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The academization of art

A practice approach to the early histories of the Accademia del Disegno and the Accademia di San Luca

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Preface

While studying Philosophy and Art History at the University of Amsterdam and later during my time as an instructor at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies (2001-2009), I increasingly appreciated the added value of taking an interdisciplinary approach in scholarly research. I found that studying the same objects and phenomena from different perspectives, in my case a systematic-philosophical and a historico-empirical point of view, greatly extended my understanding of these objects and phenomena. For this reason I adopted interdisciplinary approaches for my research MA theses for Philosophy and Art Sciences.

In the former, which is titled *The Practice Turn in Art History* (2006), I analyzed the philosophical presuppositions of two central debates in Dutch art historiography, i.e. the iconological debate and the debate on the Rembrandt Research Project, with the help of a practice-theoretical approach, i.e. Theodore Schatzki's social ontology. My aim in this study was to introduce a 'practice turn' in art history by showing the relevance of practice-theoretical ideas – concerning the pluriform and dynamic nature of culture, the instability of the meaning of objects and the identity of individuals, and the social constitution of subjectivity – for clarifying the philosophical problems internal to these art historical debates.

In my second research MA thesis, *Guido Reni's 'Abduction of Helen'* (2009), I used the practice-theoretical concepts, discussed in my previous thesis, to analyze the meanings of a concrete work of art, i.e. Guido Reni's *Abduction of Helen* (1627-1629). Rejecting existing interpretations of this painting, which reduced its meaning to a single and essentialist function in seventeenth-century diplomatic relations, I argued that, immediately after its production, it simultaneously functioned in various social practices – i.e. diplomatic, painting, literary, and collection practices – and that its meaning varied accordingly.

The Academization of Art forms a next step in the interdisciplinary strategy I have been developing, insofar as it expands both the philosophical and the art (or culture) historical sides of my approach. From the philosophical point of view, this dissertation improves the interpretative framework that was based on Schatzki's work by confronting it with Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice, and especially his attention for power in social relations. Concerning the culture historical side, the empirical object that is analyzed with the help of the practice-theoretical interpretative framework is more complex than in my MA theses, as it deals with two composite institutions and with the larger

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phenomenon of the academization of art in Italy, rather than with just a single work of art or a single artist.

Parts of this dissertation are based on papers that have been presented in conferences or published elsewhere. The general discussion about theories of practice in Chapter Two is based on a paper delivered at the philosophical symposium Drift in 2013 in Amsterdam and was subsequently published (Jonker 2014). Part of the comparison between Schatzki and Bourdieu was presented in papers at the conferences of the Dutch Research School of Philosophy in 2013 and 2014. An earlier version of the explanation of Schatzki's theory can be found in Jonker 2008. The argument about functions of the Cappella della Santissima Trinità in Santissima Annunziata in Florence, which is presented mainly in Chapter Four, but partly also in Chapters Five and Six, was delivered at the conference Presence and Visibility of Artists, Guilds, and Brotherhoods in the Pre-modern Era in Munich in 2016, and is in the process of being published (Jonker 2017). The discussion about the religious practices in the Accademia di San Luca in Chapter Five is based on a paper that was read at the Renaissance Society of America Conference in 2014 in New York. Part of the argument in Chapter Ten about the patronage practices that were performed by and in the art academies is based on a paper presented at the Renaissance Society of America Conference in 2015 in Berlin. Finally, the comparison of conceptions and practices of *disegno* of the Accademia di San Luca under Federico Zuccari's presidency and the Accademia dei Lincei of Federico Cesi in Chapter Nine was previously presented in papers at the 2013 annual section meeting of Italian Art Studies of the Dutch Postgraduate School for Art History (OSK), at the Early Modern Rome Conference in Rome in 2013, and at the Scientiae conference in 2015 in Toronto. I sincerely thank participants on these occasions for their constructive comments and questions.

More particularly, I would like to thank certain individuals and institutions without whom this dissertation would not have been written, or at least not in this form. First and foremost I am grateful to my three promoters, Bram Kempers, Martin Stokhof, and Arno Witte, who all three had previously been involved in the supervision of my master theses. I thank Bram for his support and his enthusiasm for this project from its inception until the end, as well as for his guidance and suggestions along the way. I am also very grateful to Arno and Martin for their criticism, which was always acute and constructive and which has immensely improved this book. In addition, I thank Arno for guiding me in my first steps in the intimidating world of the Italian archive and for taking the time to discuss my work in Florence, Rome, and Arezzo.

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This dissertation would not have been realized without the support of the Royal Dutch Institute in Rome (KNIR), which awarded me the Hugenholtz-stipendium in 2011 and afterwards functioned as an institutional partner of this research project by generously letting me stay in the institute for longer periods in 2013 and 2014. I am very grateful for this assistance. I also would like to thank the Dutch University Institute for Art History in Florence (NIKI) for supporting me with a GWO grant in 2014. Many thanks are due to the staff of both institutes for their help and for making these stays pleasant experiences, and especially to Marieke van den Doel, Thijs Weststeijn, Arthur Weststeijn, Jeremia Pelgrom, Gert Jan van der Sman, and Tjarda Vermeijden.

Most of the archival research for this project was carried out in the State Archive in Florence and the Archive of the Accademia di San Luca in Rome. I am very grateful to the staff of both archives for their assistance, and especially to Angela Cipriani and Elisa Camboni.

Earlier versions of the some of the chapters of the manuscript have been read and commented on by Ellinoor Bergvelt, Elisa Goudriaan, Ruth Sonderegger, and Henk van Veen. I am very grateful for their many useful suggestions. I have also benefitted greatly from fruitful discussions with Bert Meijer, Laura Overpelt, Sanne Roefs, Stefania Ventra, Nicholas Turner, Rhoda Eitel-Porter, Vera Henkelmann, and Tamara van Kessel. I am grateful to Francesco Chiaravalloti for correcting some of my translations from the Italian and to Tom de Munck for helping me with the lay-out. Finally, I would like to thank my sister Sara, my mother Ellinoor and Maria for their unconditional support. It is unfortunate that my father, who was still with us when I started this research, is not able to see the finished product. His unconditional faith in me is what gave me the confidence to embark upon and finish something as daunting as a PhD project. I dedicate the dissertation to Maria.