that underlay Rosa's remark as just quoted, but without it necessarily having had any implications for the chronological range of the Vienna wish-list for the exchange of 1792. It was simply impossible to imagine the Vienna gallery exhibiting Taddeo Gaddi at that early date. The Viennese list omitted these very early stages but conformed to the canon of Tuscan painting for the period c.1500–1680, as indicated by the selection in *L'Etruria Pittrice*, along with masters such as Agnolo Bronzino, Santi di Tito, Lodovico Cardi da Cigoli, Francesco Furino and Carlo Dolci, as well as Fra Bartolomeo and Andrea del Sarto.

Similarly to the early Tuscan masters in the Florentine gallery, the ‘primitive’ masters in the Viennese gallery (in this case German and Netherlandish painters) were not yet considered to have any international or ‘art-historical’ status; in other words, they were not seen as collectable or presentable for their artistic or historical value, apart from their educational message within their own region (or in the imperial territories in the case of

Fig. 6. Albrecht Dürer, *The Adoration of the Magi*. Oil on canvas, 99 x 113. 5 cm. Signed and dated 1504. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence (inv. 1890 nr. 1434). Published with permission of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali).

the Habsburgs). This step, however, was taken very shortly afterwards. We find an early indication of a change in attitude in a statement of *Oberstkämmerer* Rosenberg in 1796, assuring the Florentine gallery director Tommaso Puccini that if he should want ‘qualche altra opera dell’antica scuola tedesca’ besides the requested Italian and Flemish masters, he only needed to give him a nod and a wink.²⁴ This trend towards an ‘art-historical’ approach generally set in only after 1800, when Dominique-Vivant Denon reserved a significant space in the Musée Napoleon for late medieval German and Italian paintings, originating (among other locations) from the confiscated galleries of the two brothers, where their function was so different.²⁵

If we want to go deeper into the question of how far it was the new classification of around 1780 that led to the identifying of duplications and gaps, it is not sufficient for us simply to list the names on the wish-list. It is of primary importance to discover what was understood by a ‘gap’ or a ‘duplication’; what criterion was used to decide whether certain paintings were superfluous or missing?

While Rosa and the others involved in Vienna seem to have made no definite statement about the motivation of their requests, their Florentine partners were

much more explicit, at least in their correspondence.²⁶ The Tuscans not only specified the names of the artists, but also the particular works they required. Even so, it was not simply a matter of the acquisition of as many masterpieces as possible: the aim, rather, was ‘non già di accrescere il numero dei buon Quadri, ma bensì la Serie de grandi Autori’, as Puccini put it, on recalling once again in 1794 the essence of the exchange. In other words, he wanted to ‘completare le serie degli autori, anziché moltiplicare le opere loro’.²⁷ It was not the acquisition of good paintings as an end in itself; what was involved was that the complete series of important artists should be represented with some well-chosen paintings of each master. The neglect of this principle of representation would lead to ‘duplications’ and ‘gaps’.

The reasoning becomes even clearer if we look at the arguments used by Pelli Bencivenni to support his request at the end of May 1792 for two paintings with figures by Titian and Veronese, masters by whom the Galleria Reale already owned some works. In these cases the gaps turned out to be found within the body of work that was *already* in the gallery – gaps which meant that the typical qualities of these artists were not adequately represented. This was because the gallery’s own collection consisted mainly of portraits and works of little artistic worth, while

Fig. 7. Paolo Morando, called Cavazolla (formerly:Giorgione), *Portrait of a Warrior with his Equerry* (formerly *Gattamelata*). Oil on panel, 90 x 73. *l.c.* 1518/22. Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence (inv. 1890 nr. 911). Published with permission of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali).

others were in a poor condition, so that the ‘magia d[e]l Colore’ that was such a feature of the Venetian school no longer made any impact.²⁸ This shows that a series was seen as complete only when the different genres and styles in which an artist had worked were all represented. There is no question that the Viennese were also familiar with this modern way of thinking: Mechel applied it when he hung all the Titians together, so that the visitor was able to compare this great master ‘mit sich selbst’²⁹ in the various periods and themes that his work covered. The exchange of 1792 was based on this principle of representation, which in turn received a fresh impetus due to the exchange.

The exchange and the French Revolution

It should be clear from the above that there was a definite continuity between the reorganization of the galleries in

around 1780 and the concept of an exchange of paintings. As has also been shown, however, it was only at the onset of the 1790s that the absence of certain schools or masters genuinely became an issue. This is not the place to explore in detail the art-theoretical background to this new development; my aim here is confined to looking at the specific historical juncture in which the exchange was decided upon and implemented.

Anyone who seeks concrete answers to the question of a possible relationship between the decision to exchange paintings and the political situation in the years from 1790 to 1792 soon ends up in uncertain terrain. One could hardly expect there to be any sign of a *direct* connection in the midst of the bewildering series of events that occurred, particularly in the first half of 1792. What was more, the two partners in the exchange adopted different political positions – while Franz went to war with France, Ferdinand remained neutral.

First of all, we should sketch briefly the details of the ‘defining moment’ of spring 1792. As we saw, the brothers must have agreed to the exchange shortly before 21 May,³⁰ in other words, at a crucial stage in the history of the Habsburg Empire. The death of their father on 1 March 1792 brought an end to Leopold’s circumspect political approach to events in France: he had attempted to oppose the spread of the anti-royalist, democratic principles of the French Revolution with the aid of an intelligent system of counter-propaganda, and by attempting to set up an alliance with the other European monarchs, especially the Prussians.³¹ During his final months, however, some of his ministers began to be critical of his reluctance to resort to arms. His death and the inexperience of his youthful successor created an opening for another approach. In the same month of March, Franz appointed his former tutor, Count Franz de Paula Colloredo-Wallsee as *Kabinetts- und Konferenzminister*, thus promoting a courtier with minimal political experience as his most important adviser. In matters of foreign policy, the fiercest critics of the circumspect policy of his father now acquired great influence. Phillip von Cobenzl and Anton Spielmann, who previously had been Vice State Chancellor and Counsellor respectively under Kaunitz, marginalized their mentor with their advocacy of war. This development was well under way in the spring of 1792 and would eventually lead to the Chancellor submitting his resignation in March 1793. V.C. Kaunitz’s successor was Baron Franz von Thugut, another of

his political apprentices characteristically more eager to engage in armed conflict than analyse the causes of the Revolution. The war with France, which Leopold and Kaunitz had endeavoured to avoid, was already a fact – on 20 April 1792 the National Assembly in Paris declared war on Franz.

The main issues in the first months of Franz's reign were the impending conflict and, connected with it, the negotiations for an alliance with the King of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm II, and for future compensation for their respective contributions to the war effort – an aspect that was already broached by Vienna on 4 May.³² The new monarch and his staff saw this war not merely as a means of safeguarding the monarchist principle in Europe; above all they were concerned with reinforcing the position of the Habsburg Empire. On the Prussian side Friedrich Wilhelm held exactly the same views, so that very shortly after the declaration of war the two powers had already agreed on what the post-war world would look like – after the defeat of France (which the allies were confident would be brought about in no time at all): Prussia and Russia would each receive part of Poland, while the House of Habsburg would exchange the Southern Netherlands for Bavaria and the Northern Palatinate with the House of Wittelsbach.³³ Preparations for the imperial coronation in Frankfurt, arranged for 14 July, were exploited to prepare the other German principalities for acceptance of these plans.

Everything seemed on track, but the whole undertaking ended in disaster for the Habsburgs. After an initial victory the allied armies suffered a serious setback on 20 September 1792 at Valmy (Département de la Marne) after which Friedrich Wilhelm significantly reduced his military contribution to the alliance, while continuing to claim his share of Poland. The next defeat, in November 1792 at Jemappes, which opened the way to the French conquest of the Southern Netherlands, was suffered by the Habsburg army on its own. The exchange of the Habsburg Netherlands for Bavaria and the northern Palatinate never took place. Prussia separated the partition of Poland from this exchange and implemented it without consulting Vienna. And in February 1793 when Great Britain and the United Republic of the Netherlands also declared war on France, the British made as a condition for their support for the Emperor that the Habsburg presence should be preserved as a buffer between France and the North Sea.³⁴

If we wish to get a picture of the prevailing mood at the Viennese court in the period of the agreement over the exchange, shortly before 21 May 1792, we should bear in mind that the parties involved had no idea of the extreme and shocking events that awaited them. The allies had not yet suffered their humiliating defeats. The Revolution had already begun to radicalize, but no one yet knew the consequences that would ensue. Louis XVI had not yet been taken prisoner (10 August 1792), nor had the French republic been proclaimed (25 September). Even so, in spring 1792 there was already good reason for the court in Vienna to be worried. It is surprising then to notice that people's priorities lay elsewhere, if the remarks of Baron Thugut, still employed at the time as a foreign envoy for the chancellery, are anything to go by. In the middle of June he returned to the court to present his report about what one might already call the *Umwertung aller Werten* which he had observed in Paris but found little interest. According to him, Vienna was deeply embroiled in domestic state issues and had entirely lost sight of the main lines of policy; at the court the main concern was with the mutual conflicts of interest centred around the young and inexperienced monarch.³⁵ He must have been referring (among other things) to the takeover of the chancellery by Cobenzl and Spielmann, who, with their advocacy of war, were busy manoeuvring Franz into engaging in the hazardous negotiations with Prussia. Another, opposite category of interested parties in the struggle to get Franz's attention was that of those who were against the war or even sympathized with the revolutionaries. For example, there was Baron Andreas Riedel, the brothers' former mathematics teacher, who was attempting to convince them of the importance of a speedy peace with France. Later on Riedel spoke of his dismay at the naive set of ideas he encountered with the brothers – an experience that looks a great deal like that of Thugut, though from an opposite viewpoint. Apparently Ferdinand even said, 'dass die Sache mit den Franzosen von gar keiner Erheblichkeit sey und in ein paar Monaten geendigt seyn werde'.³⁶

This was the state of affairs in the middle of June 1792, and there is little reason to doubt that it had been very different a month previously, when the exchange of paintings was agreed upon. It looks therefore as though the court in Vienna was not well informed about the direction in which the Revolution was heading and, what was more, it did not care. At

the same time, as mentioned above, we should be careful not to lose sight of the chronology or to define the events of 1792 in the light of shocking political events which had not yet taken place. The same goes for our interpretation of the exchange of paintings: we should not allow our judgement to be determined by the plans for annexations and exchanges that emerged at later dates, including those that originated with the French government. At the time when the brothers made their agreement for an exchange of paintings, no one could have surmised that some years later specialists would be travelling in the baggage train of the French armies, requisitioning large numbers of works of art from various collections of the rulers of Europe in order to fill up the 'gaps' in the museums of the French republic.³⁷ All this took place some years after the exchange agreement.

In short, this type of gallery policy was not developed – as has sometimes been suggested – in the context of the French Republic or under the auspices of Napoleon, but within the court culture of the Ancien Régime. It is a well-known fact that the museum in the Louvre had a prehistory stretching back many years before the Revolution.³⁸ Nonetheless, it did not exist as such in spring 1792, when Franz and Ferdinand were engaged in updating and improving their public galleries. It was only in September of that year that a *Commission du musée* was instated, and when the 'Muséum français' was opened on 10 August 1793 in honour of the first anniversary of the fall of the monarchy, its organization remained only provisional.³⁹ Moreover, an old-fashioned mixing of schools was opted for as the initial arrangement and there was absolutely no sort of chronology, although this organizational principle had already been instituted in Vienna and Florence twenty years earlier. Only after the European campaigns, when the associated confiscations made the Paris collection much more complete, did it move to an arrangement based on the different European schools of painting.⁴⁰

The 'explanation' for our agreement of 1792 should not be sought here. The reverse was the case, since the galleries in Vienna and Florence were a long way ahead of museological developments in Paris; by exchanging paintings in such a way as to create a representative collection, the brothers had devised an acquisitions policy which would have a significant impact on the later practices of the French government.

We should return now to the question of whether, at the 'key moment' of spring 1792, a relation can be discerned between the decision to exchange paintings on the one hand and the concrete political situation on the other. As we saw, in terms of form and content, the exchange was simply a continuation of developments in the respective galleries that had already been operating for some time. But the reason that this step was taken in spring 1792 in particular, had unquestionably to do with the situation of that moment. One can think of a number of explanations for this.

A complete gallery as a metaphor for political prestige

As yet, Franz ruled as King of Bohemia and Hungary and had not yet become Emperor, although the preparations for his election and coronation were well under way when the exchange agreement was sealed. With the completion of his gallery he was able to present a favourable image of himself and to join the ranks of his ancestors who had distinguished themselves in the field of the arts.⁴¹ The fact that he was waging war at the same time was in no way in conflict with this aspiration: on the contrary, traditionally speaking, a flourishing of the arts and successful military action were deemed to be inseparably linked. State Chancellor Kaunitz, for example, when he embarked on founding an Akademie der schönen Künste und der schönen Wissenschaften in 1770, which also provided access for students to the imperial painting gallery, stressed the relative importance for the state of good artists and great generals. Referring to the situation in France under Louis XIV he had emphasized how artists such as Poussin, Lebrun, Girardon and Mansard through their positive impact on the taste of the nation had left a more lasting heritage than all the Condés, Turennes and Vaubans together. Without art, France would have been utterly impoverished by the wars, despite the considerable conquests of territory made by these generals.⁴² Following shortly after Kaunitz's remarks and largely the result of his insistence, the commission to Mechel for the reorganization of the gallery and the production of a catalogue of the collection can be understood in the context of the aim of improving taste and fostering the arts in order to enhance Austria's international prestige, as well as filling the exchequer.⁴³

Undoubtedly a well-furnished collection of paintings organized in the modern way was also seen as in the national interest, particularly in the first year of the revolutionary wars. One should not underestimate the international aura of the imperial gallery, which in 1792 was the most extensive of all the princely galleries in Europe, and moreover, was presented by school. The supplementing of the still somewhat poorly represented Florentine school would certainly have added to the unique quality and value of the collection as a whole, since the process involved acquisitions that were at times unique, a claim that Rosa, for example, made in his catalogue of 1796. He did not exaggerate when he wrote that it was the only 'German' gallery to own a Fra Bartolomeo.⁴⁴ One might wonder whether this possessing of work of 'all' the schools, apart from making it an ideal soil for budding artists – a point that had already been made at the time of Mechel's reorganization – should not also be seen as a metaphor for political and perhaps even territorial power. This would hardly be surprising at the beginning of the war with France when the issue was to highlight Austrian supremacy in Europe.

Viewed in this light, the Habsburg monarchs from Josef II to Franz II and Ferdinand III also formed a model for Napoleon. What they did in a metaphorical sense, the latter imitated in more banal fashion in parading his position as leader of a European superpower, by concentrating the quintessence of all the varied artistic landscapes of Europe in his own museum.

Opposing political interests?

It must, then, be presumed that the purpose of the gallery visit by Franz and Ferdinand in the spring of 1792 was to combine the unquestionably enjoyable with the unmistakably useful. But how did that fit in with their differing political viewpoints? In April 1792 while Franz had embarked on war, his brother Ferdinand had maintained Tuscany's neutrality, until he succumbed to the pressure to join the coalition consisting of Britain, Austria, Spain, Rome, Naples and Venice in 28 October 1793. It was only then that Tuscany, with great reluctance, also committed itself to war with France.⁴⁵

This image of conflicting interests can to a degree be put in perspective, at least with regard to the early months of the war. The principle of non-intervention

– although with Ferdinand and his ministers it undoubtedly originated in sympathy for the ideals of the Revolution – also had a self-serving aspect. It implied that people expected the different factions in France to exhaust each other in mutual conflict. This policy, which until recently had also been pursued in Vienna, was based on the notion that all that would remain would be an enfeebled nation, an outcome that could only be of benefit to the Habsburgs.⁴⁶ Viewed from this perspective, the different positions towards France adopted by Franz and Ferdinand formed less of an obstacle to their cooperation than might at first sight appear. For both of them, neutral or not, the neutrality of Tuscany could be employed as a useful expedient to advance Habsburg interests. It meant, among other things, that the Grand Duke could keep his ambassador in Paris and conduct normal dealings with the French government, thus enabling him to provide useful information for his brother who was at war with the same regime.⁴⁷

Tuscany itself unquestionably profited from the political upheavals, not least in regard to its position within the art world. The liberal-minded Grand Duchy was rewarded with a steady stream of artists who had found it necessary to leave Rome due to their French sympathies, taking up residence there. An interesting example is the alacrity with which Ferdinand (at the instigation of Manfredini, as we shall see) brought the successful printer Raffaello Morghen from Rome to Florence.⁴⁸ Tuscany furthermore benefited from the impact of the Revolution on the art market. Many members of the beleaguered French aristocracy sold their possessions, which gave the Uffizi Gallery a good opportunity to expand its collection with a section of French masters.⁴⁹

To sum up, it appears as if the Grand Duke exploited every opportunity to promote the prestige of Tuscany – and thus indirectly of the Habsburg Empire; it is therefore no surprise, that he made a point of this during the exchange of paintings with his brother. On 23 June 1792, on finally sealing the deal, he declared that he did it, 'essendo determinato di non trascurare qualunque favorevole circostanza, che si presenti per l'effetto di vie più aumentare il credito di cui meritamente gode la Sua Real Galleria in Toscana'.⁵⁰ This phrasing suggests that while the proposal for the exchange may have come from Vienna, in matters of this sort Florence was in no way subservient to the Emperor. It could take

an equally active role, because while Florence needed Vienna, the opposite was also the case.

Cementing relations between the brothers

This interpretation can be confirmed if we look at the possible interests of the two court officials who accompanied the brothers in spring 1792 on their visit to the gallery in Vienna. As already mentioned, they were two men with whom Ferdinand and Franz had been on close terms since childhood: the Marchese Federico Ferdinando Manfredini and Franz Xaver, Fürst Orsini-Rosenberg, respectively *Maggiordomo maggiore* at the court in Florence and *Oberstkämmerer* in Vienna.⁵¹ As prime minister to their father in Florence from 1766 to 1772, Rosenberg (born in Vienna in 1723) had known the two brothers from infancy. During these first years of Leopold's rule, Rosenberg served as his mentor and as the real architect of the enlightened political reforms carried out in Tuscany.⁵² He then returned to Vienna to take on the post of *Oberstkämmerer*. Manfredini (born in Rovigo near Venice in 1743) took up a post at the Tuscan court after a brief career in the army. From 1774 to 1791 he filled the posts of assistant tutor and subsequently of *ajo*, or tutor, to Leopold's sons.⁵³

Both counsellors had had an intimate knowledge of the court collections over many years – Rosenberg with those in Florence on the eve of the first reforms under Leopold, and those in Vienna where, as head of the galleries and cabinets, he had embarked on the well-known major reorganization in the 1770s. The basis of the reforms in both Florence and Vienna consisted of a division into schools of painting. One should not be surprised then that Rosenberg is regarded as 'il primo motore' of the exchange agreement,⁵⁴ all the more so as he continued to hold an important position in the imperial court at the time of the gallery visit. Even when Franz drastically changed the composition of his staff, the *Oberstkämmerer* continued to play an active role in the *Ministerial-Conferenzen*, the meetings of the monarch and his staff. It is true that he then had to share the table with figures such as the new *Konferenzminister*, Colloredo-Wallsee, Franz's former tutor, who was no match for Rosenberg with his almost fifty years of international political experience. In the council of ministers the latter pushed at an early stage for a cautious attitude towards Prussia and for making overtures to Britain, a calculation that soon

proved correct. In particular he was fiercely opposed to any indemnification from Poland for the Austrian contribution to the war, arguing instead for France to be presented with the bill, specifically by laying claim to Alsace – a viewpoint that was eventually rejected. Even so, one gets the impression from the records that Rosenberg's ideas were taken seriously by a number of the new ministers.⁵⁵ Nor are there any indications that Rosenberg's control over the painting gallery was jeopardized, as had been the case twelve years earlier with the arrival of Mechel.⁵⁶ It could even have been that he saw an opportunity in this new situation, as previously suggested, to resurrect an old plan. In a letter prior to January 1781, the Emperor Josef had informed Rosenberg that he did not feel persuaded by a proposal to purchase certain paintings that the latter had put to him, but that if the possibility of a genuinely advantageous exchange should arise, it should not be ignored.⁵⁷ Unfortunately we do not know whether they had a specific partner for the exchange in mind, but, given the continuing confidential relations Rosenberg had maintained with Leopold after his departure from Tuscany in 1772, is it not impossible that the suggestion implied a transaction with the gallery in Florence. Already at that stage the idea of an exchange would have fitted in with the enlightened gallery administration at both courts, as was also the case with the relaunch of the plan a decade later.

Similar motives seem to have played a role with Manfredini, but in his case it was in combination with a factor relating to his former post. The idea of stimulating the brothers to exchange paintings was appropriate to his original role as family tutor. It is also not improbable that he had a personal stake in the proposal, especially if we bear in mind the sort of circles he moved in as art connoisseur and collector. He was, for instance, on friendly terms with Tommaso Puccini when the latter still lived in Rome – that is, before his appointment as director of the gallery in Florence on 1 January 1793.⁵⁸ This also raises the question of whether it was perhaps Manfredini who arranged for Puccini, more of a specialist in paintings and prints, to be appointed as successor to gallery director Pelli Bencivenni, whose approach was more encyclopaedic.⁵⁹ Perhaps his attention was drawn to Puccini by a common friend, Raffaello Morghen, whom we have already mentioned and who was working in Rome as a printer with reproductions of famous paintings as his speciality. It is at any rate certain that Manfredini had

been urging this entrepreneur to settle in Florence since March 1792.⁶⁰

From his post at the court in Florence Manfredini appears to have been a driving force in continuing the work of the past decades in modernizing the gallery. As was often the case in this period, 'art-historical' and economic considerations went hand in hand. Modernization meant more than merely creating a complete representation of the schools of painting with the addition of a large number of Venetian masters – a school for which Manfredini moreover felt a great liking. A complete gallery was also an important instrument for the enlightened ruler in exercising his main tasks, summed up by the *Maggiordomo* as being 'Educare . . . arricchire . . . felicitare'.⁶¹ His interest in Morghen confirms this picture. The aim of his thriving printing concern was to spread information and improve taste. At the same time it formed a lucrative source of income for Tuscany, through the export of prints, which not only raised tax revenues but was also a factor in the influx of British tourists.⁶²

Manfredini's views on the politics of the day are also informative for anyone wishing to gain an insight into the role he played in the exchange. He emerges as a man whose aim was to continue Leopold's efforts to reconcile 'la voce del Pubblico e la volontà del Sovrano' – the public voice and the sovereign's will. In this he acknowledged that the position of the monarch had altered considerably in the first years of the revolution, although he continued to see moderation, disinterest and respect for the law – virtues that he admired in Franz – as forming 'il rimedio contro i Francesi'.⁶³ These were his words in June 1792, prior to the initial battles. A few months later, after the first Austrian defeats and the Prussian betrayal, Manfredini was still in favour of a peaceful solution, but he had to a degree shifted his emphasis. In a long letter of 9 November 1792, he impressed on Franz that 'toute l'Europe' called on him as Emperor to recognize the absolute independence of France. As a good educator he complimented Franz on his magnanimous character, pointing out how much honour would accrue to him with the restoration of peace and order. But Manfredini also stressed its importance for the future of the Habsburg monarchy. Like Rosenberg he was cautious towards Prussia. In his view its expansion might form a more serious threat than the new regime in France, which as a republic was not destined to last: 'Pour se consolider, il faut que la force de la Loi

et de la Justice se fasse valoir [in France] aussi bien qu'en Autriche, et en Toscane. Et si Elle [the French republic] n'y parviendra pas, comme il est fort probable, c'est l'exemple le plus frappant pour convertir les Peuples de l'Europe entière.'⁶⁴ He sounds here like the former tutor advising his pupil; but Franz was not in a mood to listen and he turned down Manfredini's offer to serve as mediator with the French government.⁶⁵

What interests might have prevailed with Manfredini in embarking on an exchange agreement in the context of the political situation of spring 1792? One gets a picture of a figure who positioned himself as mediator between the two brothers; this situation probably began when they were still young, but was certainly so after both of them had taken up their positions as monarchs and he himself had been allocated an important political post as *Maggiordomo*, with responsibilities similar to those of prime minister. After March 1792 the political course adopted by the court at Vienna was in danger of being entirely dictated by the advocates of war. To keep on good terms with the new Emperor and to bridge the impending gap between the policies of the regimes of Austria and Tuscany, he had to take decisive action. We see Manfredini engaged in tactical manoeuvres, praising the young ruler in didactic fashion, referring to the enlightened values he had instilled in him, in order to promote the 'Tuscan' direction. The first, and perhaps the best means of achieving this end was to present their *shared* interests as central – and the exchange was one such means, since its aim was for the two rulers to share their own abundance to the enrichment of both. Seen in this way, it is not far-fetched to interpret the exchange as a pedagogical means of conflict-solving and to assume that Manfredini would have played an important role in launching the exchange agreement.

His letter of 9 November 1792 mentioned above marked a key moment in the relations between the brothers. On the same day this letter generated a similar letter from Ferdinand, which for the first time highlighted with great clarity the differences in their political ideas. Ferdinand's letter was intended to back up and expand on that of Manfredini. 'Ich habe alle Ursache zu glauben', he tells his brother, 'dass man wo immer die Lage der Sache viel schlechter und viel verzweifelter und mit Angst glaubt als in Wien. Erwinnere liebster Bruder dass Russland nichts anders will als dich und die Preussen gänzlich zu ruinieren.' Ferdinand goes on to assure Franz that,

despite the precarious circumstances and the difference in their viewpoints, nothing has altered to affect their close ties. Having reassured him on that count, he proceeds to discuss the painting exchange: 'Heute geht unser Transport nach Wien ab welcher die Bilder bringt. Wenn du wieder etwas von hier willst schaffe nur und du wirst gewiss so gut als möglich in allem bedient seyn.'⁶⁶ The smooth transition from one statement to the other is hardly a coincidence. A game of give and take is going on here, not just of one painting for another, but also of offering comforting gifts as opposed to destabilizing criticisms.

Conclusion

This analysis gives us a picture of two partners aiming not only to profit from each other's galleries but also from each other's strong points, despite their different political positions. A common interest united the brothers in the period of April and May 1792. A brother, who as the head of a state subject to the Emperor maintained normal diplomatic relations with the enemy, could be useful as a secret source of information, on condition that the two remained on good terms.⁶⁷ And when in April Franz declared war, this was mainly to make territorial gains for the empire as a whole. All this evidently goes against any initial expectation that this war and the conflicting political positions of the brothers would form an obstacle to their collaboration over the collections. It seems, rather, that (especially on Ferdinand's side and under the influence of Rosenberg and Manfredini) the exchange was intended as a vehicle to keep the structure of family interests and ties intact. The political and dynastic requirements of the moment made it opportune to build on museological conditions created in both galleries during the previous decades. No arrangement could have revealed gaps and surfeit more effectively than the taxonomic classification into schools and sub-schools of painters and periods. In a clearer fashion than the former 'mixed' mode of arrangement, this system exposed gaps in one location and surplus in another. The result was to arouse an intense desire to complete both collections and to do so by means of exchanges – a method of acquisition that previously had been accepted practice with natural history specimens, coins and medals, and maybe even prints, and which now proved extremely effective in the field of paintings. The decision to undertake the exchange was a logical step and one taken at the right

moment – an opportunity created by the circumstances of spring 1792.

Whether the same could be said concerning the further development of the exchange process after 1793 is doubtful. Although in that year the exchange was regarded as complete as far as Vienna was concerned, Tommaso Puccini in Florence insisted on a new consignment, partly to replace the two paintings that did not comply with the requirement of being characteristic of the schools and masters not represented in the Galleria.⁶⁸ The ambitions of this modern gallery director were thwarted by the radicalization brought about by the war with France, which would result in the confiscation of parts of both galleries. When the last consignment finally arrived in Florence on 24 April 1821 after twenty-eight years of delays, not only had the map of Europe changed: the same was also true of the nature of the painting galleries of the two royal brothers.

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Notes and references

The following abbreviations have been used throughout:

AGF: Archivio delle Gallerie Fiorentine, Florence; ASF: Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Florence; HHK: Haus-, Hof- und Kammerarchiv, Vienna; HHSA: Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna; OkäA: Oberstkämmerer Amt; KHM: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna; GdU: Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence.

- 1 This article is the result of my research in the context of an international project organized and funded by the Da Ponte Institute in Vienna. Due to unfavourable circumstances, the planned two-volume publication failed to materialize in 2007. Since then a number of the scholars involved have published individually (parts of) their respective contributions: see, for instance, M. Fileti Mazza, E. Spalletti and B.M. Tomasello, *La Galleria 'rinnovata' e 'accresciuta': gli Uffizi nella prima epoca lorenese* (Florence, 2008); E. Miklautz, *Geschenkt. Tausch gegen Gabe – eine Kritik der symbolischen Ökonomie* (Munich, 2010); N. Fischer, 'Kunst nach Ordnung, Auswahl und System. Transformationen der kaiserlichen Gemäldegalerie in Wien im späten 18. Jahrhundert', in G. Swoboda (ed.), *Die kaiserliche Gemäldegalerie in Wien und die Anfänge des öffentlichen Kunstmuseums*, vol. 1: *Die kaiserliche Galerie im Wiener Belvedere (1776 – 1837)* (Vienna, 2013), pp. 22–89; Th. DaCosta Kaufmann, 'Luigi Lanzi: collecting, historiography, and the exchange of paintings between Vienna and Florence', *Journal of Art Historiography* [forthcoming 2013]. See also: D. J. Meijers, 'Een schilderijenruil tussen de hoven van Wenen en Florence in 1792: hoe twee broers besloten wederzijds hun

- galerijen te vervolledigen met de overvloed van de ander', in Johann-Christian Klamt and Kees Veelenturf, *Representatie. Kunsthistorische bijdragen over vorst, staatsmacht en beeldende kunst, opgedragen aan Robert W. Scheller* (Nijmegen, 2004), pp. 196–216.
- 2 Leopold died on 1 March 1792, just forty-five years old and only two years after succeeding his brother Jozef. Until the moment that he reluctantly accepted the imperial crown, he had ruled in Florence as Grand Duke of Tuscany, which he had transformed in a matter of decades into one of the most modern states of Europe. His sons Franz and Ferdinand were born and raised there. See A. Wandruszka, *Leopold II. Erzherzog von Österreich, Grossherzog von Toskana, König von Ungarn und Böhmen, Römischer Kaiser* (Vienna and Munich, 1965); F. Pesendorfer, *Ein Kampf um die Toskana. Grossherzog Ferdinand III. 1790 – 1824* (Vienna, 1984).
 - 3 France declared war on Franz as King of Bohemia and Hungary on 20 April 1792. His election and coronation as Emperor took place in Frankfurt on 14 July of that year.
 - 4 The *Oberstkämmerer* (Grand Chamberlain) was not only head of the personal staff of the Emperor, he was also responsible for the collections of art and natural history. The post of *Maggiordomo* (German: *Obersthofmeister*) can in short be described as that of prime minister.
 - 5 HHK, OkäA, Sonderreihe 38 a and b: Rosa to Rosenberg, 20 June 1794.
 - 6 That the initiative came from Vienna is suggested by Ferdinand's own words of 23 June 1792, which create the impression that he was confronted with this favourable opportunity to add to the prestige of his gallery; ASF, Imperiale e Regia Corte Lorenese 3469. Guardaroba. Affari diversi . . . anno 1792, n. 3373: 'Sua Altezza Reale essendo determinato di non trascurare qualunque favorevole circostanza, che si presenti [italics by DM] per l'effetto di vie più aumentare il credito di cui meritamente gode la Sua Real Galleria in Toscana . . .' There is also a source that names *Oberstkämmerer* Rosenberg as 'il primo motore' of the project: AGF, f. xxvii, GdU, Affari per l'anno 1795, n. 14 [2], Puccini to Rosenberg, 13 August 1795. For one of the first accounts of the purpose of the exchange, see: AGF, f. xxv, GdU, Affari per l'anno 1792 n. 32 [13]: unsigned (probably Pelli Bencivenni) to the Grand Duke, 6 June 1792: the exchange should be such that it 'conviene per due Sovrani Fratelli che amano vicendevolmente arricchire le loro preziose raccolte'. In other statements the term 'completare' is also used, for example in: AGF, f. xxv, GdU, Affari per l'anno 1792 n. 32 [8].
 - 7 AGF, f. xxv, GdU, 1792, n. 32 [19]: Memoria mandata a Vienna, 28 May 1792. From here on the attributions will be adhered to that were used by those involved at the time.
 - 8 Vienna returned six paintings due to their poor condition, while Florence only rejected two works, and not because of their condition but because other masters were required (see below).
 - 9 AGF, f. xxvi, GdU, 1793–94, n. 52 [2]: Puccini to Rosenberg, before 20 June 1794. The canvas by Reni was not released by Vienna; currently it is catalogued as a *Presentation in the Temple* after Reni (KHM, inv. no. 248).
 - 10 The occupation of Florence took place on 25 March 1799 and was followed by a requisitioning of a selection of paintings from the gallery. The latter also occurred in Vienna, but ten years later; during the first occupation of the city in 1805 the gallery was able to move the greater part of the collection to safety. During the second however, in 1809, the French requisitioned the remaining works.
 - 11 The initiative came from Johannes Weidinger. Those who took part, besides myself, were: Nora Fischer, Elisabeth Zerbst, Elfie Miklautz, Karl Schütz (from Vienna, the first two mentioned being the organizers of the project), Miriam Fileti Mazza, Bruna Tomasello, Ettore Spalletti, Claudio Di Benedetto (Pisa and Florence), Thomas Macho (Berlin), Claudia Brink, Thomas Ketelsen (Hamburg), Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann (Princeton). See also note 1.
 - 12 D. J. Meijers, *Kunst als Natur. Die Habsburger Gemäldegalerie in Wien um 1780* (Vienna, 1995; Dutch edn Amsterdam, 1991).
 - 13 HHSA, OkäA, Sonderreihe 38 a and b, no. 72/1782: Rosenberg to Emperor Joseph II, 25 October 1782.
 - 14 Ten years earlier a plan for a chronological arrangement had been drafted for the gallery in Dresden, although it paid no special attention to the German school and was never implemented. See V. Spenlé, 'Eine chronologische Historie der Malerey in Gemälden', Vorschläge aus dem Jahre 1771 zu einer Neuordnung der Dresdener Gemäldegalerie', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 67 (2004), pp. 461–78 on Count Vitzthum's proposal.
 - 15 The floor area was the same, but one should bear in mind that the top storey had less wall area due to its lower height, a drawback that was compensated for by the generally small format of the German paintings.
 - 16 Rosa 1796, Erste Abtheilung, Italienische Schulen, p. xi. This is, incidentally, one of the few occasions (at least in the available documents) that the term 'school of painting' is used in connection with the exchange. There are two other instances, also in 1796: AGF, f. xxviii, GdU, Affari per l'anno 1796–97 n. 14 [3], Puccini to Rosenberg talks of the 'scuola fiorentina'; and idem, n. 14 [4], Rosenberg to Puccini: 'antica scuola tedesca' (see note 24).
 - 17 HHSA, Akten des OkäA, Sonderreihe 38 a and b, CC 80, Josef II to Rosenberg [n.d., before January 1781]. See also note 57.
 - 18 J. Rosa, *Gemälde der k. k. Gallerie* (Vienna, 1796), Erste Abtheilung, Italienische Schulen, xi.
 - 19 Besides these concrete concerns, Wandruszka also lists more abstract exchange objects: 'man tauschte Erfahrungen und Ansichten, Projekte, Gesetzesentwürfe, Polizei- und Sanitätsreglements, Studienordnungen . . .' See Wandruszka, op. cit. (note 2), p. 92. Leopold's sons continued this custom. Over the years Franz sent Ferdinand musical instruments and sheet music, books, Bohemian pheasants, Hungarian boots and trousers; in return he was given lemon trees, Catalan jasmine bushes, camels, busts of philosophers, prints, physics instruments and a carpet, see: C. Wolfgruber, *Franz I. Kaiser von Österreich* (Vienna and Leipzig, 1899), vol. II, pp. 220–21.
 - 20 Meijers, op. cit. (note 12), pp. 73, 151.
 - 21 Rosa, op. cit. (note 18), p. xi.
 - 22 The oldest painting sent by Florence, although this master was not even on the Vienna wish-list, was Pietro Perugino's *Virgin with Child and Saints* of 1493.
 - 23 Marco Lastri, *L'Etruria pittrice ovvero storia della pittura toscana dedotta dai suoi monumenti che si esibiscono in stampa dal*

- secolo x. fino al presente* (Florence: Niccolo Pagni e Giuseppe Bardi, 1791 and 1795).
- 24 AGF, f. xxviii, GdU, Affari per l'anno 1796–97, n. 14 [4], Rosenberg to Puccini, 14 March 1796. Involved here were the works by Giorgione, Reni, De Crayer, Snyders and Fyt that Puccini wanted. He did not indicate that he needed any old German paintings.
 - 25 McClellan points out that the Paris wish-list of Florentine primitives of around 1800 follows the chapters in Luigi Lanzi's *Storia pittorica della Italia* of 1795–96 precisely. See: A. McClellan, *Inventing the Louvre. Art, politics, and the origins of the modern museum in eighteenth-century Paris* (Cambridge and New York, 1994), p. 119 and note 129.
 - 26 On the Viennese side there is only a wish-list: AGF, f. xxv, GdU, Affari per l'anno 1792, n. 32 [17]. This list deserves a prize for its vagueness, with its summary that consists of nothing but names of artists, which perhaps had partly to do with the diffuse character of the artistic property of the Grand Duchy (with the actual selection of works in Florence drawn not only from the Galleria but also from the Palazzo Pitti and the Palazzo Vecchio). It is possible that the Florentine wish-list, which has unfortunately not been recovered, was more specific in its requests, asking for paintings by name. That there was a Florentine wish-list, and that it had been drawn up by Luigi Lanzi, is suggested by Rosa's phrasing in the 'Nota di quadri presi dall'Imperiale Galleria . . .' of July 1792: AGF, f. xxv, GdU, 1792, n. 32 [7].
 - 27 See E. Spalletti, 'Istituzioni artistiche Fiorentine 1765 – 1825: Dal primo periodo del granducato di Ferdinando III agli anni della Restaurazione', in Francis Haskell (ed.), *Atti del XXIV Congresso Internazionale di Storia dell'Arte*, vol. VII: *Saloni, gallerie, musei e loro influenza sullo sviluppo dell'arte dei secoli XIX e XX* (Bologna, 1979), pp. 13–21. On p. 13 he refers to AGF, f. xxvi, 1793–94, a 45. See also AGF, f. xxvi, GdU, 1793–94, n. 52 [2], Puccini to Rosenberg, before 20 June 1794. This was the reason why Puccini wanted to return two paintings: *Bacchus and a Faun* by Titian and *Danae* by Benedetto Cagliari, and to acquire in their stead the portrait of *Gattamelata* by Giorgione and the *Purificazione della Vergine* by Guido Reni.
 - 28 AGF, f. xxv, GdU, 1792, n. 32 [19], Pelli to Bartolini, 28 May 1792: ' . . . quello che poi farebbe onor[e] alla R.[eal] Galleria di Tiziano, o di Paolo sarebbe qualche pezzo di più figure, e di buona conservazione p[er] ritenere la magia d[e]l Colore di questi due Veneziani essendo La R.[eal] A.[l]tezza V[ost]ra ricca di ritratti usciti dal loro Penello, e di tavole di seconda classe (eccettuando la famosa Venere) o alquanto guaste dal tempo.' Pelli too evidently wanted 'something of everything'. This makes it particularly striking that Puccini returned the *Bacchus and Ariadne* by Titian on the grounds that there was already enough work by this master in the gallery.
 - 29 Chr. von Mechel, *Verzeichniss der Gemälde der Kaiserlich Königl. Bilder Gallerie in Wien, verfasst von Christian von Mechel nach der von ihm im Jahre 1781 gemachten neuen Einrichtung* (Vienna, 1783), p. 31. Cf. also Giacomo Durazzo, who aimed in his introduction to the print collection of Albert von Saksen-Teschen in 1773–6 to achieve a correct representation of all the periods of art, instead of a meaningless increase in the number of prints, see: Meijers, op. cit. (note 12), p. 148. A comparison with Giuseppe Olmi's statement with regard to natural history collections is also interesting in this connection: he shows that the meaning of the concepts of 'doublet' and 'gap', and hence that of a 'complete series', is historically determined, see: G. Olmi, 'From the marvellous to the commonplace: notes on natural history museums (16th–18th centuries)', in R. G. Mazzolini (ed.), *Non-verbal Communication in Science prior to 1900* (Florence, 1993), pp. 241, 256.
 - 30 On this day the Grand Duke informed his *Amministratore del patrimonio della corona* Luigi Bartolini from Vienna about the decision to embark on the exchange; this *dispaccio*, which is no longer to be found, is referred to in ASF, Imperiale e Regia Corte 271, vol. 9, protocollo 74, signed by the Grand Duke on 23 June 1792.
 - 31 See: G. Lettner, *Das Rückzugsgefecht der Aufklärung in Wien 1790–1792* (Frankfurt am Main and New York, 1988).
 - 32 K. A. Roider jr., *Baron Thugut and Austria's response to the French Revolution* (Princeton, 1987), p. 95.
 - 33 Ibid., pp. 94–6.
 - 34 Ibid., p. 103.
 - 35 Roider refers to the letters from Thugut to Mercy d'Argenteau, the Austrian ambassador to France, of 21 June and 4 July 1792, see: Roider, op. cit. (note 32), pp. 96–7.
 - 36 E. Wangermann, *Von Joseph II zu den Jakobinerprozessen* (Vienna, Frankfurt and Zürich, 1966), p. 135; H. Reinalter, *Österreich und die französische Revolution* (Vienna, 1988), p. 103.
 - 37 Cf. for instance: P. Rosenberg and M.-A. Dupuy (eds), *Dominique-Vivant Denon: L'œil de Napoléon*, exh. cat., Musée du Louvre (Paris, 1999). The first move in this direction would be a French proposal for an exchange with Tuscany: with the annexation of the Austrian Netherlands in 1794 the French confiscated so many works by Netherlandish masters, that they conceived of a plan that the 'superfluous' paintings should be sent to Florence in exchange for Italian masters. Of course Ferdinand felt no sympathy for this transaction, by which, in exchange for his handing over his Tuscan property, he would receive art that the French had just confiscated from a province belonging to his brother. The notion of an exchange however must have sounded familiar to him. Entirely in the spirit of the route that he himself had followed a few years previously with Franz, he replied to the French plan with another proposal – to exchange some Italian paintings for an eagerly desired work by Eustache Le Sueur, whom Luigi Lanzi spoke of as 'the French Raphael'. Nothing came of this proposal however: see P. Rosenberg, 'Les relations artistiques entre la Toscane et la France sous la Révolution: à propos de l'échange d'un Le Sueur', in *Actes du colloque 'Florence et la France. Rapports sous la Révolution et l'Empire'*, Florence, 2, 3, 4 juin 1977 (Florence and Paris, 1979), pp. 129–49, especially pp. 133, 135.
 - 38 See for instance: É. Pommier, *Le problème du musée à la veille de la Révolution* (Montargis, 1989) and McClellan, op. cit. (note 25).
 - 39 McClellan, op. cit. (note 25), p. 95.
 - 40 Ibid., p. 95 (provisional arrangement in 1793), p. 104 (controversy in 1792). See also B. Savoy (ed.), *Tempel der Kunst. Die Geburt des öffentlichen Museums in Deutschland 1701–1815* (Mainz am Rhein, 2006) for the arrears in the museum in Paris as compared with the princely galleries in German-speaking territories.
 - 41 In the introductions to the catalogues of Mechel, op. cit. (note 29) and Rosa, op. cit. (note 18) this sort of argument occupies an important place.
 - 42 C. von Lützow, *Geschichte der Kaiserlich Königl. Akademie der Bildenden Künste* (Vienna, 1877), p. 52. Kaunitz refers to the French wars with the Netherlands and the western parts of Germany of 1672–5.
 - 43 Meijers, op. cit. (note 12).
 - 44 Rosa, op. cit. (note 18), p. 123. It concerns the *Presentation of Christ in the Temple* of 1516 (see fig. 3), a possession that,

- as he goes on to emphasize, had a glorious prehistory: 'Von diesem Gemälde aufgerufen, soll Raphael von Rom nach Florenz gekommen seyn, um sich über das kraftvolle Kolorit des Bartolomeo zu belehren. Daher es Vasari, Baldinucci, Peter von Kortona, Algarotti, Mariette und Mengs in ihren Kunstschriften hoch gerühmt haben.'
- 45 This situation lasted until the Treaty of Basel of 9 February 1795, after which the Grand Duchy reverted to its neutral position until 1798. On 25 March 1799 Florence was occupied by the French army and a selection of the paintings in the gallery was requisitioned. See also note 10.
 - 46 Roider, op. cit. (note 32), pp. 90–91.
 - 47 In a letter to Franz of 11 September 1792 Ferdinand explains this decision as follows: 'Dieser sind liebster Bruder meine Ursachen [in order to keep my envoy in Paris]. Die Franzosen sind sehr artig mit mir ohne Ausnahm einer einzigen Gelegenheit; der Favi mein Minister ist beschieden, unterrichtet mich und ich durch seinen Weg kann dir selbst mit der Zeit nützliche Nachrichten vielleicht mittheilen und endlich ist mir äusserst wichtig von ihren Kriegsschiffen nicht belästigt zu werden. Alle Augenblicke kommen einige nach Livorno. Ich bitte dich aber mir zu sagen ob ich es so recht und auch nach deinem Wunsch verstehe.' HHSA Familienkorrespondenz-Sammelbände, Briefe des Erzherzogs Großherzogs von Toskana vom Jahr 1792.
 - 48 See the report by an Englishman from Rome, d.d. 10 May 1793 in: *Neues Museum für Künstler und Kunstliebhaber* 1 (1794), p. 116: the Grand Duke had cast his eye on a 'gewinnreiche Handelsspekulation', which had previously provided England with plenty of funds, namely the export of prints. Morghen specialized in reproductions of famous paintings.
 - 49 Spalletti, op. cit. (note 27), p. 13; P. Rosenberg, *Pittura francese nelle collezioni pubbliche fiorentine*, exh. cat., Palazzo Pitti (Florence, 1977); Rosenberg, op. cit. (note 37), p. 133.
 - 50 See note 6.
 - 51 See notes 4 and 5.
 - 52 A. Wandruszka, *Österreich und Italien im 18. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 1963), p. 90.
 - 53 Manfredini was *sotto-ajo*, or assistant tutor, under Franz Colloredo-Wallsee, until the latter went to Vienna with Franz in 1784. Wandruszka, op. cit. (note 2), p. 399 and note 30.
 - 54 AGF, f. xxvii GdU, Affari per l'anno 1795, n. 14, Puccini to Rosenberg, 13 August 1795.
 - 55 A. von Vivenot, *Quellen zur Geschichte der deutschen Kaiserpolitik Österreichs während der französischen Revolutionskriege* (Vienna, 1873–90), vol. II: *Die Politik des österreichischen Vice-Staatskanzlers Grafen Philipp von Cobenzl unter Kaiser Franz II.* (1874), p. 142 (18 July 1792), 183 and 187 (3/5 Sept.), 328 (3 Nov.), 494 (13 March 1793).
 - 56 The affair was directly related to the much talked-about reorganization of the gallery by Christian von Mechel between 1779 and 1781 and is known to us from a letter of Rosenberg to Josef, dated 25 October 1782, which refers to the reversion after Mechel's departure to relations as they had been previously: HHSA, Akten OkäA Sonderreihe 38 a and b, Nr. 72/1782, Rosenberg to Josef II, 25 October. 1782. See also above note 13 and Meijers, op. cit. (note 12), pp. 61 and 65.
 - 57 HHSA, Akten des OkäA, Sonderreihe 38 a and b, CC 80, Josef II to Rosenberg [n.d., before January 1781]. See also note 17.
 - 58 Ettore Spalletti, 'Note su Tommaso Puccini conoscitore e storico delle arti', in: Paola Barocchi, Giovanna Ragionieri (eds), *Gli Uffizi. Quattro secoli di una galleria. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi* (Florence, 20–24 September 1982), Florence 1983, pp. 403–21, here: pp. 404–5. Liana Elda Funaro even sees Manfredini as 'potenziare, come ben sapeva il Pelli Bencivenni, le raccolte artistiche granducali e fiorentine in stretto accordo con Tommaso Puccini', indicating that this collaboration was already operating when the former gallery director Pelli was still in office. See L. E. Funaro, 'All'armata e in corte'. Profilo di Federico Manfredini', in *Rassegna Storica Toscana* 2 (1994), pp. 239–76, here at p. 241. She refers to a letter from Manfredini to Raffaello Morghen of 11 July 1792.
 - 59 This is how Paola Barocchi describes Pelli: see P. Barocchi, 'La storia della Galleria degli Uffizi e la storiografia artistica', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* 3rd ser. 12 (1982), pp. 1488–9.
 - 60 Funaro, op. cit. (note 58), p. 241: Manfredini to Morghen, 20 March 1792.
 - 61 Ibid., p. 246: Manfredini to Fabbroni, n.d.
 - 62 See also the report by an Englishman from Rome, quoted in note 48, d.d. 10 May 1793, *Neues Museum für Künstler und Kunstliebhaber* 1 (1794), p. 116. The author mentions that all the artists who were suspected of having 'französische Grundsätze' had had to leave Rome. He gives a few examples and goes on to mention Puccini's appointment in Florence. According to the same report Puccini was on friendly terms with Morghen and very supportive of foreigners, and of Englishmen in particular. See also Spalletti, op. cit. (note 58), p. 405. For Morghen's later career under Napoleon, see: F. Boyer, *Le monde des arts en Italie et la France de la révolution et de l'empire: études et recherches* (Turin, 1969), pp. 157–63.
 - 63 Funaro, op. cit. (note 58), pp. 246–7: Manfredini to Fabbroni, n.d. [June 1792].
 - 64 Funaro (ibid., p. 248) quotes a letter from Manfredini to Franz, Pisa, 9 November. 1792.
 - 65 Ibid., p. 249.
 - 66 HHSA, Familienkorrespondenz – Sammelbände, Briefe des Erzherzogs Großherzogs von Toskana vom Jahr 1792: Ferdinand to Franz, 9 November 1792. See also Pesendorfer, op. cit. (note 2), p. 74 on the mission to Florence of the imperial envoy Veigl, whose task was to enquire to whether the Grand Duke was still backing the Emperor.
 - 67 Besides the letter from Ferdinand to Franz of 11 September 1792 quoted above in note 47, see also that of 13 October: Ferdinand passes on to his brother secret information obtained via Manfredini, namely that the French general, Daumier had requested a truce and had been granted one for twenty-four hours. In both letters Ferdinand goes on immediately after this to talk about the exchange of paintings, in a strikingly cooperative tone. HHSA, Familienkorrespondenz – Sammelbände, Briefe des Erzherzogs Großherzogs von Toskana vom Jahr 1792: Ferdinand to Franz, 13 October 1792.
 - 68 As we saw, the works involved were the *Portrait of Gattamelata*, which was then regarded as a typical work by Giorgione, and three paintings by Caspar de Crayer, Frans Snyders and Jan Fyt respectively which were intended to expand the gallery's collection of the Flemish school. See also notes 9 and 24.